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|------------|---|-----------------|----------------------------|
| <b>To:</b> | Planning Policy, Regeneration, Culture,<br>Environment and Transformation<br>Medway Council<br>Gun Wharf, Dock Road<br>Chatham, Kent<br>ME4 4TR | <b>Date:</b>    | 10 April 2017              |
|            |   | <b>Our ref:</b> | 2017 009 Medway Local Plan |
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## Medway Council Local Plan 2012 to 2035

The National Farmers Union is an industry representative organisation, which aims to safeguard the farming and growing business interests of our members and to promote conditions for the wider industry to retain a competitive foothold in the UK and international economy. We represent 47,000 farm businesses in England and Wales involving an estimated 155,000 farmers, managers and partners: The large majority of commercial farm businesses in England.

*“Domestically, we want a profitable, thriving, competitive UK food sector to continue to play its part in keeping us “food secure”. UK farming should produce as much food as possible, as long as it is responsive to demand, and recognises the need to protect and enhance natural resources. Our ability to take advantage of global growth in demand will depend primarily on the competitiveness of UK agricultural production, as well as the nature of the demand. So we need to create the conditions for competitive, sustainable, domestic production to thrive.” Defra Food Strategy - Food 2030<sup>1</sup>*

### Summary Recommendations:

- **The Plan should include reference to the SELEP Rural Strategy which aims “to grow the rural economy with a highly skilled workforce”**
- **The Plan should give priority to the needs of agriculture in specified areas in recognition of the national importance the sector holds in Kent and Medway**
- **A more robust assessment of agricultural and horticulture in Medway is needed to fully inform the Plan**
- **In light of extensive urban regeneration proposals, the Plan should include a policy to manage and enhance urban fringe locations**
- **Further assessment and monitoring is required to manage the impacts on the rural economy as well as best and most versatile land**
- **The Local Plan must have a rural workers dwelling policy which enables essential rural workers to live permanently at or near their place of work**
- **It is recommend that a suitably worded rural exceptions site policy is included, which enables a mix of both affordable and private rental housing to be developed**
- **A flexible approach to barn conversions should be set out as a means of improving the local setting of some redundant farm buildings**
- **It is vitally important that agricultural and horticultural caravan sites are specifically exempt from any zonal restrictions for mobile home parks**
- **Specific policies are needed to enable farm diversification and expansion (including B1-B8 use) in rural areas**
- **Rural policies should enable the development of polytunnels, as well as buildings of sufficient scale for modern and efficient agricultural production, processing and packaging**

<sup>1</sup> Accessed from [www.appg-agscience.org.uk/linkedfiles/Defra%20food2030strategy.pdf](http://www.appg-agscience.org.uk/linkedfiles/Defra%20food2030strategy.pdf) February 2017

- Rural policies should recognise that there will be an ongoing need for farms to consolidate and restructure. The policy should also recognise that where some local scale effects may be caused through packing and processing development these enable landscape scale improvements, for example by ensuring the continuity of orchard fruit production over much larger areas
- In order to promote better water security, policies should provide positive support for constructing water storage capacity, sustainable drainage systems, adopting alternatives to mains water supplies (such as rainwater harvesting and on-site water recycling) and relocating parts of the business to spread risk
- Medway Council should include clear instructions to Infrastructure Developers in order to guide infrastructure projects from the outset, avoiding significant disruption to affected persons and businesses

### 1. Strategic Context

We note that the Strategic Context includes reference to the SELEP Kent and Medway Growth Deal (2014) but omits to make reference to the **SELEP Rural Strategy**.

The SELEP rural vision is for ***“a growing rural economy with a highly skilled workforce in full employment. Creating opportunities for the establishment of new businesses, the development of existing ones, increased job opportunities and a thriving culture of entrepreneurship”***. We would like to see more systematic consideration of how this ambition can be delivered through the Plan. Going further the SELEP rural strategy identifies the following relevant policies:

- **RE1** *“Provide support for rural businesses and businesses in rural areas to improve access to ‘business critical’ infrastructure, resources and professional support to enable growth and development”*
- **RE2** *“Optimise the growth and development of the agri-tech, agri-food and forestry-tech sectors to support sustainable food production, maintain plant and animal health and support and enhance natural habitats”*
- **RC2** *“Develop the skills of the rural workforce and provide opportunities for people to work, learn and achieve”*
- **RC3** *“Build ‘community capital’ in our dispersed communities, villages and market towns”*; and
- **REn1** *“Support development of a more efficient low carbon and sustainable rural economy”*

The consultation document also omits reference to the **Kent and Medway Structure Plan (2006)**. Given that the 2006 Structure Plan covers the period 2001-2021; would it not continue to hold material weight and be relevant to new policies? Other County/ Unitary authorities continue to refer to active Structure Plans as providing strategic context for future development<sup>2</sup> so presumably the same should be true for Medway?

