

View Comment

Comment Information

Document Section Main Modifications to Ashford Local Plan
> Policy HOU3a - Residential windfall Dev...
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Comment ID MMLP/62

Respondent Ruckinge Parish Council (Steph...

Response Date 23 Oct 2018

Current Status Awaiting Processing

To be "Sound" a Plan should be Positively Prepared, Justified, Effective and Consistent with National Policy

Do you consider that this 'Main Modification' is sound? No

If you consider this 'Main Modification' to be unsound, on which grounds do you consider it so? Not justified

Please give details of why you consider this 'Main Modification' to be unsound in accordance with the tests above (if applicable)?

Comments on the Ashford Draft Pan.
We have the following comments to make on the plan; specifically, Policy HOU3a - Residential windfall Development within Settlements (MM60):
Amend Settlements listed in Policy HOU3a as follows:
Residential development and infilling of a scale that can be satisfactorily integrated into the existing settlement will be acceptable within the built-up confines of the following settlements:
Ashford, Aldington, Appledore, Appledore Heath, Bethersden, Biddenden, Bilsington, Boughton Lees/Eastwell, Brabourne Lees/Smeeth, Brook, Challock, Charing, Charing Heath, Chilham, Crundale Egerton, Egerton Forstal, Godmersham,

Great Chart, Hamstreet, Hastingleigh, High Halden, Hothfield, Kenardington, Kingsnorth*, Little Chart, Mersham, Molash, Newenden, Old Wives Lees, Pluckley, Pluckley Thorne, Pluckley Station, Rolvenden, Rolvenden Layne, Ruckinge, Sevington, Shadoxhurst, Shottenden, Smarden, Stone in Oxney, Tenterden (including St Michaels), Warehorne, Westwell, Wittersham, Woodchurch and Wye.

"There are also a number of rural settlements which are smaller and play a more 'secondary' role, yet they still have a limited number of community facilities and services.

- Ruckinge has no community facilities other than a village hall, scout hut and church – there are no shops or public amenities. Even our village pub has been converted into residential accommodation. Supporting infrastructure is basic and inefficient e.g. sewage system in Bromley Green Road. These settlements often rely on the services of the nearby primary settlements or the town of Ashford and are therefore relatively 'accessible' in a rural context.

- We note that our neighbouring village Bilsington, 2.24 miles from Aldington, has been classified as isolated enough to be excluded. Ruckinge is 3.2 miles from Hamstreet. We have even less facilities than Bilsington – they have a village pub. Within these settlements, appropriate smaller scale development is acceptable in principle although this should also take account of the cumulative effects of any allocated sites and any other developments with extant planning permission in the area. Due to the more limited access to services and settlement patterns, some of these smaller settlements are not considered suitable for edge of settlement growth and are only included in policy HOU3a as suitable locations for growth within the built up confines.

5.45 The Borough's remaining rural settlements not mentioned in policy HOU3a or HOU5 below are not considered to play a service centre or secondary role on account of their small size and their lack of services and facilities (or proximity to these services/facilities). The built form of the settlement is also an important factor when determining whether they are suitable for growth as many are smaller hamlets or linear settlements

and do not have opportunity for infilling within their settlement pattern. Residents of these settlements are typically reliant on the private car to meet all of their everyday needs. These settlements are considered to be countryside for the purposes of determining planning applications."

In summary, we can find no evidence of how Ruckinge parish has been assessed and categorised within section HOU3a of the draft plan; particularly in the context of the Landscape Protection Policy whose framework is acknowledged in the plan. We argue that we fall into the same category as our 'struck-off' neighbour, Bilsington, and ask why we have not been classified as same.

If you previously commented on the Local Plan, as a result of this 'Main Modification' do you wish to withdraw, replace or add to any previous comments?

Do you consider that this 'Main Modification' is Legally Compliant in accordance with the relevant regulations?

Please give details of why you consider that this 'Main Modification' is not legally compliant in accordance with the relevant regulations (if applicable).

Attachments