

West Malling Parish

Regulation 18 Local Plan - Site allocations summary of consultation responses

Respondents

Out of 21 responses, 4 responses were from statutory consultees and other key organisations. Full responses for each draft site allocation can be seen in the comments record.

There were no standardised responses.

Where site promoter submissions have been made in relation to allocations, these will be considered as part of the next stage of plan making and have not been summarised below.

How do you feel about the site?

Site / Settlement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Not stated	Total responses
KH2	7	4	1	0	0	4	16
Offham general	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
West Malling and Kings Hill general	3	0	0	0	0	1	4
West Malling settlement total	10	4	2	0	0	5	21

Summary of key themes for proposed site allocations in West Malling Parish

The following table sets out a summary of key themes from the consultation responses received. All comments made are available to view, alongside any additional information that consultees submitted alongside their consultation responses. Comments and information received will be considered further as we progress the Local Plan.

Site or settlement	Key themes
KH2 – Land west of Kings Hill and Northwest of Ashton Way/Malling roundabout, West Malling (30 units)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong concern about coalescence and urban sprawl between Kings Hill, West Malling and Offham. • Green Belt and landscape harm, including loss of openness and impact on rural character. • Concerns raised over infrastructure capacity: traffic congestion, overstretched GP/dentists/schools, utilities, and train station parking. • Environmental concerns raised in relation to ancient woodland buffer, wildlife impacts and proximity to Blaise Farm. • Quality and appropriateness of development, including dissatisfaction with recent nearby schemes and fear of precedent for further expansion. • An acknowledgement that development may be necessary if infrastructure is secured and strong landscape buffers protect wider countryside.
West Malling and Kings Hill general	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Landscape Character Assessment highlights the importance of open farmland, historic field patterns, hedgerows, rural lanes, woodland, and clear separation between settlements. • Farmland around West Malling is essential to its rural setting, heritage, local identity, tranquillity, and agricultural function. • Kings Hill is supported as the logical location for major growth due to its existing schools, healthcare, employment, transport, and services, enabling more sustainable development. • Policy A1 is supported because it protects West Malling from inappropriate development and reduces pressure on surrounding greenfield land. • Concentrating development at Kings Hill helps protect valued landscapes, heritage, and the Green Belt. • The draft spatial strategy is supported, being seen as a pragmatic and sustainable way to meet growth needs while avoiding harmful impacts on West Malling and other sensitive areas. • Dissatisfaction over existing recent development and prospect of further development with reasons around current infrastructure demands and capacity. • Concerns around loss of high-quality (Grade 1 & 2) agricultural land that is actively farmed.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The site as existing contributes to the heritage and rural setting of West Malling, particularly given its proximity to the Conservation Area.
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Responses from statutory consultees and other key organisations

The following organisations provided a response to draft allocations in West Malling Parish. These will be considered in further work to progress the Local Plan.

Site or settlement	Consultee	Key matters raised
KH2 – Land west of Kings Hill and Northwest of Ashton Way/Malling roundabout, West Malling (30 units)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural England Kings Hill Parish Council West Malling Parish Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The allocation is in close proximity (within 15m) of ancient woodland. Any development should take account of potential impacts on ancient woodland. Adjacent to ancient woodland; 15m buffer is inadequate (50m recommended). Located within the Green Belt; no exceptional circumstances demonstrated. Risks to priority habitats and ecological connectivity. This land is Green Belt and should not be built on. Concerns raised around coalescence between the settlements of Kings Hill, Offham and West Malling with impacts of landscape character.
West Malling and Kings Hill general	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offham Parish Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offham Parish Council supports the Draft Local Plan and agrees that no sites in Offham should be allocated. Offham is a Tier 5 settlement with no capacity to support development. Surrounding farmland is vital for food production and should not be lost. Development in nearby parishes will still increase traffic through Offham’s narrow, unsuitable roads. Offham has almost no public transport, so traffic impacts cannot be mitigated.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional housing elsewhere will increase pressure on GPs, schools, and infrastructure.• A Local Plan must include full infrastructure planning across health, highways, and education.• The Parish Council supports preventing coalescence between Offham, West Malling and Kings Hill.• Strong support for Green Belt protection and opposition to reclassifying land as “Grey Belt”.• Support for protecting Local Green Spaces such as Cosgrave Field and the Recreation Ground.
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