



Paddock Wood Town Council

Matter 6 – Strategic Sites (Policies STR/SS1, STR/SS2, STR/SS3, STR/PW1 and STR/CA1)

ISSUE 2 – Five Oak Green

Q1. Policy STR/CA1 sets out the strategy for the Capel Parish. Criterion 3) states that approximately 2,060 dwellings will be accommodated on land at East Capel as part of the extension to Paddock Wood. Is it clear to users of the Plan which site this relates to?

PWTC Response:

1. No. It is clear to PWTC that this site if allocated will form part of the functional settlement of Paddock Wood due to it being immediately adjacent to Paddock Wood and therefore dependent upon Paddock Wood for its services and transport. This is not clear to users of the plan as it is constantly referred to as Capel in the plan due to the parish boundary.

Q2. What are the 'compensatory improvements to the Green Belt, including measures to reduce flooding to particular areas of Five Oak Green? How will they be delivered?

PWTC Response:

2. This is for TWBC to answer.

ISSUE 3 – Paddock Wood and East Capel

Size, Scale and Location of Development

Q1. What is the justification for having a single policy (Policy STR/SS1) for the different development parcels at Paddock Wood and East Capel? Is it necessary to have development requirements for each specific area?

PWTC Response:

3. Based on the Council's evidence we have reviewed, it appears that the Council does not have sufficiently detailed evidence based or strategy to specify what the development requirements would be for each specific area. Instead, the Council has prepared one extremely cumbersome policy covering the whole of the growth areas which effectively places all the real work and emphasis on the preparation of four 'Framework Masterplan Supplementary Planning Documents' (SPD) which it says will relate to an 'overall Structure Plan for the planned growth, and three further SPDs in relation to three parcels of land' (Western parcel, Northern parcel and Eastern parcel).
4. The policy then explains that the 'Three Framework Masterplans' will guide developers and the LPA in respect of garden settlement principles to create a new community at Paddock Wood and east Capel. It says that the SPDs will set out guidance to show how the policy requirements along with other policies within the Local Plan should be delivered on the site.
5. The entire policy is confusing, unjustified and ineffective including the Council's proposed approach for masterplanning and SPDs which appears to be attempting to push all the difficult issues to SPD documents that will not go through the independent examination process.
6. The presentation of a single policy but separate parcels brings into doubt the deliverability of the plan to share costs for infrastructure whether for flood mitigation, social infrastructure, foul drainage and waste water infrastructure etc evenly over all three parcels to ensure a sustainable and future proof urban extension.

Q2. How was the size of each parcel determined and what alternatives to the scale of development proposed at Paddock Wood and East Capel did the Council consider?

PWTC Response:

7. This is not possible to ascertain from the Council's evidence apart from the Council's crude approach in its SHELAA to determining developable areas of parcels by excluding three any "level 1 constraints" (ancient woodland, SSSI, Level 3 flood areas).

Q3. Is it clear to developers, decision-makers and local communities what scale and mix of uses are proposed on each parcel (including the amount of employment land)?

PWTC Response:

8. No, Policy STR / SS1 is simply a list of the Council's ideas for development and initiatives it has for Paddock Wood and east Capel that it claims to be its strategy and policy. Not only is it unclear what scale and mix of uses are proposed for each parcel, the entire policy is unclear about development and infrastructure phasing and its delivery. It also makes no mention of how the local community, who will be most affected by the proposals will be involved and help shape future proposals.

Green Belt

Q4. In the *Green Belt Study Stage 1*, how was parcel PW1 defined? Was land to the west of Paddock Wood, up to the A228 considered at this stage?

PWTC Response:

9. The Council should answer this question.

Q5. In the *Green Belt Study Stage 3, Map 2* identifies that releasing land to the west of Paddock Wood will cause 'moderate' harm nearest the existing settlement with 'high' levels of harm on roughly the western half of the parcel nearest the A228. What are the reasons for this and how have the findings been taken into account in the preparation of the Plan?

PWTC Response:

10. The Council should answer this question.

Q6. Where it has been concluded that it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, paragraph 142 of the Framework states that Plans should set out ways in which the impact of removing land from the Green Belt can be offset through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land. How will this be achieved?

PWTC Response:

11. PWTC has seen no proposals for compensatory Green Belt or improvements to the Green Belt elsewhere and even if these were provided it would not compensate for the loss to Paddock Wood.

