



Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of the Bearsted Parish  
Council held at Madginford Hall, Egremont Road, Bearsted on  
Monday 13<sup>th</sup> January, 2020 at 7:30pm

Present: Cllr Michael Bollom (Chair)  
Cllr Fabienne Hughes (Vice Chair)  
Cllr Richard Ash MBE  
Cllr Jon Hughes  
Cllr Pat Marshall MBE  
Cllr Denis Spooner  
Cllr Jo Tribley

Also in attendance were the Acting Clerk Erin Sugden(AC) and 25 members of the public.

1. **Declarations of intention to record.**  
The AC declared that the meeting was to be recorded for minuting purposes.
2. **Apologies and absence**  
Apologies were received from Cllr Graeme Hannington, Cllr Helena Goodwin and Cllr Suzanne Camp.  
It was proposed and unanimously agreed to accept all apologies received.
3. **Declaration of Interests, Dispensations, Predetermination or Lobbying**  
None.
4. **Maidstone Borough Council Local Plan Review: Call for New Development Sites.**  
The purpose of the 'Call for Sites' was to establish what land is potentially available in the Borough for the development of housing. The land that was submitted would form an important part of the evidence base that underpins the spatial pattern of development included in the Local Plan.  
The Local Plan is required to identify 17,500 houses required by MBC stipulated by Government by 2031. The Government also requires an additional 7,500 houses to be built by 2035.  
If MBC did not produce a Local Plan the Government would instruct external contractors to survey the area and identify areas for development for which MBC would not be able to object.
5. **Sites Identified in Bearsted Parish**  
Cllr Tribley explained that on the 17th December 2019, she, Councillor Ash and Cllr Hannington met with MBC to lodge BPC's preliminary objections in respect of sites identified within Bearsted in the MBC Local Plan 'Call for Sites' document.  
The sites were:
  - a) 088 -Land south of Ashford Road
  - b) 129 -Land to the rear of 164 Ashford Road
  - c) 135- Land south of the Ashford Road
  - d) 240 -Banky Meadow
  - e) 297 -The Library

f) 160- Land at Thurnham

Cllr Tribley explained each reason why these sites were not suitable for development and further detail can be found in Appendix 1.

**6. Sites with influences on Bearsted Parish**

Cllr Tribley spoke about the sites identified in the surrounding Parishes of Bearsted that would have an impact influence on Bearsted in the future. With the help of a comprehensive document produced by The Bearsted and Thurnham Society Cllr Tribley explained the reason these sites would not be suitable for development.

Further details about the following sites can be found in Appendix 1:

a) 266- North of Ware Street opposite Averanches Road

b) 180 - Land west of Otham Street

c) 181 - Land west of Otham Street

d) 185 - Otham Glebe

e) 306 - Land south of Gore Court, Otham

f) 176 - Ashford Road/Old Mill Lane

195 - Waterside Park/Old Mill Road

223 - South of Ashford Road

g) 232 - West of Firs Lane

h) 290/291 - The Lodge/Water Lane

i) 279 - Land at Langley Heath

016 - Plough Wents Road

172 - Land at Sutton Road

174 - Land South of Sutton Road

231 - Lested Farm

016 - Fir Tree Farm Plough Wents Road

Meeting suspended at 20.12

**Reports from members of the public**

- Site 129 is within the Len Valley boundary,
- Site 135 - The two-way carriage way was put through under false pretences. The member of the public will challenge this. Pedestrian access via Button Lane has been blocked off.
- The plans that are talked about are a requirement from Government for the next 10-15 years. The building development in this area is against objectives of climate change. The impact of traffic in terms of air and noise pollution is terrible. Development is not sustainable. More suitable infrastructure is needed before any further development.
- The Secretary of the Bearsted & Thurnham Society felt that having met with BPC it is important for both parties to continue a joint approach in objecting to planning applications. It is hoped that both parties will work together.
- The M20 is bad on a good day. As soon as there is an incident on the M20 the village and surrounding areas become gridlocked causing concern for emergency access, Ashford Road would be problematic. There is speculation that subsequent compulsory purchasing will be taking place to gain the access for emergency vehicles that should have been taken into consideration when planning was granted although concerns were raised at the time. It was suggested that current developments have over stepped the mark such as Tesco Express which has caused issues with parking of their staff vehicles The current library at the station doesn't have enough parking and with this car park often full it puts people off using public transport.