Within the Kent and Medway Structure Plan (2006)<sup>3</sup>, the following policies may still provide useful direction for further policy:

- **EP7 Development of Employment Uses in Rural Areas:** This policy permits B1-B8 business development in rural areas, which is much needed for the purposes of farm diversification and expansion. In particular part (ii) enables *“the expansion of an established business and/or for the processing, storage, distribution or promotion and research concerning produce from Kent agriculture, horticulture or forestry”* thus giving farms the ability to grow their business on their own sites.
- **EP8 Farm Diversification:** Enables the alteration or re-use of existing buildings and permits the creation of new or replacement buildings where the needs are justified.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-plans-and-policies/environment-planning-and-waste-plans-and-policies/structure-plan/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.telephonehouse.org.uk/opposite8yr/kmsp2006.pdf>

- *EP9 Protection of Agricultural Land*: Provides direction that agricultural land should only take place when there is an overriding need and that Best and Most Versatile land should be protected except under very specific circumstances.

## 2. Agriculture in Kent and Medway

Whilst we recognise the very broad overview of horticulture provided in Paragraphs 5.23 and 5.24 we question whether the authors have fully engaged with the structure and defined requirements of all sectors of the farming and rural economy?

Our back of the envelope calculations quoted in the document were derived from various sources including *Horticulture Production in England (2014)*<sup>4</sup> and various Defra statistics (summarised in **Appendix A**). The Council should really be sufficiently resourced to be able to undertake their own **robust assessment of agricultural and horticulture in Medway to fully inform the Plan**.

Furthermore the Medway Agricultural Research Project<sup>5</sup> conducted in 2007 is now very out of date and requires updating to give a clear picture of how the farming sector is now positioned.

Despite these concerns we are pleased that the Plan makes reference to the fact that Medway alone holds approximately 6% of the entire fruit and vegetable growing area of South East England. In combination with the other Thames Estuary authority areas approximately one-third of the entire fruit and vegetable growing area of the region is located here. Furthermore in 2013 the County of Kent produced 95% of the entire top fruit crop in South East England, approximately 50% of the soft fruit crop and approximately one third of all other horticultural crops produced in the region. It is for this reason that we believe the horticultural sector in Kent and Medway holds **special national significance** and should be appropriately cared for as a result.

### Options for Delivering Sustainable Development

We cannot state a preference towards any specific regeneration scenario however it is important that an evidence based approach is taken to identify the preferred option for urban regeneration. The effects on agricultural productivity and farm business viability should be considered quantitatively and those identified impacts should be minimised and mitigated as much as possible.

A measure of the impacts on Best and Most Versatile Land is one way that local authorities can account for the economic and other benefits from the farming sector (as per NPPF Paragraph 112). For example, Swale Borough Council have recently undertaken an economic assessment of the effects that their local plan will have on BMV land<sup>6</sup>, showing the job numbers and the value of the associated outputs. Despite some shortcomings their approach did provide a broad quantification on the effects of the Plan and we encourage Medway Council to consider undertaking a similar assessment.

## 3. Cumulative Impacts on Urban Fringe

We are concerned that wide scale urban regeneration could impact on rural economic activity through:

- *Maintenance pressure on public rights of way networks*
- *Increased incidents of livestock worrying, theft, fly-tipping and other urban fringe associated crime*
- *Tendencies towards nuisance claims against existing farm business as a result of new residential development.*

We believe that the new local plan must serve to manage the inevitable pressure that urban development places on the immediately surrounding countryside and positive management should be encouraged through planning policies with appropriate funding from the infrastructure delivery plan.

We note that the urban fringe was previously a consideration within the Kent and Medway Structure Plan (2006) that stated "*the urban fringe is subject to a wide range of pressures, particularly from new development and*

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.ruralbusinessresearch.co.uk/publications/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://gtgkm.org.uk/documents/medway-agricultural-survey-1282205770.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> The Value of Best and Most Versatile Land in Swale (October 2015) accessed from <http://archive.swale.gov.uk/assets/Planning-General/Planning-Policy/Evidence-Base/Local-Plan-2014/Further-evidence-2015/Agricultural-Land-Value-SBCPS0888.pdf>

*other activities, and it often contains damaged land. In some places it suffers from poor maintenance, neglect and vandalism, but there are opportunities to improve its appearance and wildlife value, as well as its accessibility, by careful management and planning.”*

A similarly focussed policy should be included in the new local plan to address pressures in urban fringe locations. For ease of reference **Appendix B** reproduces a set of ten key considerations on the urban fringe included in the 2006 Structure Plan. These positive attributes may aid further consideration of how an urban fringe policy might be structured.

