

Participant	Mr H J Kelliher	Rep ID	1771
		Date response received	11/05/2015
Representing	Himself	Response reference number	MHD022
MHD / Change reference commented on	MHD005		
Summary of comment	<p>The site south and southwest of Bay is considered unsustainable due to designation as Green Belt.</p> <p>The site south and southwest of Bay has been protected by NDDC for many years.</p> <p>The site south and southwest of Bay should form part of an enhanced green infrastructure network focused primarily on the three river corridors throughout the town.</p> <p>The site south and southwest of Bay is an amenity greenspace and is used as an informal recreation space.</p> <p>The Atkins Report (MTC004) states that the north-east of the town scores very low when meeting the test of sustainability and considered development to meet housing demand would be preferable elsewhere.</p> <p>The Burden Report (MTC008) is critical of the encroachment of existing development and that an extension of this would prejudice the separateness, rural character and scale of Bay Hamlet.</p>		
Council's response	<p>Land south and south west of Bay has not been designated as Green Belt.</p> <p>Land south and south west of Bay has not been protected by NDDC from development. The saved polices of the 2003 Local Plan (COD030) have retained the land south and south west of Bay as an area within the settlement boundary without designation and where the principle of development for general needs is accepted.</p> <p>The development of the site south and south west of Bay could open up the site to provide public access (which currently does not exist) down to the river corridor thereby enhancing the public enjoyment of the green infrastructure network focussed on the river corridor.</p> <p>The site south and south west of Bay has limited public access rights restricted to a footpath along the southern boundary of the site. It does not provide public access rights to the remainder of the site. The landowner has indicated that the site is available for development of housing in accordance with the Council's policy. Recreation space would be required as part of a development of the site.</p>		

	<p>The Atkins Report: Assessing the Growth Potential of Gillingham, 2009 (MTC004), assessed land south and south west of Bay as part of 'Scenario 2' which concluded that this site, along with the other areas of growth identified at Gillingham, namely the SSA and Station Road, formed the most sustainable growth scenario.</p> <p>The Burden Report: Gillingham Landscape and Open Spaces Assessment, 2003 (MTC008). Richard Burden concludes on page 53 "I recommend that the former Buffer Zone and the important landscape gaps that link this area to the open countryside be protected and managed to sustain their landscape features and landscape character. Careful consideration should, therefore, be given to policies and procedures to achieve these aims, including enlarging IOWA 17 to extend over the area of the former Buffer Zone. I also recommend allocating the area as a publicly accessible park."</p> <p>The saved polices of the 2003 Local Plan (COD030) have retained the land south and south west of Bay as an area within the settlement boundary without designation and where the principle of development for general needs is accepted. The landscape character of the site is a material consideration and, along with Policy GH3 and the Gillingham Town Design Statement (MTC016), will be considered in the design and approval process for planning applications to develop the site. Using the saved policies of the 2003 Local Plan and the material considerations of MTC008 and MTC016 will provide the opportunity to achieve a sympathetically designed development which enhances the opportunities to respect the local character, incorporate landscape features, and provide public access (of which there currently is no right) to the river corridor.</p>
<p>Conclusions</p>	<p>The principle of development of the site south and south west of Bay has been established in the 2003 Local Plan. Mitigation measures can be considered as part of the site allocations and planning application processes for issues including local character and landscape features.</p> <p>The comments from Mr Kelliher raise no new issues for the progression of the Local Plan.</p> <p>No further action required.</p>