

Key Points raised by CPRE Kent

1. Generally we are supportive of the Plan – its vision, objectives and general strategy of focusing development in the Thames Gateway part of the Borough (Sittingbourne & Sheppey).
2. We support the brownfield regeneration opportunities in and around Sittingbourne town centre and at Queenborough & Rushenden on Sheppey.
3. We accept the proposed housing target of 10,800 dwellings by 2031 and Swale's reasons for not seeking to accommodate the full objectively assessed housing need, which would have seen a higher target of at least 14,680 dwellings.
4. We consider, though, that the housing supply situation presented in the Plan is an underestimate, which gives some scope to remove some greenfield housing sites from the Plan – specifically land North of Key Street, Sittingbourne (30 dwellings) and land at NE Sittingbourne (106 dwellings).
5. We generally accept the major greenfield sites at NW Sittingbourne (1,370 dwellings and an unspecified amount of employment) and at Frogmal Lane, Teynham (260 dwellings and 26,840 sq.m of employment)
6. In Faversham we accept the proposed sites at the Western Link (240 dwellings) and Oare Gravel Workings (300 dwellings) – both brownfield – but continue to oppose the proposed greenfield mixed-use site at Lady Dane Farm, on the eastern side of the town (20,000 sq.m of employment and 200 dwellings). However, SBC has already resolved to grant permission for this. We oppose the suggested 2nd phase of development here.
7. We object to the proposed job target of 7,000 new jobs by 2031, considering this to be unachievable and the primary reason why the objectively assessed housing need figure is so high. We suggest a more achievable, but still challenging target of 4,000 jobs.
8. We suggest that the Crown Quay Lane site, next to Sittingbourne railway station should be mixed-use (office & residential) rather than just residential.
9. We object to a number of proposed greenfield employment sites, as we don't believe they are needed and they will be either damaging in landscape terms or impinge on a sensitive countryside gap:
 - Land south of Kemsley Mill, Sittingbourne (landscape);
 - Land at West Minster, Sheppey (landscape);
 - Land at Whiteway Road, Queenborough, Sheppey (landscape); and
 - Land north of Swale Way, part of the NW Sittingbourne mixed-use site (gap between Sittingbourne & Iwade).

10. We strongly object to continued commitment to the Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road in the form of a 'safeguarded area of search' around Bapchild for the final leg of the road. We do not believe that this section of the road is needed or justified and the area of search will cause long-term blight to the area.
11. We strongly object to the identification of the 'longer term development opportunities' at Sheerness Port, the Kent Science Park and for the Sittingbourne Southern Relief Road. This approach is seeking to get agreement for these projects in principle now without any specific proposals being put forward or evidence presented.
12. We object to the failure of the plan to take action to improve Junction 5 of the M2.
13. We object to the failure of the plan to be proactive in seeking a meaningful modal shift in transport.
14. We support most of the development management policies, and in particular welcome the recognition of tranquillity (this is the first Local Plan in Kent to recognise and embrace CPRE's work on this); the reinstatement of important local countryside gaps (a product of our earlier comments on the plan); the retention of designated areas of high landscape value; and the designation of a number of Local Green Spaces.
15. We consider that the Plan could be more positive on securing affordable housing.