Q7. Taking into account the answers provided under Matter 4, do the exceptional circumstances exist at site specific level to justify amending the Green Belt boundary in this location?

PWTC Response:

12. We understand that the Council's stated reasons for exceptional circumstances for amending the Green Belt boundary in this location are as follows according to the Development Strategy Topic Paper¹

- *“the land proposed to be released from the Green Belt here is part of a wider release of non-Green Belt land to deliver development in a sustainable location, around an existing settlement, with the potential to rejuvenate and revitalise the town centre: approximately 48% of the total area of land included for the comprehensive urban extension is currently designated as Green Belt;*
- *through the comprehensive development of this site, and particularly the land to the west of Paddock Wood (i.e. that which would be released from the Green Belt), it has been identified through the Strategic Flood Risk*

¹ CD 3.64

Assessment that there is the potential for the flood mitigation required in association with this development to deliver “betterment” through reduced flood risk to existing areas of Paddock Wood and its surrounds. This requirement is specifically included in the policy, and is considered to make a significant contribution to the exceptional circumstances for the release of this land from the Green Belt;

- *Expansion of the town offers opportunities both within the new development and existing development to increase the use of alternative modes of transport (to cars) for local journeys, improve Green Infrastructure and taken together with land at Tudeley there are opportunities to provide significant new highway infrastructure and localised highways improvements.”*

13. The first ‘exceptional circumstance’ given is that releasing the Green Belt will rejuvenate and revitalise the town centre. However, Purpose 5 of the Green Belt is to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land. Therefore, it is for this reason that the Green Belt should not be released around Paddock Wood not the opposite. In any case the Green Belt Study concludes that *“All Green Belt land is considered to contribute equally to this purpose (Purpose 5)”*. Given that TWBC considers that Paddock Wood Town Centre needs to be ‘rejuvenated and revitalised’ we would argue that the Green Belt around Paddock Wood is even more important to retain for Purpose 5 than in the other parts of the borough.
14. The second ‘exceptional circumstance’ given is that releasing the Green Belt will deliver ‘betterment through reduced flood risk to existing areas of Paddock Wood and its surround’. As we have set out in our responses to a number of other Matters and Issues, this argument defies all logic – how can the Council possibly say that putting strategic growth in areas of flood risk will improve the flood risk situation. This has not been demonstrated in terms of the ability to actually engineer these claimed ‘betterments’ to address existing and future flood risk and wastewater constraints and nor has it been demonstrated that this would be economically viable and deliverable. This is not to mention the fact that the Council has not followed the NPPF in terms of undertaking a Sequential Test in relation to flood risk areas which we cover in our separate responses.
15. The third ‘exceptional circumstance’ given is that expanding the town into the Green Belt offers opportunities within new development and existing development to increase the use of alternative modes of transport for local journeys, improve green infrastructure and provide new highway infrastructure and improvements. We fail to see how this could possibly equate to anything ‘exceptional’. These are supposed benefits of the scheme These are simply some of the infrastructure items that would be required in order to make the scheme acceptable in planning terms rather than anything that is exceptional.

Flood Risk and Drainage

Paragraph 4.11 of the *Strategic Sites Topic Paper* states that “...the starting point was to focus development using a proportionate application of the sequential test in flood risk terms i.e., the majority of residential development in flood zone 1, with some in flood zone 2 where there was confidence in the site specific flood mitigation ensuring that was acceptable.”

Paragraph 4.14 then goes on to state that “A scenario was run with residential development in flood zone 1 only (Option 3). This provided fewer dwellings, 2,840, and was considered unnecessary in the context of planning guidance on locating development in appropriate flood zones.”

Q8. What is an ‘proportionate application of the sequential test’? Is the allocation of land to the west of Paddock Wood consistent with paragraph 162 of the Framework, which states that development should not be allocated or permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower risk of flooding?

PWTC Response:

16. No, it is not consistent. Paddock Wood is the area of highest risk from flooding within the Borough and the growth area is substantially within areas defined as being in Flood Zone 2 and 3 and is also an area at risk of surface water flooding with an evidenced history of surface water flooding. There are other areas across the Borough where the flood risk is far lower. Whilst it is not for the Town Council to discuss the merits or otherwise of potential growth areas elsewhere, the scale of growth proposed is significantly skewed towards Paddock Wood, despite the flood risk. In addition to this, there are known capacity issues with the sewerage network: combined with flood risk, Paddock Wood is an inappropriate location for the scale of growth proposed.

