

Public Consultation on Tunbridge Wells Borough Council's Local Plan: New Evidence Base Documents – summary and response table for comments on the Revised Policy Wording and Supporting Text for Policy STR 1 (PS_109)

Rep No	Consultee Name	Consultee Organisation	Agent Name	Agent Organisation	Document(s) commented on	Proposed Modifications	Comment Summary	TWBC Response	Hearing Session Participation (and reason for participation)
NEBD4-2	Sean Hanna	Natural England			PS_109	Natural England recommends that the Plan is amended to include specific reference to the enhanced landscape duty, either within an overarching landscape policy or in relevant site allocation policies. This will ensure that the Plan complies with the enhanced duty in relation to protected landscapes.	<p>Unsure on both Legal Compliance and Soundness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural England highlights that Policy STR1 (8) limits development within the High Weald National Landscape to mostly small-scale projects, with larger proposals only in exceptional circumstances. Recommends amending the Plan to reflect the enhanced landscape duty under Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, as amended by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, which emphasises the relevant authorities to 'seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area'. If an overarching landscape policy is not amended, Natural England suggests updating Policy STR 1 to incorporate this enhanced duty. 	As noted by Natural England matters may be covered by an overarching landscape policy. For this Plan that overarching policy is EN19 High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which is already proposed to be modified to refer to the revised statutory duty.	No, I do not wish to participate at the examination hearing session.
NEBD6-2		Castle Hill Developments Ltd	Mr Douglas Bond	Woolf Bond Planning LTD	PS_109	<p>As indicated in the accompanying statement, the necessary changes to the introductory section of the policy together with that concerning the review of the Plan are amended as follows (deletions shown struck through and additions underlined).:</p> <p>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 12,0061 dwellings <u>(at least 667 dwellings annually)</u> 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 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 supply housing and other requisite development and supporting infrastructure for the final 5 years of the plan period.</p> <p>Early Partial Review of the Local Plan Following adoption of the Local Plan, the Council will publish an update to its Local</p>	<p>Legally compliant but unsound</p> <p>It is essential that any review of the Plan is not arbitrarily constrained in its consideration of options through the contents of the current plan.</p> <p>The narrow focus of the review proposed through STR 1 would be inconsistent with the emerging national guidance detailed in the draft NPPF 2024.</p> <p>The direction regarding the approach to the Green Belt and housing targets in the draft NPPF will be important factors informing the review of the Local Plan and whether the factors considered in preparing the current one remain valid. This is especially relevant with respect to the suggested reference to Tudeley as an option for growth, where the draft NPPF emphasises the role of the 'grey belt' in sustainable locations.</p> <p>Assuming the draft NPPF is confirmed without significant changes, any review of the Local Plan will need to review the potential grey belt options before the option of Tudeley can be assessed.</p> <p>Therefore, we despite that there should be any reference to Tudeley as an option for the review. It</p>	<p>TWBC considers that the Local Plan review will not be narrow in focus. It will seek to meet its housing and other growth needs including supporting infrastructure based on the relevant housing growth figure applicable at the time of the review. This might be the recent OAN figure (1,045 per annum) consulted upon through the 2024 NPPF consultation, including proposed changes to the Standard Method. It is noted that currently, whilst clearly an indication of the direction of travel, this is not yet Government Policy.</p> <p>In conducting the early review, should the Government proceed with proposals for the 'Grey Belt' then TWBC would clearly seek to identify 'Grey Belt' land and give consideration as to how this could contribute to any future growth strategy, having firstly considered the contribution of brownfield sites.</p> <p>It is recognised however that the extent of 'Grey Belt' land in the borough might be limited given the extent to which the borough's Green Belt also lies within the designated High Weald National</p>	Yes, I wish to participate at the examination hearing session - As explained in the accompanying statement, it is important to appear given the importance of addressing the issues regarding the review of the plan, as previously stated through the contributions at earlier sessions.

