

# Core Strategy Review - Inspectors' Action Points

Matter 11 – Other Policies - Policy CSD3: Rural  
and Tourism Development

22 January 2021



## **Core Strategy Review Examination – Inspectors’ Action Points**

# **Contents**

Matter 11 – Other Policies - Policy CSD3: Rural and Tourism Development.....	2
1. Introduction.....	2
Appendix 1: Proposed Modifications to Policy CSD3: Rural and Tourism Development and supporting text .....	3

# **Matter 11 – Other Policies - Policy CSD3: Rural and Tourism Development**

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. During the hearing session for Matter 11, Other Policies, the council undertook to review Policy CSD3: Rural and Tourism Development.
- 1.2. Proposed modifications were identified to:
  - Allow flexibility by removing wording that results in a closed list;
  - Reflect the wider range of rural housing and economic uses set out in the National Planning Policy Framework;
  - Review the wording of the second paragraph regarding loss of facilities in the ‘centre’ of any village; and
  - Expand the definition of ‘community facilities’ to reflect a wider range of uses including pubs, shops and places of worship.
- 1.3. Proposed modifications to Policy CSD3 and supporting text addressing these points are set out in Appendix 1 to this note.
- 1.4. Some additional modifications are also proposed to improve the clarity of the policy by cross-referencing some general principles to the relevant development plan policy.

**Core Strategy Review Examination – Inspectors' Action Points**

**Appendix 1: Proposed Modifications to Policy CSD3: Rural and Tourism Development and supporting text**

## **Core Strategy Review Examination – Inspectors' Action Points**

*This page is kept intentionally blank*

## Core Strategy Review Examination – Inspectors’ Action Points

### Rural and Tourism Development

- *Primary aims: A1, A2, A3, A8, B6, B7, B8, C5, C8, D2, D3, D4, D8 (see section 3.1).*
- *Main local evidence base studies: Sustainability Appraisal, Rural Services Study, Employment Land Review.*

- 5.20 This policy provides a district-wide approach to economic and social regeneration, complementing spatial strategy policies through addressing needs of small settlements, businesses and the countryside. In line with national policy a positive framework needs to be provided for more scattered functions and places, small business and rural needs, capitalising on sense of place and heritage. This must accord with countryside protection and sympathetic design and landscaping.
- 5.21 Appropriate flexibility is needed for genuinely rural uses – including the exceptional rural housing need in areas outside settlements – where the countryside protection principle established in SS1 would otherwise substantially constrict development, and the detail of this may be brought forward through policies in neighbourhood plans. (In addition, Places and Policies Local Plan policies E6 and E7 contain further guidance on this issue.)
- 5.22 Like most of Kent and many rural areas, the district’s economy is reliant on the employment generated by small firms, but diversity brings its own resilience and a range of opportunities that need to be seized.
- 5.23 Improved communications, particularly digital, can improve the competitive offer of rural East Kent economies. The rural parts of the district have particular infrastructure and communication needs, particularly regeneration requirements in places like Romney Marsh. More immediate benefits to business from upgrades such as High Speed 1 rail are most likely to be felt in Folkestone and the M20 corridor, but competitive advantages accrue in ‘access dependent’ sectors elsewhere (for example tourism).
- 5.24 Improved connectivity will be important, through maximising transport choice, reinforcing coastal travel routes, and promoting rural cycling and walking as healthy activities in their own right.
- 5.25 Many of the district’s enterprises, especially smaller ones, are found in its villages and countryside. In particular, tourism-related activities have traditionally been important along the coast. Tourism activities (visiting an area for leisure, business or family reasons) by their nature present challenges in co-ordinating the work of different sectors and the mix of attractions and accommodation across a wide area. Overnight stays by visitors to the district need to increase to maximise value to the local economy.
- 5.26 The district still retains many traditional tourism facilities, especially in coastal areas – for instance beach resorts and the Romney Hythe and Dymchurch Railway – as well as accommodation such as caravan and camping parks on the Romney Marsh.

## Core Strategy Review Examination – Inspectors’ Action Points



### Features of the Rural and Coastal Built Environment

	Conservation Areas		Churches		Military Museums
	District Boundaries		Acoustic Mirrors		Castles
	Settlements		Windmills		Martello Towers
	Royal Military Canal				

**Figure 5.1 Features of the rural and coastal built environment**

5.27 Figure 5.1 shows that although clusters exist on the coast, key features of the district’s attractive historic environment are also found across the North Downs and Romney Marsh, especially the built environment and military artefacts. The latter may particularly help to attract visitors given increasing interest in the area’s role as a frontier in times of national conflict.