Q9. Can the parcel allocated to the east of Paddock Wood come forward without requiring residential development in areas at risk of flooding?

PWTC Response:

17. It is the Town Council’s view that if growth and development is to take place, it should be planned for properly. If the extent of land at risk of flooding precludes development from taking place, then alternative approaches should be considered, including a reduced growth figure, with green and blue infrastructure appropriately accommodated to embed climate change resilience for the longer term. The parcel to the east of Paddock Wood is also prone to

surface water flooding as the railway line acts as a barrier to surface water flows towards the River Medway catchment. The proposal for this site which has already been placed in the public domain jointly by Redrow and Persimmon proposes intensive residential development with a small neighbourhood commercial centre. A substantial proportion of the site is in Flood Zone 2 and 3.

Q10. What is the justification for requiring a drainage strategy to be in place prior to the granting of planning permission ‘unless exceptional circumstances arise’? What might these circumstances be? Is the policy sufficiently clear and is it effective?

PWTC Response:

18. PWTC feel it is unacceptable for planning permissions to be granted with drainage strategies covered by condition. Drainage is too crucial a matter not to be properly addressed prior to planning permission being granted. PWTC’s recent experience is that this results in poor planning for drainage and poor observance of planning conditions once in place. It sends the wrong signal to developers and underestimates the importance of effective drainage strategies especially when there is large scale development on a number of adjacent sites.

Mix of Uses and Infrastructure Requirements

Q11. How have the type and location of community uses been established? For example, what is the justification for the proposed sports hub (including a 25m swimming pool) and why is it in the location proposed?

PWTC Response:

19. The Town Council is supportive of new and expanded sports and leisure provision in Paddock Wood. The TWBC Indoor / Built Need Assessment 2017-2033, Playing Pitch Strategy 2017-2033 and the Sports & Recreation Strategy (October 2020) both point to the need for new and expanded sports facilities.

20. The primary reason for locating a sports hub in the south west of the growth area is to create a ‘softer buffer’ between Paddock Wood and Capel. This appears to be the driver for the decision taken by TWBC rather than any wider placemaking objectives.

21. The Town Council does not agree with the proposed location of the Sports Hub. The Town Council has worked proactively with local sports groups and organisations over the last five years to identify how and where a sports hub might be most appropriately located. The preference is to retain and improve

facilities at Putlands for indoor sports, with an outdoor sports hub located to the north of the town but still in easy reach on foot of the station and town centre and accessible from the north via the Hop Farm roundabout.

22. The Town Council's preference will bring a better balance to the distribution of sports facilities across Paddock Wood (with Putlands and all other sports fields currently located to the south of the town), such that all residents, existing and new, are within access of these. It will also act as a sustainable hub in close proximity to rail and bus services from those travelling further afield.
23. The Town Council has sought to discuss its preference with TWBC and also presented the idea at community workshops associated with the Structure Plan prepared by TWBC. The views of the Town Council and its partners have been given limited consideration, if any, by TWBC, with no assessment of alternatives seemingly having been undertaken. The Structure Plan makes reference to an alternative location, but the reasons given for the location preferred by TWBC are not convincing and are inconsistent, pointing to issues associated with flooding, access and visual impact counting against a sports hub to the north of the town. However, the Structure Plan shows housing in this location, and where issues of flooding, transport and visual impact would equally apply, if not more so. This is expanded upon in our representations to the Pre-Submission Local Plan.
24. In terms of wider community facilities, The Town Council is supportive of an approach that would see those facilities required for everyday activities being located in close proximity to residents, preferably by foot and bike, and where these complement the role and function of the town centre.

Q12. In the location envisaged, will the sports hub be accessible to existing and future residents of Paddock Wood by sustainable modes of transport?

PWTC Response:

25. No. The location neither supports sustainable access by residents of Paddock Wood nor residents of nearby settlements outside Paddock Wood. The location is the furthest removed point from existing and proposed new areas of growth, including that to the north of the railway line. With limited walking and cycling infrastructure as well as limited public transport provision in this remote location, it only provides for and encourages movement by the private car. It this excludes much of the community.
26. There has been no proper consideration and evaluation of alternative locations, including that proposed by the Town Council, which supports a location to the

north of the town in closer proximity to the railway station, supporting journeys by public transport (bus) for residents of Paddock Wood and those travelling from further afield (train and or bus). Such a location would help balance sports provision across the town and provide choice for all, including the ability for residents to walk and cycle to nearby facilities.