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						<p>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 <u>consistent with national policy to which shall include investigation of ways of meeting identified unmet housing needs over the relevant until the end of the plan period (2038)</u>. The early review shall be conducted with the objective of securing sustainable development to:</p> <p>(1) meeting the Council's unmet objectively assessed housing need for a the period <u>extending at least 15 years post its adoption of the Local Plan to the end of the plan period (2038)</u>, including unmet housing needs for Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Show People, and</p> <p>(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 beyond.</p> <p>We also consider that the suggest additional paragraphs 4.49 to 4.57 are not included, especially given that the Inspector confirmed (as noted in draft paragraph 4.53) that the site of the suggested Tudeley village had "high" harm to Green Belt purposes if released. Such a conclusion means that the land cannot qualify as "grey belt" as currently defined in the glossary of the draft NPPF. In such instances, it cannot be detailed as a preferred location for consideration through any review, as this would conflict with national policy.</p>	<p>would also be appropriate to undertake a wholesale, rather than partial, review of the Local Plan consistent with the requirements of the new NPPF.</p> <p>As explained in [representation NEBD6-2] the overall housing requirement should also be maintained as a minimum of 667 dwellings annually, rather than the 660 now proposed.</p>	<p>Landscape (over 70 % of the Green Belt is also National Landscape). If the borough's OAN is confirmed as 1,045 dwellings per annum, this is a challenge and it needs to be recognised that in order to meet this need in full, then it could be necessary, subject to exceptional circumstances being demonstrated, to release further green belt sites (after having considered other non- Green Belt, greenfield sites).</p> <p>In conducting a future call for sites, and identifying other land for assessment, the Council would seek to robustly assess all sites based on their own merits – reflected at the proposed para 4.57 set out within document PS_109. This includes Tudeley Village should it be submitted to the future Call for Sites.</p> <p>The Local Plan review will be undertaken consistent with national policy and as such the suggested modifications to Policy STR 1 and its supporting text are not considered necessary to ensure this Local Plan is sound.</p> <p>The plan period will remain a 15-year period to cover development management policies and other strategies.</p>	
NEBD9-9		Redrow and Persimmon	Judith Ashton	Judith Ashton Associates	PS_109		<p>Legal compliance and soundness not stated</p> <p>Concerned the housing buffer is now very small, and to ensure an effective plan TWBC will need to work with those promoting all allocations to ensure their timely delivery.</p>	<p>TWBC has worked with site promoters throughout the plan-making process and will continue to do so. The key focus of the early Local Plan review will be to find additional land/ site allocations to help meet the housing growth (and requisite infrastructure) needs of the borough. This continued engagement will help secure the timely delivery of site allocations, many of which in the Submission Local Plan now</p>	Not stated.

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								already benefit from planning consent or a committee resolution to grant planning consent subject to necessary S106 agreements being completed.	
NEBD15-8	Louise Goldsmith	Capel Parish Council			PS_109	4.57 Supporting text: Delete “The findings in respect of Tudeley Village set out above mean that...” Start sentence “In carrying out...” The above findings also relate to the reduced amount of development at east Capel Paddock Wood and might lead an observer to conclude the council favours future development in Tudeley as no other site has been named.	Legal compliance and soundness not stated [TWBC: see column – Proposed Modifications]	TWBC does not consider this modification to be necessary for soundness reasons but would make this change to para 4.57 set out in PS 109 should the Inspector feel it necessary.	Not stated.
NEBD19-3		B.Yond Strategic Ltd	David Neame	Neame Sutton	PS_109		Legally non-compliant and unsound [TWBC: comments to be read in conjunction with those in the table for PS_107 – Five Year Housing Land Supply Action Note] When should the Council's 10 Year Plan Period commence from? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council sets out an updated housing delivery trajectory (PS 107 also known as TWLP/153) that clearly marks the years 1-18 for the overall Plan period. Year 1 commences in 2020/21, which is reflected in the revised wording to Policy STR1. The Council's housing delivery trajectory therefore works on the basis that the 10 year period runs from 2020 – 2030 i.e. there will only be 5 years of the period left at the proposed point of adoption. In effect at the point of adoption the Plan will only have 5-years worth of planned housing growth left which is high risk not supported by the National policy. Does Policy STR1 identify the Correct housing delivery figure? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council cannot include a requirement to deliver a minimum of 11,880 dwellings over the 18 year period 2020 – 2038, whilst at the same time confirming that the most the Plan can deliver is 10,983 dwellings [see trajectory on page 10 of Appendix 1 of PS 107 known as TWLP/153]. The most that Policy STR1 therefore is capable of delivering is 1,000 dwellings less than the minimum. This should be stated in express terms within 	This is incorrect. The Plan's Plan Period runs from 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2038 (a total of 10 years). The Council's proposed strategy is to meet the housing needs over a 10-year period post-adoption of the Local Plan (i.e., 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2035). This would therefore ensure that the identified housing need within the borough would be fully met for the period from 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2035 as the Council will have regard to any shortfall or surplus in delivery since the base date of the Local Plan. The shortfall of 897 dwellings by the end of the Plan period is noted. However, the Council's proposed strategy is to meet the identified housing need 10-years post-adoption in full, with an immediate review of the Local Plan post-adoption which will seek to meet the needs for the remainder of the Plan period. Given that the housing supply position changes annually, and that a Local Plan review will be immediate post-adoption, it is not deemed appropriate nor necessary to specify any current identified shortfall.	Yes, I wish to participate at the examination hearing session - as the matters raised in these representations are of a detailed and technical nature and flow from previous representations and verbal evidence provided at the earlier sessions for the EiP. B.Yond therefore wishes to address the Inspector directly on the matters raised in these representations and to provide further verbal evidence.