- An observation was made by a resident of Spot Lane between 08.15-08.20 where 40 cars passed their property. Between, 08.40-08.50, 50 cars passed. This is before any further houses have been built in the area.
- It was questioned whether Maidstone is over its quota of the 330,000 homes required by the Government to achieve its target. Cllr Spooner replied 'the more you provide the more you are asked to provide'.
- Sites 176 and 195 at Jt 8 access would be treacherous due to the fly- over and the roundabout. Do these sites then not put the requirement on a by-pass at threat/block the potential for one?
- How far have these proposals gone. Does the proposer not have to come up with an impact statement? Cllr Spooner advised this would be required at the planning application stage.
- A resident of Otham Lane has observed an influx of traffic due to those cutting through in the recent years since homes were built in Langley. Further sites suggested at the other end of Otham Lane will just increase this issue. It is particularly dangerous for pedestrians as there is no footpath or lighting. Potential flood risk in the Otham area.
- The footpath overlooking site 129 is just one of a chain of footpaths. The field is used on a regular basis by a vast number of users; walking parties, dog walkers. It is used continuously-. The sheer volume of traffic on the road is horrendous.
- It was suggested that those members of the public that have issues with traffic should put comments and objections to Cllr Paul Carter of Kent County Council or Kent Highways.

Meeting continued at 20.28

Cllr Bollom thanked Cllr Tribley and Cllr Hannington for all their efforts putting together the objections to the MBC Local Plan Review 'Call for Sites' and Bearsted and Thurnham Society for their hard work in putting together their detailed report. Cllr Bollom agreed with Mary Richards, Secretary to the Society that BPC would continue to work with them on such matters.

It was recommended that, if anyone has comments or objections to any part of the MBC Local Plan Review or a planning application, they submit them to Maidstone Borough Council. BPC will always do their best to object to submissions that are not suitable but the more objections lodged; the better the chances are for an application to be declined.

**There being no further business to transact, the meeting closed at 20.30hrs**

**Signed..... Date.....**

## Appendix 1

# Local Plan Review - Call For Sites

## The Local Plan

- “A Local Plan is a document produced by councils across the country which guides the way new development will happen over the coming years. It provides the key framework for future decisions on planning applications. It sets out how much new development is needed, where it should be built and what supporting infrastructure such as roads, schools and health centres should be provided. It also guides the quality of development”

## Local Plan Review

- There is already a Local Plan in place (the 'Maidstone Borough Local Plan') and reviewing the plan now means that we will continue to have a Local Plan that is fit for purpose into the future. The Local Plan Review will look ahead to at least 2037 and possibly further into the future than that.

## Call For Sites

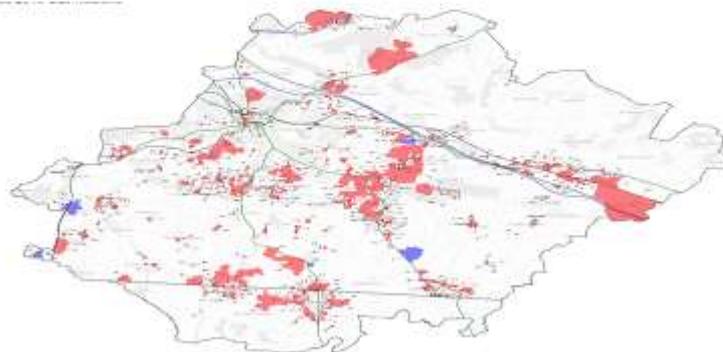
- The Call for Sites was an important early step in the Review of the MBC Local Plan which was open between March and May 2019. The purpose of the Call for Sites is to establish what land is potentially available in the Borough

## The Process

- 334 sites have been put forward by landowners and/or prospective developers to the council as part of its local plan review process. At the point of release (4 November 2019) no decisions have been taken on these sites.
- Maidstone Borough Council is currently assessing the suitability of each of the sites in order to make a decision on which sites should be included in the Local Plan Review
- The land that has been submitted is very much more land than will be needed for the 1,236 new homes/year which the Government says needs to be built in our borough from 2022 and which the Local Plan Review needs to plan for.
- MBC's decision on which sites are to be included in the Local Plan Review was due in March 2020, but this is likely to be delayed. In the meantime local councils are being invited to comment on the sites within their parish

