



**Tunbridge Wells
Borough Local Plan (2020 – 2038)**

**New Evidence Base Documents
Consultation Representation Form**

**Please use a separate sheet for each
representation**

Ref: (For official use only)
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Box 1:	
Name of the Local Plan Evidence Base Document to which this representation relates:	Post Hearing Stage 3 - Revised wording for Policy STR 1 - The Development Strategy (Sept 2024)

Completed forms must be received at our offices by **midnight on Wednesday 23rd October 2024.**

We encourage you to respond online using the consultation portal. Please note you do not have to sign in to respond via the portal: <https://consult.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/kse/>

Alternatively, you may email or scan forms to: LocalPlan@TunbridgeWells.gov.uk or send them by post to: Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, PLANNING POLICY, Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells, TN1 1RS

PART A – CONTACT DETAILS

Please note that representations must be attributable to named individuals or organisations. They will be available for public inspection and cannot be treated as confidential. Please also note that all comments received will be available for the public to view and cannot be treated as confidential. Data will be processed and held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations 2018.

	1. Personal Details	2. Agent Details (if applicable)
Title		
First Name		
Last Name		
Job title (where relevant)		
Organisation (where relevant)		Turley (obo Taylor Wimpey)
Address Line 1		
Address Line 2		

Address Line 3		
Address Line 4		
Postcode		
Telephone number		
Email address (where relevant)		████████████████████

PART B – YOUR REPRESENTATION
(Please use a separate sheet for each representation)

Name or Organisation	Taylor Wimpey
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3.	To which part of the document listed in Box 1 above does this representation relate to?	
Chapter and (if applicable) sub heading	Policy STR 1 - The Development Strategy – Main Modifications Version	
Paragraph number or appendix	Page 9-10	

4.	Do you consider the Evidence Base document on which you are commenting, makes the Borough Local Plan Submission Version (2020 – 2038) (please tick or cross as appropriate):				
4.1	Legally Compliant	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.2	Sound	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

5.	<p>Please give details of why you consider the Borough Local Plan Submission Version (2020 – 2038) is not legally compliant or unsound. Please be as precise as possible.</p> <p>If you wish to support the legal compliance or soundness of the Local Plan, please also use this box to set out your comments.</p> <p>The text box will automatically expand if necessary.</p>
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Paragraph 227 of the proposed consultation draft of NPPF (2024) confirms local plans that have been submitted for examination prior to the publication of the revised NPPF (+ one month), as is the case for TWBC, will be expected to commence plan-making in the new plan-making system ‘*at the earliest opportunity*’, where there is a shortfall in housing need greater than 200dpa between the adopted annual housing requirement, and the relevant published Local Housing Need figure.

The Main Modifications proposed by the Council to Policy STR1 confirms a housing requirement of 660dpa for the period to 2038. The Government’s consultation on a revised Local Housing Need calculation indicates the figure is currently 1,045dpa (>200dpa).

Whilst we await the final transitional arrangements and method in the update to NPPF and NPPG once published, we suggest an early review of the TWBC Local Plan should not be constrained to solely meeting the unmet objectively assessed housing need of the adopted plan to 2038. Under modified policy STR1, it will be approaching 3 years post adoption of this policy (8 years into the plan period) before an updated plan is submitted for examination.

In that time, it is reasonable to assume a revised NPPF and LHN calculation will have been published and will be material to such a review. In addition, unmet needs from adjoining LPAs will be better understood and known. All of which ought to be accounted for in the review of the Local Plan in accordance with the final version of NPPF once published.

In addition, the submitted Local Plan looks ahead over a 13-year period post anticipated adoption, rather than the minimum 15 years required to accord with paragraph 22 of NPPF (Sept 2023). Given the proposed early review will take at least three years to reach submission stage, 8 years into the plan period, we would suggest the review plan ought to revisit the end date of the plan period as well, ensuring this addresses the minimum of 15 years from the anticipated adoption of the review plan, as opposed to being limited to the period to 2038.

Finally, we note and share the concerns raised by others at the examination that whilst the policy is a statement of intent, it lacks consequences should it not be met. We note reference by some participants to exploring wording similar to Policy 1 of the adopted Bedford Local Plan 2030, which includes reference to Paragraph 11d of NPPF as a consequence of not delivering the policy.

For the reasons outlined above, we do not consider the revised policy wording for STR1 meets the Positively Prepared or Effective tests of soundness. It fails to meet objectively

assessed needs, over a plan period less than the minimum of 15 years post adoption, and seeks a review mechanism that would not in our view remedy these deficiencies.

However, we commend the Council for seeking to find a cost effective and proportional response to the plan's shortcomings, enabling the Council to progress to adopt a Local Plan in the interim, and deliver the allocations within it that are urgently needed in this borough. As a result, we suggest an alternative wording to Policy STR1 to assist; and would welcome the opportunity to engage further with the Council on this and the subsequent review of this Local Plan in due course.

Please set out what modification(s) you consider necessary to make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound, having regard to the Matter you have identified at Section 5 (above) where this relates to legal compliance or soundness.

6. You will need to say why this modification will make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording of any policy or text. Please be as precise as possible.

