



MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC

RESPONSE FROM THE KENT DOWNS AONB UNIT

SESSION 10B – GYPSIES, TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOW PEOPLE

2. GT1 SITE ALLOCATIONS

Qn 10.5 What purpose does the word ‘inappropriate’ serve in the above criterion and would it be better replaced by e.g. ‘significant’?

The use of the word ‘significant’ in place of ‘inappropriate’ would be more consistent with the requirements of the NPPF as set out as para 14 of the NPPF. The Kent Downs AONB Unit remains of the view that both terms ‘inappropriate’ and ‘significant’ fail to meet the stringent requirements as set out in the CROW Act 2000 and para 115 of the NPPF for the conservation and enhancement of AONBs however. While para 14 of the NPPF sets out that Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs, footnote 9 to this para confirms that the presumption in favour of sustainable development is not applicable in AONBs.

Should an additional criterion prohibiting gypsy and traveller sites in the Kent Downs AONB, as set out in the AONB Unit’s response to the Reg 19 Draft Local Plan consultation, not be considered appropriate we would suggest amending criterion 2 to:

“2. The development would not result in significant harm to the landscape and rural character of the area and the openness of the Metropolitan Green Belt and would conserve and enhance the Kent Downs AONB....”