#### 4. Rural Workers Accommodation

One of the main planning needs for farming and growing businesses in South East England relates to their ability to accommodate rural workers within close proximity to their place of work. This planning need usually takes the form of either requiring residential sites for a number of temporary workers (e.g. caravans or bunk house dwellings for seasonal pickers) or low numbers of permanent residential dwellings. The latter are usually required either to be “in sight and sound” of farm buildings, so that the worker can attend to any emergency, animal welfare or security issues without delay, or to ensure essential activities can be undertaken during unsociable hours, such as milking cows or harvesting produce very early in the morning.

There are broadly three scenarios where new on-farm residential accommodation is required:

1. Succession – where there is only one dwelling on a farm holding, transferring the management of the business from one generation to the next can be difficult.
2. Expansion and change – where farming practices evolve and expand there may be a need for additional dwellings.
3. A completely new enterprise – particularly where a new occupier comes into ownership or control of previously “bare” land.

Without providing residential accommodation on site, farms often cannot find staff willing to commute into work at 4 or 5am. If you then add in the very high average house and rental prices in the south east, the provision of on-site accommodation is really a question of staff retention. If you cannot provide local accommodation then it is nearly impossible to retain suitably experienced and qualified staff.

Recent and ongoing changes to permitted development such as Class Q can enable some residential development to be undertaken without referral to local policy, however this can only be utilised where there are redundant buildings that can be converted, which then removes other PD rights under Part 6, Schedule 2 of the GPDO. This means that Class Q is not always suitable as a way in which farms can develop rural housing. As a result **it is necessary to have a route through local policy to enable residential developments for rural workers**, which for most other local authorities falls within the rural economy section of their Local Plan.

It is our recommendation that the new Plan should enable a positive approach to rural workers’ dwellings, particularly in cases where the business is well-established and the need clearly identified.

There is also an opportunity to apply **a flexible approach to barn conversions** as has been successfully implemented by Wealden District Council<sup>7</sup>. In brief this approach enables low quality barns to be demolished and rebuilt sometimes in an alternative location, rather than insisting on conversion. We believe this is a useful approach because it enables the local authority to achieve enhancements in the visual appearance and setting of some farm locations.

#### 5. Affordable Housing

In many cases local authority affordable housing is simply not provided in areas suitable for the needs of agriculture and horticulture. This means that farms will continue to need residential accommodation on their own holdings, which in the absence of affordable housing, is their own privately developed form of “housing that is affordable” to fulfil their own staff and business requirements. In this context, the provision of formal

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[www.wealden.gov.uk/Wealden/Planning\\_and\\_Building\\_Control/Planning\\_Development\\_Management/Agents\\_and\\_Parish\\_Council\\_Information/Planning\\_Useful\\_Documents\\_For\\_Agents\\_and\\_TownParish\\_Councils.aspx](http://www.wealden.gov.uk/Wealden/Planning_and_Building_Control/Planning_Development_Management/Agents_and_Parish_Council_Information/Planning_Useful_Documents_For_Agents_and_TownParish_Councils.aspx)

affordable housing in a nearby town or village is often not a viable alternative to on farm residential accommodation. As such **the Local Plan must have a policy which enables essential rural workers to live permanently at or near their place of work**, which in the absence of any alternatives is the farmers' option for providing the best welfare for their workers at cost price.

By contrast, landowners are often not against the release of small amounts of their own land (e.g. as part of a rural exceptions sites policy) to provide local affordable housing to satisfy genuine demand from the local community. We have recently seen some very interesting rural housing schemes brought forward in other parts of the South East, which can release small numbers of affordable houses on the edge of village settlements. In order to allow this to happen, **cross subsidisation is needed** to permit an element of private housing for sale or rent on the open market, or for some houses to be retained by the landowner for business purposes. This release of capital or revenue whether managed privately, or through a rural housing association or community land trust is an essential catalyst in funding these much needed rural affordable housing projects.

NFU members are very aware of the shortage of housing in rural areas for key workers and local residents and have indicated a willingness to engage with these schemes. On this basis **we recommend that a suitably worded rural exceptions site policy is included in the Local Plan, which enables a mix of both affordable and private rental housing to be developed.**

### 6. Mobile Home Parks

We note that the proposed policy approach seeks to protect existing parks, but restricts expansion outside of specific designated areas. We suggest this restriction may be problematic as seen from the context of horticulture where mobile home sites are often required to house seasonal workers. Seasonal caravan sites are usually required within proximity to the farm (or farms) that they service. Their position will be driven by the existing location of the horticultural business and may not therefore fall within the proposed designated areas.