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							<p>the policy so that minimum shortfall at the point of adoption is clear.</p> <p>Does the Proposed Early Review Mechanism Work?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council's early partial review mechanism for housing policy, as outlined in Policy STR1, is unworkable and outdated due to the new National Planning Policy Framework due to published around the end of 2024. The Council is in a difficult position because the Plan's examination has taken so long that the national planning system has overtaken it. The current Plan, if adopted, will not meet the new Government's objectives to significantly boost housing supply nationally which has indicated a change to the standard method and an increase in the LHN from 660 to 1045 dpa. Policy STR1 makes no reference to this. Concerns about the partial review where the Council is clear that other than addressing unmet housing needs, all other policies would remain applicable for the entire plan period 2020 – 2038 (<i>para 4.56 of PS 109 – Revised Wording for Policy STR 1</i>). Irrespective of the new NPPF position, the out-of-date evidence base back in 2018/2019 would make it unworkable. There is uncertainty about whether continuing with the current Plan is the most efficient way forward for Tunbridge Wells. A new Plan that accounts for the new planning system will be required immediately upon adoption of the current Plan, potentially rendering the current Plan out-of-date. 	<p>TWBC considers that the Local Plan review mechanism is workable. It will seek to meet its housing and other growth needs including supporting infrastructure based on the relevant housing growth figure applicable at the time of the review.</p> <p>This might be the recent OAN figure (1,045 per annum) recently consulted upon through the 2024 NPPF consultation, including proposed changes to the Standard Method. It is noted that currently, whilst clearly an indication of the direction of travel, this is not yet Government Policy.</p> <p>Policy STR 1 sets out that the early partial review will include ways of meeting unmet housing needs until the end of the plan period. Criterion (1) indicates this will be to meet unmet housing and G&T need, and (2) provide other requisite development and supporting infrastructure to meet the needs of the population. The current issue with the plan is unmet housing need, however the policy does not limit the area of exploration, including what evidence may or may not be out of date.</p> <p>TWBC considers that continuing with the current Plan is appropriate. It will enable a 10-year, planned supply of housing growth, ensuring the Council has the required five-year housing land supply. This would reduce ad-hoc planning applications and 'planning by appeal', whilst providing a more up to date suite of Development Management Policies. The alternative would be to withdraw the Plan which has been in preparation and the subject of significant local engagement, and which would result in a significant delay in enabling the Council to have an adopted plan in place, creating uncertainty for communities and all users of the Plan. The Examination is so far advanced that this would not be a sensible outcome.</p>	

