

The Tonbridge & Malling Local Development Framework

An overview

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced a new type of plan for shaping and guiding development and new procedures for preparing it, known as a Local Development Framework (LDF).

The LDF for Tonbridge and Malling is progressively replacing the Tonbridge and Malling Borough Local Plan in setting out planning policies and proposals for the area. The LDF comprises a number of documents, the programme for which is set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS).

The Core Strategy was adopted in September 2007. This sets out the spatial vision, spatial objectives and core policies for the borough. All subsequent Development Plan Documents (DPDs) produced for the borough must be in conformity with it. As a spatial plan the Core Strategy has drawn upon a range of strategies produced by the local authority and other organisations that have implications for the development or protection of land.

T&MBC has also produced a Development Land Allocations DPD, which identifies sites for housing, employment and retail development in the borough, and a Tonbridge Central Area Action Plan, which establishes detailed proposals and policies for the centre of Tonbridge. Both of these documents were adopted in April 2008.

The latest element of the LDF, the Managing Development and the Environment DPD has just completed its consultation period and is now with T&MBC for consideration. The aim will be to submit the plan to the Secretary of State in the summer of 2009 following at least one further stage of consultation on a full draft of the plan. The plan will then be subject to Public Examination before an independent Inspector who will make binding recommendations to the Council before the plan can be adopted, probably some time during 2010 or earlier if possible.

The usefulness and continued appropriateness of the previous Tonbridge and Malling Borough Local Plan policies were subject to a rigorous review during 2007 because only those that meet current Government guidelines were able to be saved beyond 28 September 2007.

Borough Green Parish Council acted promptly to ensure that the village was adequately represented for consideration in the borough's documentation and as a result, The Borough Green Parish Plan – Action Plan was one of those saved.

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