Given that the council will set out criteria by which new mobile home developments will be considered, we believe **it is vitally important that agricultural and horticultural caravan sites are specifically exempt from any zonal location restrictions.**

### 7. Economic Development

We support the Council's ambition to boost Medway's economic performance by working with local businesses to support the creation of jobs and growth. The proposed policy approach suggests the Council will safeguard existing sites, promote redevelopment and investment and allocate new sites, where the ELNA clearly looks towards brownfield, developed and edge of centre locations to achieve this. For many sectors this is entirely to be expected, however for farming, horticulture, food production and food processing businesses; **Business Park and edge of centre locations may not always be the most sustainable or desirable.** This is particularly the case where an agri-business may through natural expansion wish to develop greater packing, storage and distribution on an existing agricultural site under their ownership or control.

This is not an unusual scenario where in South East England there are a number of "keystone" packing, storage and distribution farm businesses that provide much needed retail access to a network of smaller producers and satellite farms both locally and regionally. In these examples, larger packing and storage operations are often judged against a threshold between agricultural land use and B8 storage and distribution, where by implication they risk being constrained in their growth simply because their location does not conform to the site allocations policy.

Our suggested approach is that there needs to **be a rural policy to enable rural businesses to diversify and grow their existing enterprise base.** Farm businesses need certainty that any investment in their own site will be secure and will allow them to grow in the future. As a corollary we point towards an appeal decision, which recognises the importance of specific keystone packing and storage sites for the wider sector (PINS reference APP/C/93/U2235, APP/U2235/A/94/233436) where the inspector stated:

*"15. the use enables a good number of other local fruit growers, who may well not have the resources to provide the storage and packing facilities in accordance with the specifications laid down by the large retailers individually, to gain access to a market for their produce which might otherwise be denied to them. By providing*



*an outlet for locally grown produce, my opinion is that the development would help to underpin and sustain the production of soft fruit not only at... [the farm in question], but also on other farms in the area. I consider this would be of benefit to local agriculture and to the rural economy in general.*

17. *Notwithstanding the import of fruit from outside Kent, I consider it is reasonable to regard the development as a necessary adjunct to, or reasonably necessary to local agriculture."*

Whilst we appreciate that the decision is now quite old, we believe the logic still holds and should be included as a concept within the local plan.

### 8. Rural Economy

We support the need to include a Rural Economy Policy within the Plan but as indicated previously, **checks and balances are needed to monitor the relative effect of urban regeneration policies on the rural economy** and any **impacts should be offset through enabling substantial growth in farming, growing and other rural enterprises**.

A new policy should provide scope to secure growth in the rural economy both by reducing effects on existing high value production areas and by promoting sustainable development and diversification of farming more generally. In developing this policy it is noteworthy that:

- **Lesser quality agricultural land continues to have value for horticultural production.** This is particularly the case where produce is grown in a protected system (such as a polytunnel) within a growing medium such as coir or compost, where irrespective of the soil type on which a polytunnel is located, a high value crop can be produced. As the soft fruit sector is going through a period of consolidation many growers are looking to rationalise their enterprise set up. By keeping dispersed satellite sites to a minimum, growers are looking to ensure that they also keep labour and transport costs to a minimum. In many circumstances this means that soil type is **only part** of the consideration where **logistical operations and water resource availability are equally important to the value of the site**.
- As reflected in the recent government response to the Rural Planning Review, polytunnel developments provide substantial positive benefits to the sector. In this context the government has suggested that **"appropriate weight should be given to the agricultural requirements of proposed polytunnels"**. In this context your Plan should include scope for the development of polytunnels giving weight to their food production requirements. For further information we include a brief description on the importance of polytunnels in **Appendix C**.
- Some recent pack house developments in Medway have enabled the continuity and expansion of apple orchards more broadly across the wider area and have had a significant positive landscape and visual impact. This should be reflected in policy where larger scale, functional agricultural and packing/processing developments can lead to significant environmental gain. Further background is provided in the **Case Study Box** below.

**Case Study: AC Goatham & Son**

AC Goatham & Son currently farms 710 hectares of top fruit with an additional 750 hectares in top fruit production from 20 partner farms within the Thames Estuary area. Their Flanders Farm site on the Hoo Peninsula processes more than 10% of the UK's top fruit, 50-55% of Sainsbury's British apples and pears.

Over the last seven years the business has invested over £30 million on packing, storage, new orchards and other new infrastructure.