## Core Strategy Review Examination – Inspectors’ Action Points

- 5.28 The Heritage Strategy identifies the positive role heritage can play in the district’s future, including:
- Acting as a catalyst for economic and social regeneration;
  - Encouraging tourism and visitors; and
  - Contributing to improved public health and wellbeing.
- 5.29 However, while proposals affecting heritage assets will be considered positively, some assets are worthy of conservation for their significance alone and some may be incapable of re-use or being made viable. Places and Policies Local Plan policy HE1 supports proposals that provide, where possible, a viable use that assists in social and economic regeneration and ensures the long term protection, conservation and, where appropriate, the enhancement of heritage assets in line with legislation.
- 5.30 This approach will be complemented by the restoration and enhancement of historic military landmarks within towns, and the upgrade of cultural attractions in the Urban Area. Events in and around the town centres, such as the Folkestone Triennial, are drawing in new visitors. Improvements to the public realm and the retail, leisure and cultural mix of centres, and maintaining sufficient accommodation will underpin tourism in the Urban Area in line with policies CSD6, CSD7 and SS10.

### Policy CSD3

#### Rural and Tourism Development

Proposals for new development in locations outside the settlements identified in the settlement hierarchy may ~~only~~ be allowed if a rural or coastal location is essential, ~~and or~~ to protect or enhance ~~meet~~ green infrastructure assets in line with Policy CSD4 requirements. Development in these locations will ~~only~~ be acceptable in principle if forming a site for:

- a. Affordable housing (rural exceptions in accordance with CSD1, or allocated sites);
- b. Accommodation to provide for an essential need for a rural worker (including a person who is in majority control of a farm business) to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;
- ~~b-c.~~ Agriculture, forestry or equine development;
- ~~e-d.~~ Sustainable rural diversification, and tourism enterprises as set out below;
- ~~d-e.~~ Local public or essential services and community facilities in line with policies SS3/4;
- ~~e-f.~~ Replacement buildings (on a like-for-like basis) and the subdivision of existing residential dwellings;
- ~~g.~~ The re-use of a redundant or disused building and the enhancement of its immediate setting;



## Core Strategy Review Examination – Inspectors’ Action Points

~~f.h.~~ Building conversions ~~of buildings~~ that contribute to the character of their location;

~~g.i.~~ Sustainable rural transport improvements;

~~h.j.~~ Essential flood defences or strategic coastal recreation; or

k. Development that makes optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of a heritage asset.

To ~~underpin~~ maintain the ~~sustainable development sustainability of rural communities of the countryside~~, the loss of community facilities (including local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) in the ~~centre of~~ any village will be resisted unless appropriately demonstrated to be unviable in line with Places and Policies Local Plan Policy C2, ~~and rural economic diversification will be supported, especially through the re-use or refurbishment of redundant rural buildings.~~

Tourist, recreation and rural economic uses will be appropriately protected and new development allowed within defined settlements in the settlement hierarchy. Where sites are unavailable within settlements – and development is proportionate in scale/impact and also accessible by a choice of means of transport – it may also be acceptable on the edge of Strategic Towns and Service Centres, and failing that, Rural Centres and Primary Villages.

Rural economic development must be consistent with the green infrastructure (GI) and coastal and water environment principles set out in Policies CSD4 and CSD5.

- 5.31 The district’s rural areas offer a range of attractions from Stelling Minnis in the AONB through to Dungeness at the southern tip of the district. The district’s high-quality natural environment can help to support ‘footloose’ enterprises, existing tourist accommodation and opportunities for new small-scale high-quality accommodation and marketing of local food, drink, craft and natural produce. The North Downs offers particular opportunities for investment in existing tourist facilities, including Westenhanger and Lympne Castles, through the development of a new garden settlement (see policies SS6-SS9) and at, or adjoining, Port Lympne Reserve, subject to sympathetic consideration of the natural and historic environment.
- 5.32 As a rural district with places of particular interest to visitors specifically because of their unique environments (for example, Dungeness), rural and coastal development must be appropriately managed. Planning for rural areas should therefore sympathetically utilise and enrich the beauty and character of the countryside. Therefore this policy should be read in parallel with national policy and environmental and coastal policy, particularly with green infrastructure provisions (CSD4) and Habitats Regulations Assessment findings on recreational uses and impact. Given the characteristics of the district, the scope of this policy is wide.
- 5.33 In the countryside, rural services and infrastructure for residents and visitors alike may be found in a range of locations and serve far afield. It is an important principle that the stock of rural economic or social uses should be managed for the benefit of the countryside as a whole. National policy requires that services and facilities found within settlements should be retained and protected. In applying Policy CSD3 the council will have regard to National Planning Policy Framework which states that planning policies should enable “the retention and development of accessible local services and

## Core Strategy Review Examination – Inspectors’ Action Points

community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.”

- 5.3~~3~~4 There is a particular sensitivity around new buildings and structures in the countryside. This is especially so in landscapes such as the AONB or where not within or adjoining villages. Existing building(s) that contribute to the character and appearance of the local area by virtue of their historic traditional or vernacular form and are in sound structural condition should be retained and re-used. Buildings should be converted without requiring substantial alteration, extension or rebuilding, and proposed works must not detract from the character of the building(s) or their setting. Re-use and conversion of buildings can also be more resource efficient and sustainable than new build development.