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NEBD20-11		Save Capel			PS_109	<p><i>[TWBC: see policy wording concerns and proposed modifications where applicable from Save Capel (SC) as below]</i></p> <p>Policy STR 1 - The Development Strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The revised policy STR 1 now proposed is unclear, inconsistent with other documents in the consultation. The explanation of the plan period in the second sentence is misleading and not consistent with the other evidence submitted for this consultation. <p><i>Opening paragraph</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The housing supply evidence Housing Needs and Supply (PS_107 – para 4.54) makes it clear that the strategy is to demonstrate “...a 10-year housing land supply can be achieved <u>post-adoption</u>. The Council will then aim to meet the needs beyond the 10-year <u>supply period</u> by way of an <u>immediate Local Plan review</u>”. <i>[TWBC: Emphasis added by SC]</i> However, STR 1 refers to the plan period which is misleading. The post-adoption period is also referenced in the Gypsy & Traveller evidence (PS_094 – para 8) as “...To the end of the 10-year supply period proposed in the emerging Plan (i.e., to 31 March 2035)”. For consistency, the review should be described as “immediate” rather than “early”, and SC considers that the wording could be clearer and more concise with a submission of the review for examination within 30 months of this Plan’s adoption. SC proposes MMs to the policy wording: <p><i>[TWBC: strike through: suggested removal; bolded and underlined: suggested addition]</i></p> <p>“The strategy of this plan provides for a housing supply for the first 10 years <u>after its adoption (i.e., to 31 March 2035)</u> of the plan period with employment and other development</p>	<p>Unsound, legal compliance not stated</p> <p>Need for an early review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Save Capel (SC) has serious concerns about the claimed “need for an early review” of the plan, and to take such an approach would undermine the entire purpose of this examination. The Council’s updated housing supply projections show a shortfall of approximately 1,000 dwellings. Therefore, an early review is proposed to address this shortfall, which SC believes should have been addressed already. SC state that there are multiple causes for the shortfall: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Draft allocations</u>: up to 900 dwellings should have been re-assessed after being removed from the Submission Plan. Examples of broad approximate reductions (<i>compared Reg 18 Draft Local Plan - para 3.9 with PSLP - Para 3.58 and PS_054 – pg.68</i>) by parish are – Cranbrook 340; Sissinghurst 70; Hawkhurst 380; Brenchley & Matfield 60; Lamberhurst 30 which would make a notable contribution. <u>Tudeley Village</u>: SC supports the deletion of Tudeley Village due to its unsustainability for strategic development. <u>Strategic allocation</u>: approximately 1,000 dwellings reduction due to compliance with flood risk policy. <u>Alternatives</u>. The Council has done the minimum it considers necessary in order to try and comply with the Inspector’s findings. The Council has only reviewed a limited range of sites in its Stage 3 Green Belt, which SC considers insufficient. SC considers that there remains insufficient evidence to justify the progression of the Plan with an early review. Emerging revised NPPF and national planning policy would necessitate an immediate review of the development plan. 	<p>The Council’s commitment to an early review of the Plan and the reasons for this have previously been considered under MIQs relating to the Stage 3 Hearing Sessions. It has been considered by Matter 1, Issue 3 Proposed Strategy and Early Review, and the hearing session held on 18 June 2024. This is also addressed in the Council’s hearing statement (document TWLP/118).</p> <p>This point was discussed at the Stage 3 hearings. The Council undertook a review of reasonable alternatives as part of the Green Belt Stage 3 work.</p> <p>Point noted.</p> <p>Point noted.</p> <p>The entire list of submitted sites were reviewed as part of the SHELAA process, and sites that were acceptable were included/considered.</p> <p>The Council has provided evidence to justify progress with an early review based on the Councils development strategy.</p> <p>Consultation on the NPPF by the government has not resulted in any changes to national policy. Should changes be made they will be reflected at the point the Council undertakes its review</p>	<p>Yes, I wish to participate at the examination hearing session - SC intends to continue to participate fully in any remaining stages of the Local Plan’s review and will seek to make formal representations in any future hearings during which the issues raised in this representation are discussed.</p>

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						<p>including necessary supporting infrastructure, but with a requirement for an immediate early focussed review of the plan to supply housing and other requisite development and supporting infrastructure for the remainder final 5 years of the plan period “.</p> <p><i>Para 2</i> SC recommends modifications to Policy STR 1 include the word “proportionate”: “Looks to focus proportionate 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.”</p> <p><i>Para 4</i> SC considers that “<i>Includes a buffer to allow for potential delays or non-delivery of sites</i>” is not supported by evidence. The buffer proposed of (200 dwellings or 2.02%) as stated in the housing paper is not adequate.</p> <p><i>Para 7</i> SC suggests that “some” is replaced with “significant” to give perspective as follows... “Provides for significant some reductions in the area of the Green Belt...”.</p> <p><i>Para 9</i> SC is unclear what “...<i>rural location is fully demonstrated to be necessary</i>” means and seeks clarification in policy on this.</p> <p><i>Early Partial Review of the Local Plan</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To use the term “immediate review” for consistency with this and other modifications proposed by the Council, as outlined above • Considers a clearer and more concise wording for the review within 30 months, with a requirement of a call for sites. • Hence, suggested revised wording <i>[TWBC: text formatted as seen in the representation]:</i> “<u>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 review of the Local Plan to achieve its submission for Examination</u>” 	<p><i>[TWBC: see policy wording concerns and proposed modifications where applicable in the previous column – Proposed Modifications]</i></p>	<p>of the local plan which will be in accordance with policy STR1.</p>	