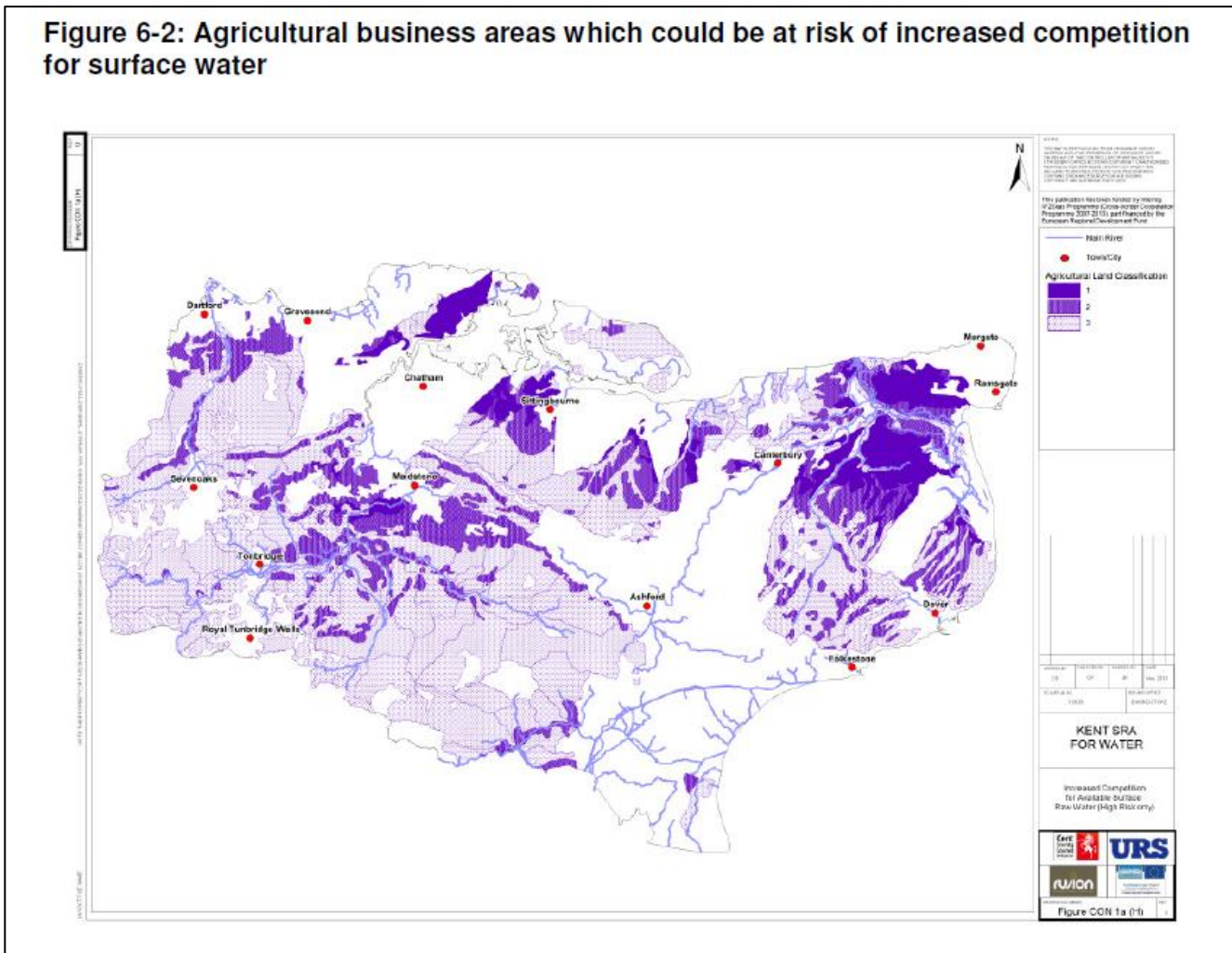
AC Goatham & Son are, and have been, the major buyer at the annual Horsmonden Hard Fruit sale for the last 10 -12 years having been in attendance for the last 35 years. This is the largest hard fruit auction in the UK, where growers can sell fruit on the tree for a guaranteed price with the purchaser being responsible for the management of the finished crop including all harvesting, storing, grading, packing and onward sale. This serves a vast range of traditional top fruit farms which contributes significantly towards maintaining the fabric of Kentish orchards.

AC Goatham and Son now plan to double their volume of top fruit production within the next 4 years. In particular, **the business plans to more than double the number of top fruit varieties it handles by planting over a quarter of a million new apple trees in the Medway area by 2017/18.**

[www.acgoatham.com](http://www.acgoatham.com)

- **Water security** is a key risk for agriculture and horticulture. This is given clear context within the Kent Spatial Risk Assessment for Water (Feb 2014)<sup>8</sup>, which shows that there are extensive areas within Medway where agricultural businesses have been identified as potentially at risk of increased competition for surface water, as shown in the reproduced **Figure** below. In this context we believe the Plan should give positive support to any water resource adaptations that farming businesses may require. This should include providing positive support for constructing water storage capacity, sustainable drainage systems, adopting alternatives to mains water supplies (such as rainwater harvesting and on-site water recycling) and relocating parts of the business to spread risk. Such a policy fits with the government's response to the rural planning review, where they state "*on-farm reservoir development should be considered in the context of the increased drive for more water storage and that the disposal of excavated waste [should be considered as]... an acceptable by-product*". Within this context we believe it is also worth noting that Kent County Council have published a "Design Guide for Irrigation Reservoirs: Guidance on the planning and design of irrigation reservoirs in Kent" (2015) aimed at supporting the development of irrigation reservoirs. Whilst Medway is not specifically covered by this guidance, we suggest that the ambitions of the neighbouring authority could be easily transferable.

