

Medway Local Plan: EiP Hearings
Written Statement on behalf of Hoo Consortium
Reg 19 Submission ID: E.184
Further Submissions (June/July 2026) ID.31

Inspectors' Matter 2: Vision, Spatial Development Strategy and Strategic Objectives

ISSUE: 2.10

The Plan sets out that the spatial distribution of new development within Medway is circa. 40% urban regeneration; circa 30% suburban and circa 30% rural (mainly on the Hoo Peninsula). Please could the Council explain, with reference to the evidence submitted, how and why this spatial distribution is the most sustainable, deliverable and therefore appropriate approach to the delivery of new development during the Plan period.

[COMMENTARY]

1.1 The Hoo Consortium presently comprises the following four organisations:

- The Church Commissioners for England
- Dean Lewis Estates
- Esquire Developments
- Redrow Homes/BDW

1.2 The Consortium has significant land interests at Hoo (circa 400+ ha) and has been working collaboratively with Medway Council over the past 10 years through the evolution of the emerging Local Plan and former draft Hoo Development Framework.

1.3 The Consortium's landholdings are of sufficient scale to accommodate a substantial proportion of the social, economic and physical infrastructure required to support the proposed growth at Hoo, and help create a more sustainable and self-sufficient community that will meet housing, education,

Reference: Hoo Consortium/A3

retail, employment, leisure and recreation and other community needs on the Peninsula during the emerging Plan period and beyond.

- 1.4 The proposed growth on the Hoo Peninsula also provides the opportunity for a raft of environmental improvements, with significant areas of planned open spaces and biodiversity enhancements.
- 1.5 The Consortium's interests therefore provide for a comprehensive form of development, ie far more than "just another housing site", which will facilitate the sustainable delivery of a coordinated provision of both much needed housing and the necessary supporting community infrastructure alongside it. In pursuing such a coordinated approach, this also provides for the opportunity of the increased self-containment of Hoo (and surrounding villages), reducing the need to travel and providing increased patronage to facilitate improved public transport services as an alternative to the private car.
- 1.6 This captures the Strategic Objectives of the emerging Local Plan in a location identified as a suitable location for growth.
- 1.7 The supporting **Sustainability Appraisal (SA)** [Ref: A3.1/3.2/3.3] concluded that the "Blended Strategy"¹ (inc "Policy-on" approach) provided for the most sustainable spatial strategy. This is not surprising having regard to the geographic nature of Medway as a whole and is reflective of the development opportunities identified within the Medway LAA [Ref: B1], comprising circa 40% urban regeneration; and circa 30% suburban development and circa 30% rural (mainly on the Hoo Peninsula). This reflects the fact that, in order to meet the overall housing and employment needs for Medway, the urban and suburban areas together cannot deliver the identified objectively assessed needs.
- 1.8 The "blended strategy" that includes the quantum of growth ascribed to the rural areas is therefore a necessary component of the sustainable Spatial Development Strategy. This Option (3) was identified to provide the most sustainable balance by combining **urban regeneration** with **suburban** and **rural development**, seeking to ensure a diverse range of housing types and tenures can be provided across Medway (SA Objective 7) and economic needs can be met (SA Objective 12) whilst directing the majority of new development to sustainable locations.
- 1.9 This spatial approach has then been tested together with reasonable alternatives with the Sustainability Assessment and found to be the most sustainable Spatial Development Strategy.

¹ Table N.5.5 [Ref: A3.1]; Table 5.5 [Ref: A3.2]

Reference: Hoo Consortium/A3

1.10 The Hoo component is also capable of being delivered. A substantial proportion of the allocated land is controlled by active promoters working collectively with the Council. The housing trajectory identifies phased delivery extending through and beyond the Plan period, while Policy SA8 provides for infrastructure to be coordinated with that growth. Delivery remains subject to the timely resolution of transport and other infrastructure requirements, but those matters support a phased approach rather than the removal or reduction of the Hoo component.

ISSUE: 2.12

How does the spatial development strategy address the requirements of different parts of Medway such as the Hoo Peninsula as well as the more urban areas.

1.11 This has largely been captured in our response above, but in having regard to the Local Plan's over-arching strategic objectives, the scale of proposed growth at Hoo will help provide for:

- Supporting a shift towards sustainable modes of transport
- A mix of homes and employment to help address local needs
- Reducing health inequalities
- Directing development to the most suitable locations
- Phased education, health, retail, leisure and community infrastructure
- Strategic environmental, landscape, flood-risk and climate-resilience measures

1.12 Such objectives are not just achieved in Hoo itself, but also on the wider Hoo Peninsula and more rural hinterlands due to the recognised "service centre" role Hoo fulfils too.

1.13 The Consortium has worked closely with Medway Council in establishing the existing level of services and facilities, and how best these can be improved. This would either be through the provision of an expansion of existing facilities and/or the provision of new services/facilities, which directly addresses the needs of both the existing and future residents.

1.14 In a plan-wide context the comprehensive and tailored policy approach to development on the Hoo Peninsula, whilst distinct in its own right, is complimentary to the tailored policy response elsewhere within Medway targeting urban regeneration and renewal within the urban areas and securing appropriate incremental growth opportunities in the suburban areas.

End