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						<p><u>within 30 months of this Plan's adoption. The review shall include investigation of ways of meeting identified unmet housing needs, through a new call for sites across the whole Borough, until the end of the plan period (2038) “.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommends adding “proportionate” as follows... “The early review shall be conducted with the objective of securing proportionate sustainable development to...”. • To ensure the Partial Review is Positively Prepared, STR 1 should also clarify that “all reasonable options are objectively considered including revised spatial strategies with proportionate development across the Borough”. <p>Supporting text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SC has serious concerns with the proposed supporting text in PS_109 and highlights the many factors that have resulted in the shortfall of housing [TWBC: see the causes of shortfall in the next column – Column Summary]. It is fundamentally not just about Tudeley Village. • The supporting text continues to imply a pre-determined outcome to re-introduce Tudeley Village rather than an open-minded investigation of more sustainable alternatives. <p><i>A series of MMs are proposed:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Para 4.49 include “The Council's response was to remove Tudeley Village and reduce the scale of development at the strategic sites in Paddock Wood and Capel”. • Para 4.51 should be deleted as the allocation is not in the Submission Local Plan. • Para 4.52 amended “The Tudeley Village site is located...”. • Para 4.54 / 4.55 should be deleted. • Para 4.56 is accepted although the review should be “immediate” for consistency. 			

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						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Para 4.57 proposed wording is unacceptable as it refers solely to Tudeley Village when there are also other reasons for the housing shortfall, hence recommends modification as follows: "The findings in respect of Tudeley Village set out above mean that in carrying out the early review of the Local Plan, The the Council will identify and assess reasonable options for meeting unmet housing needs, and without prejudice to any decisions made about a future development strategy to meet this unmet need, will consider, all reasonable sites put forward through a Borough-wide 'Call for Sites' and other land identified by the Council to be assessed as part of the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) process". 			
NEBD21-1	Mrs Nichola Watters	Wealden District Council			PS_109	<p>None as stated in the representation form.</p> <p><i>[TWBC: However, WDC considers in particular to Policy AL/RTW 19 that there may be merit in adding criteria similar to those in Policy AL/RTW 16 (criterion 10), at least to the supporting text. Please see detail in the respective table for Policy AL/RTW 19]</i></p> <p><i>[TWBC: also see the next column – Comment Summary]</i></p>	<p>Legally compliant and sound <i>[TWBC: Applied to the whole Policy STR 1 as stated in the representation form</i></p> <p><i>Also see comments with regard to the below in the respective response tables:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gypsy, Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Needs Assessment (PS_093 and PS_094) - Policy AL/RTW 19 (PS_108) - Others out of the scope of the Consultation: Policy AL/RTW 16] <p><u>Overall comments on Policy STR 1 – the Development Strategy</u> Wealden District Council (WDC) and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC) have signed a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) to ensure legal compliance and cooperation. This agreement confirms that the Regulation 19 Tunbridge Wells Borough Pre-Submission Local Plan does not present any new cross-boundary strategic issues beyond those already addressed.</p> <p>In terms of development strategy, WDC acknowledges the necessity of the adjustments, in light of the Inspector's Initial Findings from November 2022, which involve removing the</p>	<p>This is noted. TWBC has engaged with Wealden District Council through-out the plan-making process, and will continue to do so, including in the context of proposed/future reforms to the planning system, and respective Local Plans (with engagement including with respective County Councils as needed).</p>	<p>No, I do not wish to participate at the examination hearing session.</p>

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							<p>Tudeley Village allocation and reducing growth at Paddock Wood. As a result, the Plan addresses housing needs for only the initial 10-year period, rather than the full 15 years.</p> <p>In more strategic terms, WDC welcomes the commitment to an early partial review of the Plan, as outlined in the revised Policy STR 1 and its supporting text. This includes a review within six months of the Local Plan's adoption and submission of an updated Plan within 30 months. WDC looks forward to collaborating with TWBC on these matters, particularly regarding how the needs are met within the Borough. WDC also urges early engagement on any Green Belt Review required for the new Local Plan and potential changes arising from the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) expected later this year or early next year.</p> <p>The updated evidence base documents, which include assessments of flood risk, viability, highways, education, and infrastructure, have been welcomed by Wealden District Council (WDC) to ensure a sound and compliant Plan. WDC is committed to constructive engagement with Kent County Council (KCC) and East Sussex County Council (ESCC) on these matters. They look forward to developing an updated Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) to address strategic planning issues. The new evidence base documents do not raise new cross-boundary strategic issues for WDC, and the Council is satisfied that the duty to cooperate has been met. WDC anticipates further discussions during the early review of the Plan.</p>		
NEBD24-9	Mr Nigel De Wit	National Highways				<p>We do not consider that any further modifications are required to this policy to make it sound in the context of the wider Local Plan.</p>	<p>Legally compliant and sound</p> <p>We are content the revised wording appropriately responds to the revised development strategy and note the commitment to a focussed early review of the plan.</p> <p>In combination with the monitor and manage strategy established in the IDP, this will enable any necessary adjustments to the mitigations proposed in the current Local Plan. However, for the avoidance of doubt, we are satisfied with the submitted technical work, subject to the agreed mitigations being implemented in accordance with</p>	<p>This is noted.</p>	<p>National Highways does not have any matters to raise in relation to this document which we wish to discuss at the hearing session. However, should the Inspector wish representatives of National</p>