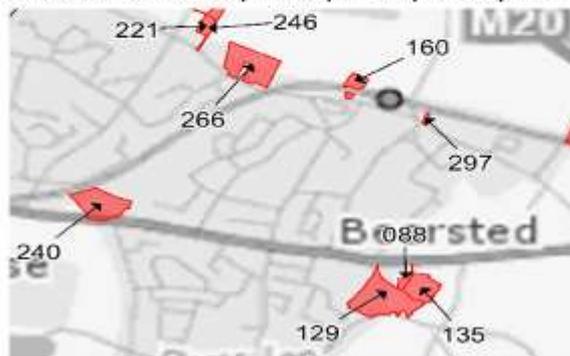
## Call for sites 2019

### 334 sites within Maidstone Borough



## Call for Sites within the parish of Bearsted

- 6 sites have been submitted within the parish of Bearsted : 240, 160, 297, 088, 129, 135



## 088 Land South of Ashford Road

- 0.4 hectare triangular plot situated behind 172 174a and 174b Ashford Road
- Access from an existing track between 174b and 176 Ashford Road
- Proposal for 7 Bungalows



## 088

- Proposed access from A20 Ashford Rd



## 088-

- Within the Len Valley Landscape of Local Value
- Contrary to policy SP17 of the current local plan
- Loss of amenity to adjacent houses
- Loss of open countryside – backland rural development
- Egress onto A20 inadequate as safe technical standards can not be met

## 129- Land to the rear of 164 Ashford Road

- 5.2 ha to the rear of 162 -166A Ashford Rd
- Access from A20 via road running between 162 and 166A Ashford Rd which is shared with public right of way KM77A
- Proposal for 45-55 dwellings



## 129

- Plot as viewed from public footpath KM77A



## 129-

- Within the Len Valley Landscape of Local Value
- Prominent site in open countryside viewed from public right of way KM77A
- Harmful to the local landscape of the Len valley and to adjacent houses
- Loss of amenity and green corridor
- Contrary to policy SP17 of current Local Plan
- Impaired access and egress onto busy A20
- Unsustainable due to loss of irreplaceable rural resource and loss of grade III agricultural land
- Negative impact on the local highway system which is already overstretched at key junctions, resulting in rat runs through the village

## 135- South of Ashford Road

- 2.11 ha. of mature woodland situated behind properties fronting Lilik Hill and Ashford Rd, directly abutting The Lilk
- Currently landlocked – proposed access via call for sites 129 (164 Ashford rd)
- Proposal for 20-40 houses



## 135

- Woodland as viewed from public footpath

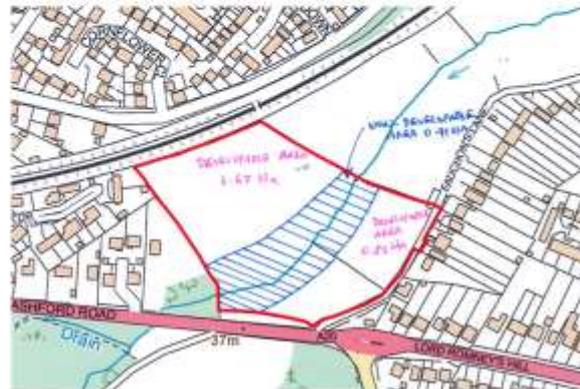


## 135-

- Within the Len Valley Landscape of Local Value
- Prominent site in open countryside viewed from public footpath
- Irreplaceable loss of mature woodland, which is subject to TPO and valuable ecological resource
- Contrary to policy SP17 of current Local Plan
- Harmful impact of traffic movements of potentially 65-95 houses (sites 129 plus 135) on properties adjacent to access and on overstretched highway
- Impaired access and egress onto busy A20

## 240 Banky Meadow

- 3.30ha grazing and woodland north of Ashford Rd and west of Fauchons Lane
- Access from Ashford rd
- 70 houses



## 240

- As viewed from Fauchons Lane

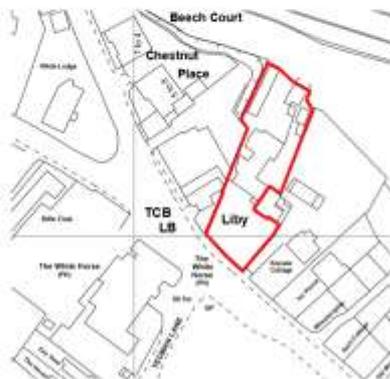


## 240-

- Buffer of open countryside between Bearsted and Weaving preventing urban sprawl contrary to policy SS1 (coalescence between settlements)
- Important ecological green corridor
- Prominent and visible site from A20 and footpaths
- Loss of countryside
- Access onto A20 dangerous and traffic clogging at an already heavily congested junction