<sup>8</sup> Accessed from [http://healthsustainabilityplanning.co.uk/documents/Spatial\\_water%20\\_risk\\_assessment%20.pdf](http://healthsustainabilityplanning.co.uk/documents/Spatial_water%20_risk_assessment%20.pdf) February 2017



From Kent SRA (Feb 2014) Kent County Council

## 9. Strategic Infrastructure

Within the Policy Approach on Strategic Infrastructure we note that the council propose to engage constructively on these matters. Whilst this cuts across your main responsibilities we feel it necessary to point out that farmers and landowners and rural businesses tend to be principally affected by such large schemes. In many cases we find that the effects on rural businesses are not given sufficient consideration within environmental assessments and avoidance measures tend to be poorly specified. In this context we believe that it is of paramount importance that infrastructure promoters are clearly reminded that they have a duty to treat affected persons fairly in accordance with their human rights and in a manner that should not leave them disadvantaged as a result of the scheme construction and operation.


It is essential that infrastructure developers are reminded at an early stage that there are a number of considerations that should be incorporated to prevent unnecessary disruption. Given that there are likely to be a number of major schemes affecting the area over the coming years, it would be of great value if Medway Council could include clear instructions to guide their design and development from the outset. In this context the following specifications should be provided to them as guidance:

- Land compulsorily acquired should be kept to an absolute minimum.
- The amount of land used for replacement habitat should not be any greater than that which has been lost.
- The proposed infrastructure development and any replacement habitat should avoid affecting best and most versatile agricultural land and as a minimum requirement the proposed scheme should avoid all damage of the highest grade agricultural land (Agricultural Land Classification Grades 1 and 2).



- The main scheme plus any associated mitigation should be designed in direct negotiation with landowners and farming tenants to ensure that the ongoing management of those areas and adjacent farmland is deliverable in perpetuity.
- A comprehensive traffic management strategy should be required in order to avoid major disruption on the roads surrounding a construction site. The promotor should consult with local businesses to ensure that the traffic management strategy does not adversely affect them.
- The developer and their nominated contractors should be required to give reasonable notice to landowners and tenants of the proposed start and end dates for specific activities
- A minimum amount of compensation should be paid for entering land, including access to undertake all types of surveys.
- Where any damage is caused to land or other property compensation should be recoverable by any person suffering damage from the person exercising the right of entry.
- There may be disputes and grievances on a wide range of matters, most of which will be minor in terms of economic impact, but which nevertheless cause distress to those affected. Those affected should be able to have their grievances heard swiftly by an independent third party empowered to offer a remedy.
- Where farms are severed as a result of the construction; accommodation works in general and watercourse crossing points in particular are matters of significant importance for those affected.
- Bridges will be required where farm holdings are severed by the proposed scheme. The specification of these bridges should enable the width and weight of modern agricultural machinery to be accommodated.
- There will be a need to avoid environmental impacts to soils during construction of the project. Soil which will be affected must be stripped and stored so that the land can later be returned to agricultural use and to its pre-construction condition. We suggest that the promoter should fund an aftercare period of at least 10 years to ensure stabilisation of the soil structure once restored to agricultural use.
- It will be essential that drainage systems and water supplies for livestock affected by the scheme should be re-instated as soon as possible. It is not acceptable for such re-instatement to be carried out “where practicable”: all field drainage must be restored, or a new system installed, to ensure that the drainage of fields is returned to full working order in the shortest time possible.