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							the timescales established in Policy STR/SS 1 and reflected in the IDP.		Highways to attend to facilitate discussion on matters or points raised by other responses to this consultation, we will be happy to do so.
NEBD26-1		Taylor Wimpey	Ryan Johnson	Turley	Policy STR1	<p>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)':</p> <p>Policy STR 1 - The Development Strategy</p> <p>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 42,204 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.</p> <p>To achieve this, the Local Plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Promotes the effective use of urban and previously developed ("brownfield") land, having due regard to relevant Plan policies; 	<p>Unsound, legal compliance not stated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 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. The end period for the post adoption Local Plan review should also take this into account ensuring the minimum of 15 years (currently required) from the anticipated adoption of the review plan is applied, as opposed to being limited to the period to 2038. Note (and share concerns raised by others at the examination) that whilst the policy is a statement of intent, it lacks consequences should it not be met. (Reference made to Policy 1 of the adopted Bedford Local Plan 2030 - consequence of not delivering the policy). Revised policy wording for STR1 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 remedy these deficiencies. Proposed modifications to the policy are suggested. 	<p>Policy STR 1 sets out that the early partial review will include ways of meeting unmet housing needs until the end of the plan period 2038. Criterion (1) indicates this will be to meet unmet housing and G&T need, and (2) provide other requisite development and supporting infrastructure to meet the needs of the population. The current issue with the plan is unmet housing need, however the policy does not limit the area of exploration, including what evidence may or may not be out of date.</p> <p>As set out in the Stage 3 Hearings the effectiveness of the plan upon its adoption will be based on whether the policies maintain the necessary 5 year housing land supply position, and whether the Housing Delivery test is met. If the LPA does not meet these requirements then national sanctions will be applied. Therefore, there is absolutely no need for Policy STR1 to stray into policy areas which are set nationally at paragraphs 75 and 76 of the NPPF.</p> <p>Paragraph 68 of the NPPF only requires a) specific, deliverable sites for years 1-5, b) specific, deliverable sites <u>OR</u> broad areas for growth for years 6-10, and only where possible sites for years 11-15 of the plan.</p>	No, I do not wish to participate at the examination hearing session.

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						<p>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;</p> <p>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;</p> <p>4. Includes a buffer to allowance for potential delays or non-delivery of sites;</p> <p>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;</p> <p>6. Provides a framework for the preparation of a holistic Area Plan for Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Centre;</p> <p>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;</p> <p>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;</p> <p>9. Normally limits development in the countryside (being defined as that outside the</p>			

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						<p>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.</p> <p><u>Early Partial Review of the Local Plan</u> 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.</p> <p>The early review shall be conducted with the objective of securing sustainable development to:</p> <p>(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</p> <p>(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.</p>			