27. The Town Council's preferred location has been developed in liaison with local sports clubs and organisations to reflect their needs, and their users' needs, including the ability for all age groups to travel to and benefit from such facilities.

Q13. What is the justification for the inclusion and location of sites proposed for gypsy and traveller accommodation?

PWTC Response:

28. The Council should answer this question as the justification is unclear to PWTC.

Q14. Where will the proposed sheltered and extra care accommodation be located? For effectiveness, should this be set out in the Plan?

PWTC Response:

29. The Paddock Wood Neighbourhood Plan is currently subject to Regulation 14 consultation. This notes that where housing to support the needs of an ageing population is proposed, then it should reflect good practice guidance and principles established in Planning Practice Guidance and in the HAPPI (Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation) report. These reflect principles of inclusivity and accessibility, promoting the provision of such housing within easy access of shops, facilities and public transport services. Locations in, or in close proximity to the town centre or smaller local centres to be provided as part of the growth of Paddock Wood would be the most appropriate locations for such housing. To be more effective, the Local Plan should provide more guidance on location, even if in broad terms (and in which case the Neighbourhood Plan will not need to supplicate this if and when made).

Highways and Transport

PWTC Response:

30. The Town Council has reviewed the Local Plan Local Junction Capacity Sensitivity Testing Technical Note, Transport Assessment Addendum 2 and the KCC Statement of Common Ground (PS_023, PS_024 and PS_025) which were published without warning at the Local Plan Stage 1 Hearings. The Inspector has requested that participants be aware of these documents when preparing responses to the Inspector's Questions. We make the following observations of these documents:

- The timing of the release of this important evidence base and Duty to Cooperate documents is clearly too late in the Local Plan process. Given the lateness of the documentation how can one possibly conclude that the evidence and SOCG influenced the preparation of the plan and its policies? Critically, no one apart from the Council, its consultants and KCC has seen these documents therefore the public and participants of the Examination have been put at a considerable disadvantage as a result.
- **Local Plan Sensitivity Test Addendum Report:**
 - **Mode Shift:** The report states at Paragraph 1.1.10 that *"The 10% mode shift, so 10% reduction in car driver trips, applied to the TRICS trip rates for trips from the new settlements at Tudeley and Paddock Wood is considered to be low given the new cycling, pedestrian and public transport infrastructure being planned for these developments. The modal shift assumption of 10% is based on the Sustainable Towns research (DfT Sustainable Travel Towns: evaluation of the longer-term impacts, Sept 2018). However, in Tunbridge Wells Borough there will be an even greater level of investment per head into sustainable transport infrastructure than that applied within the Sustainable Towns Report"*. PWTC considers that this is a flawed assumption and there is no local evidence to back up this assumption. TWBC prepared a Cycling Strategy for the Borough in 2016 (2016-2020)² including a Paddock Wood Circular Route. To date not a single piece of signage has been installed nor tarmac laid for this Strategy.
 - **Retrofitting Paddock Wood for Cycling:** The section relating to Paddock Wood in the submitted LCWIP³ makes recommendations that are impossible to achieve by retro fitting due to the layout of the existing town- there is simply no space for the cycle paths and pavements proposed. The Town Council are horrified to note that the proposal to close the Maidstone Road railway bridge to all

²https://tunbridgewells.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/384770/6FB057F542A07AF9E0531401A8C01B6A_Final_Cycling_Strategy_2016-20.pdf

³ https://tunbridgewells.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/385333/05_LCWIP-Phase-2_Final-Report.pdf

traffic except buses and to close Commercial Road to through traffic remains in the document despite the local outcry that came in response to the publication of these proposals by KCC.