## Appendix A – Defra Farming Statistics

| <br>Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs |                                |                             |                             |   |              |                    |                     |                             |                        |
|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---|--------------|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| England 2013<br>County / Unitary Authority <sup>(3)</sup>  | Farm size - areas              |                             |                             |   |              | Total holdings     |                     |                             |                        |
|  | Farmed area 2013 (hectares)    |                             |                             |   |              | Number of holdings |                     |                             | Farmed area (hectares) |
|  | <5ha                           | 5<20ha                      | 20<50ha                     | 50<100ha                                      | >=100ha      | 2010               | 2013                | % difference                | 2013                   |
| West Sussex  | 238                            | 4 789                       | 9 952                       | 15 099  | 85 135       | 1 471              | 1 399               | - 5                         | 115 214                |
| Medway   | #                              | 102                         | #                           | #   | 7 083        | 51                 | 50                  | - 2                         | 7 919                  |
| Kent CC  | 635                            | 9 943                       | 17 276                      | 23 242  | 170 646      | 2 767              | 2 613               | - 6                         | 221 742                |
| South East (incl. London)  | 2 482                          | 46 004                      | 87 484                      | 128 427                                       | 893 622      | 13 589             | 12 996              | - 4                         | 1 158 019              |
| England  | 20 172                         | 298 794                     | 694 577                     | 1 325 941                                     | 6 746 996    | 105 449            | 102 836             | - 2                         | 9 086 480              |
| England 2013<br>County / Unitary Authority <sup>(3)</sup>  | General Cropping               | Horticulture                | Grazing Livestock           | Farm Type - Areas                             |              |                    |                     |                             | Farmed area (hectares) |
|  | 2013 (SO 2010 coefficients)    | 2013 (SO 2010 coefficients) | 2013 (SO 2010 coefficients) | General Cropping                              | Horticulture | Specialist Pigs    | Specialist Poultry  | Grazing Livestock (lowland) | 2013                   |
|  | West Sussex                    | 287                         | 111                         | 585   | 16 044       | 2 358              | 840                 | 311                         | 34 130                 |
| Medway   | 10                             | 14                          | 11                          | 1 511   | 2 044        | #                  | #                   | 1 152                       | 7 919                  |
| Kent CC  | 472                            | 399                         | 917                         | 39 241  | 16 654       | 295                | 2 468               | 34 778                      | 221 742                |
| South East (incl. London)  | 2 233                          | 966                         | 5 512                       | 130 452                                       | 36 169       | 5 787              | 7 665               | 258 391                     | 1 158 019              |
| England  | 15 762                         | 4 398                       | 32 505                      | 1 361 935                                     | 164 231      | 77 348             | 77 098              | 1 488 510                   | 9 086 480              |
| England 2013<br>County / Unitary Authority <sup>(3)</sup>  | Total vegetables grown in open |                             |                             | Glasshouse and protected crops <sup>(4)</sup> |              |                    | Top fruit           |                             |                        |
|  | area (hectares)                |                             |                             | area (hectares)                               |              |                    | area (hectares)     |                             |                        |
|  | 2010                           | 2013                        | % difference                | 2010  | 2013         | % difference       | 2010                | 2013                        | % difference           |
| West Sussex  | 2 233                          | 1 286                       | - 42                        | 136   | 137          | 0                  | 132                 | 110                         | - 17                   |
| Medway   | 518                            | 281                         | - 46                        | #   | #            | n/a                | 225                 | 750                         | 233                    |
| Kent CC  | 2 388                          | 1 975                       | - 17                        | 75  | 66           | - 12               | 8 757               | 7 281                       | - 17                   |
| South East (incl. London)  | 7 729                          | 6 112                       | - 21                        | 351   | 343          | - 2                | 10 194              | 9 172                       | - 10                   |
| England  | 103 046                        | 98 224                      | - 5                         | 1 483   | 1 434        | - 3                | 21 940              | 21 287                      | - 3                    |
| England 2013<br>County / Unitary Authority <sup>(3)</sup>  | Small fruit <sup>(5)</sup>     |                             |                             |   |              |                    |                     |                             |                        |
|  | area (hectares)                |                             |                             |   |              |                    |                     |                             |                        |
|  | 2010                           | 2013                        | % difference                |   |              |                    |                     |                             |                        |
| West Sussex  | 359                            | 398                         | 11                          |   |              |                    |                     |                             |                        |
| Medway   | 43                             | #                           | n/a                         |   |              |                    |                     |                             |                        |
| Kent CC  | 1 540                          | 1 531                       | - 1                         |   |              |                    |                     |                             |                        |
| South East (incl. London)  | 2 999                          | 2 928                       | - 2                         |   |              |                    |                     |                             |                        |
| England  | 8 250                          | 8 583                       | 4                           |   |              |                    |                     |                             |                        |
| England 2013<br>County / Unitary Authority <sup>(3)</sup>  | Total cattle                   |                             |                             | Total sheep and lambs                         |              |                    | Total poultry       |                             |                        |
|  | Number of livestock            |                             |                             | Number of livestock                           |              |                    | Number of livestock |                             |                        |
|  | 2010                           | 2013                        | % difference                | 2010  | 2013         | % difference       | 2010                | 2013                        | % difference           |
| West Sussex  | 50 711                         | 50 348                      | - 1                         | 93 077  | 99 907       | 7                  | 519 798             | 373 231                     | - 28                   |
| Medway   | 2 228                          | 2 155                       | - 3                         | 7 844   | 7 360        | - 6                | 2 678               | 7 575                       | 183                    |
| Kent CC  | 58 265                         | 58 094                      | 0                           | 291 392                                       | 298 291      | 2                  | 2 439 809           | 2 098 717                   | - 14                   |
| South East (incl. London)  | 443 232                        | 424 358                     | - 4                         | 1 177 386                                     | 1 237 538    | 5                  | 9 339 945           | 8 599 211                   | - 8                    |
| England  | 5 521 386                      | 5 344 652                   | - 3                         | 14 239 840                                    | 14 921 639   | 5                  | 125 172 787         | 120 504 242                 | - 4                    |

