

## Executive Summary

Medway Council is preparing a new Local Plan to provide direction on the future growth of the area. The aim of the Local Plan is to ensure that Medway grows sustainably, to provide land for the homes, jobs, infrastructure and services that people need, whilst protecting and enhancing the qualities of the area's environment and heritage. The Local Plan shares the ambitions of the council's regeneration strategy, 'Medway 2035' for a successful waterfront University city noted for its revitalised urban centres, its stunning natural and historic assets, and countryside.

The Local Plan seeks to manage change in ways that benefit Medway's people and its environment. It considers how we can accommodate new development, without damaging the quality of life and our environment. It looks at how we can help address inequalities in health, social and economic opportunities. It sets out where we need to upgrade infrastructure and services. It reflects how the area and our lives have changed over recent decades, and how we need to plan for future changes in how we live, work, travel, use services and socialise.

This document represents the third formal round of consultation that will inform the content of the new Local Plan. It is grounded in a wide ranging evidence base, including development needs, transport, and environmental issues, and technical assessments of the potential impacts arising from development and policy approaches.

This work has confirmed that urban regeneration continues to form the foundation for Medway's growth, with the potential to make the best use of land and extend opportunities for all. However a wider supply of land is required to meet the full range and mix of development needed. Infrastructure is a major constraint to delivering growth in Medway. The council has assessed that the strongest means of securing the infrastructure improvements needed in Medway, is through strategic scale development linked to upgrades to transport, education, health and wider services to enable new housing. An option has been identified to develop a small rural town based around Hoo St Werburgh. The plan would direct a smaller proportion of growth towards suburban and village expansion, recognising the difficulties to mitigate infrastructure pressures in such areas.

This consultation document presents four development options based around variations of the sequential approach to growth outlined above:

- Meeting objectively assessed need for housing of 29,463 homes by 2035
- Investing in infrastructure to unlock growth
- Meeting Government's proposed calculation of local housing need of 37,143 homes by 2035
- Consideration of development within Lodge Hill SSSI

The document also sets out suggested policies that would guide development to achieve the ambitions set for Medway's sustainable growth.

The consultation on the Development Strategy document runs from 16 March to 11 May 2018. Further details, including supporting and background documents are available on the council's website at: [www.medway.gov.uk/futuremedway](http://www.medway.gov.uk/futuremedway).