- **Commuting Assumptions:** The report states at Paragraph 1.1.11 that: *“The trip rates also do not include adjustments for internalisation / localisation rates of the new Local Plan sites in Paddock Wood and Tudeley as well as the wider area around Paddock Wood in particular. Nor does it include reductions in trip rates due to change in how people travel. At this time, ONS data has shown that for 2020 Tunbridge Wells borough had the highest levels of ‘Working from Home’ in England for that year. In addition, TRICS have observed over 25 years of data that people are travelling less today than they used to 2.”* It appears to the Town Council obvious that the levels of working from home will have been high in 2020(Lockdown). The cost of housing in the area means that it is almost impossible to afford to live in the area unless you work in London. Therefore, the vast majority of people do commute, and this was not possible with the covid restrictions. To assume that this will continue and use this to plan for future infrastructure is clearly unsound. This is supported by the KCC Highways SOCG which states that *“This Addendum 2 Report includes further modelling that covers a scenario which KCC considers should be assessed (no reduction in trip rates from existing residents of Paddock Wood as a result of mitigation measures and inclusion of mitigation measures for consented schemes in the base case scenario).”*
- KCC SOCG:
 - We note that none of the highways improvements set out in the SOCG do anything to mitigate the strategic scale of development proposed at Paddock Wood. It would appear that funding raised towards highways costs from these developments instead of going towards improvement for the area affected will instead be diverted to schemes elsewhere. The Town Council believes that the negative impact of this scale of development with no commensurate investment in the immediate local road network is in contravention of PPG which states that transport evidence base should *“consider the cumulative impacts of existing and proposed development on transport networks”*⁴. The plan fails to do this for the proposed allocations at Paddock Wood.

⁴ Reference ID: 54-003-20141010

Q15. How will the north-south pedestrian and cycle link over the railway line be provided as part of the western parcel? Is it deliverable?

PWTC Response:

31. This is for TWBC to answer. However, the Town Council notes that, in the interests of creating accessible, inclusive and sustainable places, connections across the railway line must be successfully delivered, and designed such that they support and encourage movement, and are well integrated within the street network and built form. The Town Council suggests that the Dafne Schippersberg Bridge across the Rhine Canal in Utrecht represents an excellent example of the type and level of ambition that TWBC must show to create a successful, coherent place.

Q16. How will the necessary financial contributions towards works to the A228 and the Five Oak Green bypass be calculated for each site and Tudeley Village (Policy STR/SS3)?

PWTC Response:

32. PWTC is concerned that the proportion of financial contributions for highways generated by developed around Paddock Wood will be dedicated towards the costs of the A228 improvement, Colts Hill bypass. This will be of no benefit to Paddock Wood where there is a clear need for an additional road from south to north on the eastern edge of the town if further development to the east is to be permitted. The main road through the town and over the railway bridge is already totally inadequate for a town of this size and to have the only route into the town from the east remaining Church Road which begins as a narrow country lane, enters the town along a winding residential street and joins the B2160 via a switchback turn over the narrow railway bridge is quite clearly unsustainable. It has no space for a cycle path once it enters the town and would require substantial widening outside of the town to permit pedestrians or cycles.

Q17. What will be the main point of access for the parcel to the east of Paddock Wood? How will pedestrian, cycle and vehicular accessibility to the rest of Paddock Wood (to the west) be achieved?

PWTC Response:

33. Please note PWTC's response to Question 16. Through work on the Neighbourhood Plan, the Town Council is strongly supportive of a connected network of walking and cycling routes that links areas of growth with existing

streets and routes. However, the quality of any route, and thus whether it is an attractive proposition for people to use or not, is dependent upon its coherence and any gaps in the network. To support active and sustainable modes of transport, existing infrastructure, walking and cycling conditions in Paddock Wood will need upgrading, otherwise there will continue to be gaps between areas of new growth and important services and facilities, including the town centre and railway station. This is likely to involve new cycle routes and junction redesign alongside provision in areas of growth.

Landscape and Heritage

Q18. The AONB Setting Analysis Report identifies areas of ‘very high’, ‘high’ and ‘medium’ sensitivity within the allocated site boundary to the east of Paddock Wood. Very high is defined as likely to cause harm to the setting of the High Weald AONB which it may not be possible to mitigate against.

What is the justification for including the parcel of land to the south of the site, where the Report recommends avoiding any development?

PWTC Response:

34. The TWBC ‘Strategic Sites Masterplanning and Infrastructure Study’ makes reference to the setting of the AONB within the baseline review but does not clearly set out how this has been considered and responded to in the preferred or alternative options presented beyond references, in the preferred option, to screen planting and lower density forms of housing. The Town Council does note that the summary text associated with Option 2 in that document locating the sports hub to the north of the town would be considered preferable as potential visibility of this from the AONB would be reduced. It is also to be noted that the proposed offline Colts Hill Bypass is noted in the Strategic Sites study impacts upon the AONB. It is not entirely clear from that Study how those impacts will be mitigated.