The text box will automatically expand if necessary.

For reasons set out above, we would suggest the following **modifications** to the Councils Revised Wording for Policy STR1 – The Development Strategy, as set out at pages 9-10 of TWBC post hearing document entitled '*Post Hearing Stage 3 - Revised wording for Policy STR 1 - The Development Strategy (September 2024)*':

Policy STR 1 - The Development Strategy

The broad development strategy for Tunbridge Wells borough over the period 2020-2038, as shown indicatively on the Key Diagram (Figure 5), is to ensure that a minimum of ~~12,204~~ **11,880** dwellings and 14 hectares of employment (Use Classes B and E) land are developed, together with supporting infrastructure and services. **The strategy of this plan provides for a housing supply for the first 10 years post adoption of the plan period with employment and other development including necessary supporting infrastructure, but with a requirement for an early focussed review of the plan to secure levels of growth that accord with government policy for the period beyond this. ~~supply housing and other requisite development and supporting infrastructure for the final 5 years of the plan period.~~**

To achieve this, the Local Plan:

1. Promotes the effective use of urban and previously developed ("brownfield") land, having due regard to relevant Plan policies;
2. Looks to focus new development within the Limits to Built Development of settlements, as defined on the Policies Map, where proposals accord with other relevant

policies of this Plan;

3. Provides for the growth of settlements, having regard to their role and function, constraints and opportunities, together with the ~~development of two strategic sites, namely:~~ a major, transformational expansion of Paddock Wood (including land at east Capel), following garden settlement principles and providing flood risk solutions; and ~~b. the creation of a new garden settlement – Tudeley Village between Paddock Wood and Tonbridge;~~
4. Includes an ~~a~~ buffer to allow ~~ance~~ for potential delays or non-delivery of sites;
5. Provides for a prestigious new business park to the north of North Farm/Kingstanding Way, Royal Tunbridge Wells, well connected to the improved A21;
6. Provides a framework for the preparation of a holistic Area Plan for Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Centre;
7. Provides for some reductions in the area of the Green Belt, notably for **land in east Capel (adjacent to Paddock Wood) the strategic sites** and around Royal Tunbridge Wells and Pembury, where exceptional circumstances warrant **this release of land from the Green Belt** and where an effective long-term Green Belt is maintained;
8. Limits development within the High Weald **National Landscape Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty** to that which can be accommodated whilst still conserving its key characteristics, this being mostly small-scale, only promoting larger proposals where exceptional circumstances are demonstrated;
9. Normally limits development in the countryside (being defined as that outside the Limits to Built Development) to that which accords with specific policies of this Plan and/or that for which a rural location is fully demonstrated to be necessary.

Early Partial Review of the Local Plan

Following adoption of the Local Plan, the Council will publish an update to its Local Development Scheme (LDS). This shall set out a timetable for a partial early review of the Local Plan, which shall commence within six months of adoption of the Local Plan. The LDS shall provide an indicative timescale for submission of an updated Local Plan for Examination, to take place no later than 30 months from commencement of the early review of the Local Plan. The Council shall then undertake the early review which shall include investigation of ways of meeting **identified unmet housing needs until the end of the plan period (2038). levels of growth that accord with government policy, beyond the 10-year period currently planned for post adoption of the plan.**

The early review shall be conducted with the objective of securing sustainable development to:

(1) meeting as a minimum the Council's unmet objectively assessed housing need for the 15 year ~~the~~ period post adoption of the Local Plan ~~to the end of the plan period (2038)~~, including unmet housing needs for Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Show People, and

(2) provide other requisite development (including such employment development as may be necessary) and supporting infrastructure to meet the needs of the population for the whole of the plan period; and where it is practical to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development, the unmet needs of adjoining authorities; and beyond.

7.	<p>Please use this box for any other comments you wish to make.</p> <p>The text box will automatically expand if necessary.</p>
	<p>The revisions our client proposes relate specifically to the period 10 years post adoption, in the context of seeking to plan for growth that accords with government policy for the period beyond this. We are content to retain the Councils suggested 36-month timeframe for the review in that context. However, if the Council and PINS are minded for the partial review to only address the shortfalls of the plan to 2038, we would suggest the period for such a partial review is much shorter, and aligned to the 18-month period the current consultation version of NPPF suggests for plans in similar circumstances that have reached Reg 19 stage.</p>

8.	<p>If your representation is seeking a modification, do you consider it necessary to participate at the examination hearing session when it takes place? (please tick or cross as appropriate)</p>	
	No , I do not wish to participate at the examination hearing session	X
	Yes , I wish to participate at the examination hearing session	

9.	If you wish to participate at the examination hearing when it takes place, please outline why you consider this to be necessary:
N/A	

Please note the Inspector will determine the most appropriate procedure to adopt to hear those who have indicated that they wish to participate at the examination hearing session.

Please note your representation should cover succinctly all the information, evidence and supporting information necessary to support/justify the representation and the suggested modification, as there will not normally be a subsequent opportunity to make further representations based on the original representation at later stages.

After this stage, further submissions will be only at the request of the Inspector, based on the matters and issues he identifies for examination.

Signature		Date	17 th October 2024
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