

LEEDS PARISH COUNCIL

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Maidstone Borough Council
Spatial Policy
Maidstone House
King Street
Maidstone
Kent ME15 6JQ

29th October 2015

Dear Sir/Madam

Maidstone Borough Council Local Plan Regulation 18 Consultation 2015

Leeds Parish Council note the scale of the Maidstone Borough Council Local Plan is as a result of the Governments pressure to want to build many more homes in the south east and that the Borough Council has had the difficult task of estimating the likely number that the Government will accept. Maidstone Borough Council is requiring us to consider a plan to build an estimated 18,600 homes in the Maidstone area by 2031.

We recognise this number will put an immense burden on both existing local communities and particularly rural ones, for the fear of them getting swallowed up and part of an expanding urban sprawl.

We wish rural villages to stay rural but we accept the wider community need for new homes too, so long as they are proportionate and that the adequate infrastructure is in place "First" to support them.

In addition to many new homes, comes many new homeowners and most with families. Most of these homes will have multiple cars per household too. If we take an average of 2 cars per household we are looking at up to an extra 37,200 cars by 2031 in the area. This huge influx of vehicles must therefore be accompanied with the right level of infrastructure investments, namely highways, to support the new homes. Without this the main town of Maidstone will grind to a halt through congestion and the health & wellbeing of local rural communities like ours in Leeds and our surrounding Parishes and communities will be affected and ruined.

Therefore our Parish Council calls on both Maidstone Borough Council and Kent County Council to work together and ensure we urgently have a Leeds-Langley relief road that can support; existing traffic, thousands of new home owners with their vehicles and of course the new jobs and businesses that will follow the growth in homes, that in itself will bring even more traffic.

It is not just our village that will be affected should these homes be built without a new Leeds-Langley relief road. In fact, both Leeds village and our neighbouring communities will also be significantly

adversely effected by thousands of new homes along the Sutton road such as nearby Parishes like; Otham, Langley, Sutton Valence, Broomfield & Kingswood, the new Parkwood estates, Headcorn, Willington Street etc and even out towards Boughton Monchelsea etc. They will all end up using the current B2163 through Leeds/Langley as a "rat-run" to the M20 Junction 8 or even worse using e.g. the back roads to and from Otham and Parkwood as short cuts e.g. Back Street or Caring Lane (both in Leeds Village). Or conversely, cars and HGVs and other traffic from the M20 J8 will want to access those homes and businesses in the Weald and that part of Maidstone that is covered via the Sutton Road and reached today by the B2163 and our side/back roads and through our village.

Therefore, any new housing development to the north, south, east and west of Maidstone will without doubt increase the traffic flow on the B2163 increasing pollution levels, vibration and further reducing the quality of life to the Leeds and Langley residents. Notwithstanding the deterioration to a classified "B road" that also has a 17tonne weight limit and has at least 3 natural pinch points throughout the short B2163 span of the village where the traffic is reduced to only one vehicle passing at any one time i.e. by the Leeds Castle bridge, at Upper Street opposite the playing fields and also at the George pub.

We will go further and strongly object to any such housing development proposals in the Maidstone Local Plan if they involve high density housing as projected and is then at odds with a low density rural setting that is not accompanied by a Leeds-Langley relief road.

We should inform you we have also begun an e-petition on the KCC website stating "**We the undersigned petition Kent County Council and Maidstone Borough Council to collaborate and provide and build a Leeds-Langley relief road as a matter of urgency**".

There is therefore a need for a detailed and phased infrastructure highways plan from Kent County Council that is needed to accompany the Maidstone Local Plan, showing how the increased traffic will be catered for, how the increased water, sewage, gas and electricity supplies will be made available notwithstanding medical and school facilities, before any house building can be considered and of course the inclusion of a Leeds-Langley relief road as a matter of urgency towards the early years of the Local Plans timeline.

Yours sincerely

S Babington

Mrs S Babington
Parish Clerk
Leeds Parish Council