Q19. In the areas of ‘high’ and ‘medium’ sensitivity, what mitigation is required and are the requirements sufficiently clear to users of the Plan?

PWTC Response:

35. This is for TWBC to answer.

Q20. Will the proposed mitigation be effective? What potential impacts will the allocation as a whole have on the setting of the AONB?

PWTC Response:

36. This is for TWBC to answer.

Q21. What potential impacts will the proposed allocation have on the significance of designated heritage assets, having particular regard to the Grade II listed buildings at Badsell Manor Farmhouse, Mascalls Court, Mascalls Court Lane and Knell's Farm? How have heritage assets been taken into account in the preparation of the Plan?

PWTC Response:

37. This is for TWBC to answer.

Other Matters

Q22. What is the justification for requiring each parcel to be delivered through the production of a SPD?

PWTC Response:

38. The Town Council does not consider this to be appropriate. Although it is understood that the future SPDs are intended to provide more detail, they will not be subject to the same scrutiny as the Local Plan and will not carry the same weight. This risks development coming forward in isolation and not helping to deliver the wider benefits of growth for the community. This is already evident given progress being made on planning applications now. The Local Plan should establish a clear strategy and principles for development and delivery to ensure an integrated approach to growth.

39. It is entirely unclear what Policy STR/SS 1 is even setting out as its proposed approach where it states at Paragraph 15 that *“development will be delivered through the production of four Framework Masterplan SPDs”* which will *“relate to an overall Structure Plan for the planned growth”* and *“three further SPDs in relation to the following parcels of land as shown on Map 27:*

1. *Western parcel*
2. *Northern parcel*

3. Eastern parcel"

40. Does this mean that TWBC will prepare six SPDs in total? What does the phasing of these Framework Masterplan SPDs and the Western Parcel SPD, Northern Parcel SPD and Eastern Parcel SPD look like? How will the timing of the preparation of the Structure Plan, Framework SPDs and Parcel SPDs relate to the need for the long list of infrastructure requirements to be delivered. It appears that these simple considerations about the practicalities of preparing these important documents, let alone the realistic phasing of infrastructure delivery, has not been seriously considered by TWBC.

Q23. How will the Council ensure that the allocation comes forward in a coherent and comprehensive manner and avoids the piecemeal development of individual sites?

PWTC Response:

41. This is an extremely important question raised by the Inspector as, in the Town Council's opinion, there is a very high risk of individual sites within the proposed Paddock Wood and East Capel Allocation coming forward in a piecemeal and uncoordinated fashion.

42. Given the need for the significant infrastructure required to support and deliver up to 3,700 new dwellings and employment at Paddock Wood, as set out in the proposed Local Plan Policy STR/SS1 (The Strategy for Paddock Wood, including land at east Capel), the proposed approach of TWBC to infrastructure planning and delivery is entirely inadequate and will result in a piecemeal and fragmented development. As we have set out throughout our representations, the high risk of flooding and already overburdened wastewater infrastructure in Paddock Wood present 'critical infrastructure' issues that will simply not be addressed and mitigated through the Council's confusing and piecemeal proposed approach.

43. Policy STR/SS1 states that "*Proposals for the piecemeal development of individual sites within the parcels identified will not be supported*" however the policy says nothing about the need to coordinate the delivery of development and infrastructure across the parcels. It goes on to state that "*The delivery of this infrastructure should be through ongoing discussions with relevant stakeholders*". This certainly does not sound like a sound or well-considered approach to delivering what is a very significant amount of infrastructure in an area of high flood risk and critically lacking in wastewater infrastructure.