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/structure-of-the-agricultural-industry-in-england-and-the-uk-at-june> Accessed February 2017

## Appendix B – Urban Fringe Considerations (from Kent and Medway Structure Plan 2006)

| <b>The urban-rural fringe: Ten key functions</b> |  |
|--|--|
| A bridge to the country                          | Networks of parks, woodlands and other green spaces are linked to urban areas and the wider countryside by footpaths, bridleways and cycleways. Parks and other green spaces are joined up to form green corridors between town and country. |
| A gateway to the town                            | The quality of the countryside around towns is an indicator of the quality of a town or city – it creates a strong impression to visitors and prospective investors.   |
| A health centre                                  | An accessible and attractive countryside and green space infrastructure close to where people live and work provides an invaluable recreational resource.  |
| A classroom                                      | The countryside around towns provides learning opportunities in a variety of 'outdoor classrooms' to support the national curriculum, particularly in respect of environmental education and rural studies.                                  |
| A recycling and renewable energy centre          | The countryside around towns plays an important part in the sustainable management of the waste, water and pollution generated in urban areas.   |
| A productive landscape                           | Farms close to urban areas can take advantage of their proximity to urban markets, supplying high quality local produce through direct marketing as well as through other outlets.   |
| A cultural legacy                                | The countryside around towns contains many imprints of the history of communities and their change and development.  |
| A place for sustainable living                   | Where careful decisions have been taken to accommodate the need for new development after examining other options including increasing housing densities in existing urban areas and expanding other towns and villages.                     |
| An engine for regeneration                       | Strategies for regeneration use the countryside on the urban edge to help communities develop their own confidence, skills and prospects.  |
| A nature reserve                                 | The countryside around towns contains historic and newly-established woodlands, wetlands and meadows and a range of other natural habitats.  |

Source: *The Countryside In and Around Towns: A Vision for Connecting Town and Country in the Pursuit of Sustainable Development, Groundwork and Countryside Agency 2005.*

### Appendix C – The Importance of Polytunnels for Soft Fruit Production

Supplying the large multiple retailers requires detailed planning and supreme flexibility seven days a week. Failures to meet tight delivery deadlines or high quality standards are not tolerated and could have severe consequences, especially for suppliers with exclusive contracts. In the case of soft fruit, public demand for the home-grown product is such that many supermarkets insist on production under the protection of polytunnels, thereby increasing availability by extending the growing season, demonstrating 'greener' credentials by reducing the need for chemical sprays, guaranteeing consistent standards of product quality and appearance, and ensuring regular and timely deliveries. Some 80% of the soft fruit supplied to supermarkets is now produced in this way.

#### *Polytunnels at a glance*

| <b>Issue</b>                   | <b>Use of Tunnel</b>   | <b>Impact on soft fruit</b>   |
|--------------------------------|--|---|
| Earliness of crop              | Tunnels enclosed using side skirts, door ends and polythene closed for maximum earliness   | 2-3 weeks earlier with early season strawberries and raspberries                          |
| Season extension               | Tunnel polythene drawn down to remove impact of rain   | Continued picking of autumn strawberries and raspberries through to late October          |
| Proportion of marketable fruit | Tunnels enclosed in early season to protect blossom and reduce mis-shaped produce. Vents opened high on warm days to avoid soft growth | % of marketable fruit improved from 55 - 70% to 80 - 90% compared with outdoor production |
| Yield                          | Crop environment managed through venting the tunnels to optimise temperature and humidity  | Marketable yield over 30% better  |
| Pesticide usage                | Significant reductions in moisture related diseases such as botrytis, downy mildew and black spot                                      | At least a 50% reduction in botrytis fungicide usage                                      |
| Weather protection             | Guaranteed window to conduct production and harvest routines   | Picking continues regardless of rain  |

Source: *British Summer Fruits Association*

Prior to the introduction of polytunnels in England only 50% of the soft fruit yield was Grade 1 fruit; now it is nearer 90%. For a soft fruit grower, all of which are privately-owned family-run businesses, this represents the difference between having a business and going out of business; as it is this technology that allows an increase yields and quality whilst reducing the risk of disease and crop loss due to adverse weather. Importantly this technology is used by competitor suppliers elsewhere in the EU.

British berries grown under plastic are harvested generally from April up to November and a premium is paid for early crops; a harvesting season, which is considerably longer than uncovered crops, where the season tends to be for just 6 weeks in June and July. This extended growing period reduces the dependency on imports and contributes to our overall self-sufficiency in homegrown food. The extended harvesting period also extends the season for the seasonal workers who, when picking under polytunnels, can be employed for a greater part of the year.