## 297 Bearsted Library

- 0.13 ha Bearsted conservation area
- Proposal 6 houses



297

- Bearsted Library



297

- Integral part of Bearsted conservation area
- Inadequate vehicular access/parking

## 160 Ware Street

- 1.8 ha. Currently gardens and allotments
- Access from Ware Street opposite Sandy Mount
- Proposal for 20 houses



## 160

- Allotments



## 160-

- Within the Bearsted Golf Course landscape area
- Contrary to policy SP17 of current Local Plan
- Impact on the Grade II listed properties forming Church Cottages
- Contrary to policy DM1(iv) loss of amenity to neighbouring properties due to traffic
- Single track access with no footpath or lighting for pedestrians

## 266 – North of Ware Street

- 4.25 ha. Opposite Averanches road and surrounding "Fairways"
- Access from Ware Street
- Proposal for up to 100 houses



## 266-

- Contrary to policy SP17 of the current Local Plan and paragraph 15 of the NPPF (conserving and enhancing the natural environment)
- Harmful to the character and appearance of the area and setting of AONB
- Contrary to policy DM1(iv) amenity of neighbouring properties
- Impact on traffic on Ware Street ( an undesignated road)

## 180 Land west of Otham Street

- 7.2ha agricultural land
- Access onto Otham Street
- Proposal 215 houses



## 180-

- Unsustainable
- Access - Highway unsuitable for large scale development
- Contrary to SP17 development in the countryside
- Loss of amenity to neighbouring properties

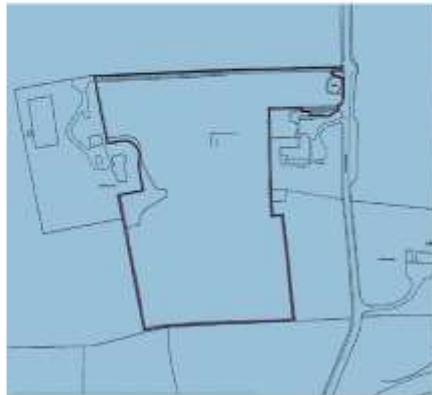
## 181- Land west of Otham Street

- 0.96 ha agricultural land
- Access onto Otham Street
- 20 houses



## 185 – Otham Glebe

- 1.9 ha agricultural land
- Access onto Church Road
- 50 houses



## 306 – land south of Gore Court, Otham

- 1.06ha
- Access onto Church Rd
- Proposal for 12 houses





## 223 – South Of Ashford Road

- 3.0ha of arable land
- Access A20
- Proposal 100 houses



## 232 West of Firs Lane

- 2.0 ha arable land
- Proposal for 50 houses



## 290/291 The Lodge Water Lane

- 4.07ha in total
- Proposal 60 houses



## Further Concerns

- Greatest Impact of the proposed sites is in Lenham, Leeds and Langley and the top of Detling Hill adjacent to the A249.
- Approximate figures:
  - **Lenham ~ 7200 including 5000 for the Heathlands Garden Community submitted by Maidstone Borough Council.**
  - **Leeds, Langley, Warmlake and Kingswood ~ 6900\***  
*(\* This figure does not include an area of 498 hectares proposed by the Rochester Bridge Trust.)*
  - **Top of Detling Hill (A249) ~ Between 1750 and 4000\***  
*(\* This proposal includes three options)*
- The huge increase in traffic generated by these developments will have a substantial impact on residents of Bearsted. Inadequate infrastructure leading to heavy congestion at key junctions has already led to roads through the village and rural lanes being used as rat runs as motorists seek to find alternative routes to avoid congestion.
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## Conclusion

- Sites assessed according to planning policies, suitability, sustainability, access
- Strongly recommend that the 6 sites in Bearsted are not included in the local Plan Review
- BPC endorsement of the Bearsted and Thurnham Society's appraisal
- Concerns over the level of future housebuilding in the borough without significant investment in road infrastructure