44. TWBC has clarified at the Local Plan Hearings that the primary reason for selecting Paddock Wood for strategic development over other options assessed is that locating strategic development in this location will deliver 'betterment' to the existing flooding and drainage issues in Paddock Wood – securing the delivery of such 'betterment' for Paddock Wood is not evident in Policy STR/SS1. Clause 13 of the policy is simply not strong enough to ensure this.
45. The Town Council has significant concerns that development will come forward in a piecemeal approach and that a consequence of this is that the full scale of infrastructure required will not be realised as Section 106 agreements will be made on a site-by-site basis and that securing 'equalisation' between the various landowners is likely to be fraught with difficulties under TWBC's current approach.
46. For example, some sites and areas around Paddock Wood are less constrained than others in terms of flood risk, and ancient woodland for example. How does TWBC propose to ensure that the greatest financial burden for delivering the necessary infrastructure across Paddock Wood is not 'shouldered' by a handful of landowners rather than shared across the sites / landowners? We use as an example Site 20 to the east of Paddock Wood which is less constrained by flooding whereas sites 309 and 142 have higher flood risk and is constrained by the railway line and adjacent to ancient woodland (Whetsted Woods).
47. There is already evidence of a piecemeal development coming forward. Site 20 is, as the Town Council understands it, ready to submit a planning application ahead of the Local Plan being adopted (if it does eventually become adopted) and Site 315 is also in the same position as Site 20. Please note that the site reference numbers are taken from the *Paddock Wood Assessment Sheets Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment – Regulation 18 Consultation July 2019*.
48. In terms of a site deliverability point, the Town Council understands that Site 340 has been acquired by local residents to attempt to prevent development on this site.
49. One would expect that Policy STR/SS1 would include TWBC's approach towards securing developer contributions towards the infrastructure required to support development (including 'betterment' for Paddock Wood). Presumably TWBC will include a number of 'triggers' within the Section 106 agreements prepared with developers to ensure that key pieces of infrastructure are in place to support each phase of development of 'parcels' and across the overall development.

However, the policy says nothing about Section 106 agreements being part of TWBC's approach to ensuring infrastructure delivery.

50. Whilst we do not go into detail on the other proposed infrastructure types in Paddock Wood including, education, health, community hub and 'wetland park' the same principle applies to the points we have made regarding flood risk and wastewater infrastructure in terms of there being a lack of a coherent phasing and delivery plan for infrastructure across the area in the Local Plan.

ISSUE 4 – Paddock Wood Town Centre

Q1. Policy STR/SS2 states that the Paddock Wood Town Centre Framework Masterplan SPD will identify 'key development sites'. Is this approach justified when taking into account that the SPD will not form part of the development plan for the area?

PWTC Response:

51. No. As noted in the representations made on the Pre-Submission Local Plan progress on the town centre has been delayed and has resulted in land coming forward for development in advance of a strategy being prepared. This undermines the opportunity for development to be considered holistically, with piecemeal development not delivering the type of transformational change the Borough anticipates nor which is required to serve a major growth area. Delaying identification of sites to a SPD essentially passes the responsibility downstream and weakens the aspirations for the town centre.

Q2. Is the Plan justified and effective by requiring development proposals to accord with the (not yet prepared) Masterplan SPD?

PWTC Response:

52. No. It is not possible to determine an application against a masterplan to be prepared at a future date. This risks ad-hoc, piecemeal development coming forward. This has already happened in Paddock Wood, with the Churchill Scheme on Commercial Road already undermining the ability to take a holistic view of change and development in the Town Centre.

53. In the absence of a masterplan the Town Council has prepared a series of guiding principles and a concept strategy for the Town Centre in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan (at Regulation 14 stage). The Local Plan should make reference to the emerging Neighbourhood Plan as this will carry more weight than a SPD.

Q3. What is the justification for seeking developer contributions in part 8 of the policy? What proposals would be subject to this requirement and what would they be required to contribute towards?

PWTC Response:

54. The Town Council suggests that any reference to developer contributions should be related to the development in question. If contributions are required to facilitate delivery of infrastructure in the wider growth areas - as the policy suggests they might - then this should be linked to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Tunbridge Wells is not a CIL charging authority though. As such, the Local Plan should be clearer as to what infrastructure and contributions are directly related to the Town Centre and the immediate Paddock Wood area as opposed to the wider growth areas. These should be refined through consultation with the Town Council as work on the Neighbourhood Plan has identified a series of infrastructure projects and improvements which the community which the community would wish to see delivered.

ISSUE 5 – Land at Mascalls Farm

Q1. What is the latest position regarding the construction of dwellings already approved at Mascalls Farm?

PWTC Response:

55. This is for TWBC to answer

Q2. Is the site still necessary and justified as an allocation in the Plan?

PWTC Response:

56. This is for TWBC to answer