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						The proposed revisions 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.			
NEBD34	Mrs Elizabeth Strang				PS_109	To remove the site AL/RTW 5 from their local plan as it is not <i>Grey Belt</i> , its inclusion was not and is not <i>soundly compliant</i> and (Para 9) there are no exceptional circumstances whatsoever to justify removal of Green Belt status from the sit	<p>Legally non-compliant and unsound</p> <p>Policy STR 1 - Para 1 and 7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site AL/RTW 5 (Caenwood Farm) which, as TWBC themselves admitted, was not soundly or legally dealt with by them, in that proper notice was not given to those in the area of the inclusion of the site in the TWBC Plan, nor at the meeting when the plan was passed were many of the councillors themselves in possession of these facts. Given that I see that TWBC wishes to promote "brownfield" sites (Para 1) and also, following Government guidelines, wishes only to develop Grey Belt sites and should protect Green Belt, this would seem an ideal time to rectify this unsound decision above. 	<p>The Councils approach to the strategy for development is set out within the Development Strategy Topic Paper (CD 3.126) and the Development Strategy Topic Paper Addendum (PS_054). It is acknowledged in the SLP that allocation AL/RTW 5 – Land at Caenwood Farm, Royal Tunbridge Wells includes land within the designated Green Belt on the edge of Royal Tunbridge Wells. The rationale for the allocations is set out within Hearing Statement TWLP/037 and was discussed in detail at the Stage 2 Hearing sessions on the 17 of June 2022.</p> <p>The term 'Grey Belt' is referred to within the Government's recent consultation on the amendments to the NPPF. The amendments are not yet confirmed and so are not currently part of government policy.</p>	No, I do not wish to participate at the examination hearing session.
NEBD38-2		The Hadlow Estate	Jonathan Coulson	Turnberry Consulting Limited	PS_109	<p><i>[TWBC: Two options for the proposed wordings to be included are bolded and underlined. For detailed reasons, see next column - Comment Summary]</i></p> <p>Option 1: to include following text at the end of the "Early Partial Review of the Local Plan" in Policy STR 1</p>	<p>Legally compliant but unsound</p> <p>Policy STR 1 - supporting text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Estate acknowledges the proposal to remove Tudeley Garden Village from the Development Strategy, noting that the Council's current evidence base PS_035 confirms the absence of better/preferable alternatives to meet housing needs. 	Point noted.	Yes, I wish to participate at the examination hearing session - To explain in more detail how the proposed amendments to Policy STR 1

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						<p><u>“The partial review will consider all reasonable alternative ways of meeting identified unmet housing needs. Given the timescales for the partial review process, reasonable alternatives will be defined with reference to the existing Local Plan evidence base and will not need to include site already assessed and rejected.”</u></p> <p>Option 2: to include following text at the end of the “Early Partial Review of the Local Plan” in Policy STR 1</p> <p><u>“The partial review will consider all reasonable alternative ways of meeting identified unmet housing needs. Reasonable alternatives will be defined with reference to the following criteria:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Located beyond the High Weald National Landscape area;</u> <u>Reasonable proximity to Tonbridge, Paddock Wood and Royal Tunbridge Wells;</u> <p><u>Alternatives which do not meet these criteria will not be considered reasonable.”</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The estate consider the evidence base ‘up-to-date’ for the purpose of plan-making. The Estate emphasises the necessity of an early partial review of the Plan, most notably complying with the requirement to consider all ‘reasonable alternative’ ways of meeting unmet housing needs (and other development needs). Two options for defining ‘reasonable alternatives’ for sites are proposed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Option 1 limits the review only to new sites not previously submitted or assessed, alongside any outstanding technical assessments of Tudeley Garden Village. Option 2 is based on the definition set out at para 4.51 to clarify the criteria for reasonable alternatives, including the proximity to key locations and the ability to support comprehensive facilities, also beyond the High Weald National Landscape. The sites should be capable of being planned in a coordinated, master-planned way, with a distinctive identity. <p>As such STR 1 wording as modifications proposed [TWBC: see previous column – Proposed Modifications]</p>	<p>We note that Turnberry consider the Council’s evidence to be up-to-date.</p> <p>Proposed modifications to policy STR1 set out the requirements for an early review of the plan.</p> <p>The Council will identify and assess reasonable options for meeting unmet housing needs, as set out in the revised supporting text of policy STR1, following an appropriate level of public engagement including a call for sites, and which will not discount reasonable sites which come forward as part of that process irrespective of location.</p>	will make the plan sound.
NEBD39-8	Stephanie Holt-Castle	Kent County Council (KCC)			PS_109		<p>Legal compliance and soundness not stated</p> <p><u>PS 109 Revised wording for Policy STR1 – The Development Strategy</u></p> <p>PRoW The County Council supports references to modal shift and off-road connectivity in the Development Strategy but requests more focus on pedestrian routes and the PRoW Network.</p>	There are Development Management Policies in the Plan which adequately address the matter of pedestrian routes and PRoW. Specifically, these are policies EN1 Sustainable Design, and TP 2 Transport Design and Accessibility.	Not stated.
NEBD42-9	Carol Williams	Paddock Wood Town Council	Troy Hayes	Troy Planning + Design	PS_109		<p>Legally non-compliant and unsound</p> <p>Supporting Text Unclear whether this is an addition to the existing text in the submission plan.</p> <p>Paragraph 4.57 – wording regarding Tudeley reads as if it is a foregone conclusion that a new</p>	Document PS_109 proposes main modifications to the wording of policy STR1 following on from detailed discussions at the Stage 3 Hearings. The supporting text wording is proposed as additional to those other changes that will be required as Main Modifications.	Yes, I wish to participate at the examination hearing session - The Town Council wishes to participate in

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							<p>settlement at Tudeley Village will feature in the review.</p> <p>There is contradictory text between paragraphs 4.54 and 4.55. If the removal of a new settlement at Tudeley Village is required in order to make the Plan sound, then surely proposals at Tudeley were unsound.</p> <p>Question the need to give the background to proposals at Tudeley given anyone wishing to understand the final conclusions can be directed to the Inspector's Final Report.</p> <p>Policy STR 1 To be sound the policy should set out the quantum of development allocated by source or settlement.</p> <p>There is no detail on what the expansion at Paddock Wood will involve in terms of amount of development, number of parcels or supporting infrastructure.</p> <p>The wording of Point 7 underplays the significant amount of Green Belt proposed to be released at Paddock Wood.</p> <p>Question how TWBC considers approach of commencing a review within six months of adoption will be any different to that likely to be imposed through the revised NPPF.</p>	<p>Para 4.57 outlines that the Council will seek to meet unmet need, and will consider all reasonable sites put forward through the review process.</p> <p>The councils does not consider that the wording in paragraphs 4.54 and 4.55 is contradictory. No alternative wording has been proposed.</p> <p>The point regarding the Inspectors Final Report is noted.</p> <p>The quantum of development at each settlement is set out in Table 4 which is in the SLP and is proposed to be modified to take account of the proposed changes to the development strategy following the receipt of the Initial Findings which is set out in the revised IDP [PS 105].</p> <p>Point 7 reflects the Council position on green belt for the purposes of the Development Strategy policy STR1. The SLP has a section on Green Belt release (para 4.124 onwards) which identifies in precise detail the leave of green belt release required for the SLP. This will be updated as part of the Main Modifications to reflect the Council position at the point of adoption.</p> <p>The Council has set out the review mechanism in the revised policy ST1. Any proposed changes to the planning regime that are introduced nationally which may include proposed changes to the NPPF will be taken into account at the point that the Council starts that review process.</p>	<p>any future Hearings on the Local Plan given the scale of growth still proposed at Paddock Wood and given the well-known constraints and complexities of the area as well as the Local Plan, masterplanning, infrastructure delivery and funding uncertainties that still remain.</p>
NEBD47-1		Heyworth Properties	John Collins	DHA Planning	Whole Plan <i>[TWBC: most closely related to PS_109]</i>		<p>Unsound, legal compliance not stated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerned that the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC) will not meet the required housing supply for the Local Plan period. Referenced a similar case with Solihull Council, where the Local Plan was withdrawn and restarted. Despite having opportunities to reconsider sites removed 	<p>TWBC acknowledges that the revised Development Strategy, developed in response to the Inspector's initial findings received November 2022, does not meet the boroughs housing growth needs in full. This is the very reason why the Council is committed to an early Review of the Local Plan, to enable it to seek additional sites to meet the need.</p>	Not stated.

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							<p>during the transition between Regulation 18 and Regulation 19 stages, Solihull Council did not do so.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believe the Plan is unsound, given the time elapsed and the removal of large-scale allocations without proper replacements. • Highlighted the Labour Government's direction and the identified uplift for more housing required by TWBC make it crucial to adopt a Local Plan that addresses the housing shortage to avoid exacerbating the crisis and inflating house prices. • Urge the Inspector to carefully consider the Local Plan's position. 	<p>The Local Plan review will seek to meet its housing and other growth needs including supporting infrastructure based on the relevant housing growth figure applicable at the time of the review. This might be the recent OAN figure (1,045 per annum) recently consulted upon through the 2024 NPPF consultation, including proposed changes to the Standard Method. It is noted that currently, whilst clearly an indication of the direction of travel, this is not yet Government Policy.</p> <p>The reasons why the Submission Local Plan is no longer meeting its needs have been considered through the Stage 3 MIQs and hearing sessions held in June and July this year.</p> <p>TWBC considers that continuing with the current Plan is appropriate. It will enable a 10-year, planned supply of housing growth, ensuring the Council has the required five-year housing land supply. This would reduce ad-hoc planning applications and 'planning by appeal', whilst providing a more up to date suite of Development Management Policies. The alternative would be to withdraw the Plan, which would result in a significant delay in enabling the Council to have an adopted plan in place, creating uncertainty for communities and all users of the Plan. The Examination is so far advanced that this would not be a sensible outcome.</p>	