

<b>Local Plan Panel Meeting</b>		<b>Agenda Item: 8</b>
<b>Meeting Date</b>	20 September 2018	
<b>Report Title</b>	For Information: New Garden Communities Prospectus Update	
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cllr Gerry Lewin, Cabinet Member for Planning	
<b>SMT Lead</b>	Emma Wiggins	
<b>Head of Service</b>	James Freeman	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Gill Harris	
<b>Key Decision</b>	No	
<b>Classification</b>	Open	
<b>Recommendations</b>	None	

## 1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report updates the Panel on work connected with the publication of the New Garden Communities Prospectus by the Council in April 2018.

## 2 Background

- 2.1 Encouraged by Government, authorities are increasingly exploring the potential of new communities as a means to address housing need and other objectives.
- 2.2 Following consideration of the Peter Brett Associates report 'Choices for Housing Growth' in February 2018, the Panel agreed publication of a New Garden Communities Prospectus as a means to determine the degree of interest in building new garden communities in Swale. Sitting alongside the Local Plan review process, if taken forward, they would be considered as part of the Issues and Options stage of the Local Plan.
- 2.3 The Prospectus was launched on 27 April 2018 and set out the Council's vision and design expectations for new communities of 2,500 dwellings and above. The launch was followed by a workshop with developers and landowners.
- 2.4 The Prospectus set out a two stage submission process. The first required an expression of interest to be made; with officers then raising a number of matters with each promotor that they believed should be the focus of particular attention within the final submissions. The second stage was the submission of detailed proposals themselves on 3 August 2018.

2.5 Four detailed submissions were made by the deadline (see location plans in Appendix 1):

- 1) NS1: Land south-east Sittingbourne: 628 ha<sup>1</sup>, circa 11,500 homes (inc. 10% affordable housing), 120,000 sq. m commercial space, community uses (local retail space within 4 district centres), GP surgeries, education (up to 4 primary schools, secondary school, possible FE), sport and leisure, natural and semi-natural open space and amenity greenspace. New motorway junction and M2/A2 link road to be provided.
- 2) NS3 Land at Bobbing: 208 ha, circa 2,500 homes (up to 40% affordable housing), 100 ha of open space, community facilities including primary school, health centre, local centre, village hall and sports pitches, 3 ha of employment floorspace, stopping up/re-alignment of Sheppey Way.
- 3) NS4 Land at south-east Faversham: 131 ha, circa 2,500 homes (inc. aim for 40% affordable housing), up to 20,000 sq. m of commercial space. Community uses (4 local centres, health centre), education (primary school), sport and leisure (inc. possible relocation of cricket club and football ground), network of habitats, spaces.
- 4) NS5 Land at Ashford Road, North Street, Faversham: 319 ha, circa 5,000 homes (a 'strong emphasis' on affordable housing). No precise details, but indicated as additionally included employment provision, a High Street for retail/mixed use and market hall, primary and secondary school, community uses, allotments, community orchard, playing fields and areas, together with open space and woodland. Re-alignment of the A251 through the site is indicated, together with improvements at J6.

2.6 NS2 Land at Rushenden Marshes was withdrawn.

2.7 Other submissions were made which did not meet the Prospectus minimum dwelling size. These included a number of small sites at Neames Forstal/Selling and two sites, adjacent to NS4 at Faversham, comprising some 42 ha to the north of the A2 (in separate land ownerships). All the promoters have been advised that their sites will not be further considered via the Prospectus process, but will be assessed as part of the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment process. In the case of the sites adjacent NS4 at Faversham, the promoters have also been advised that should a future decision be taken by the Council to allocate substantial new provision for the Local Plan review in this part of Faversham, consideration of all the sites would be undertaken together. As a result, it is understood that all the parties in this area have had at least had initial discussions about future joint working should that become necessary.

2.8 The process for considering the four submission is now as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> Land north of the A2 is not currently submitted as part of the Prospectus process. However, the promotor has been advised that it will be considered by SBC, given the connections with the proposed Sittingbourne Northern Relief Road. The promotor has indicated their intention, in due course, to amend their submissions to formally include the area.

- Current and on-going: Initial independent assessment by consultant of proposals against Prospectus expectations and further requests for information from officers.
- September 2018: Officer meetings with scheme promoters.
- 16 October 2018: All-Member presentations and Q&A session with scheme promoters, together with consultant's draft independent assessment. Full submissions to be available for Members ahead of session.
- 31 January 2019: Local Plan Panel to receive final consultant's independent assessment and to resolve whether new communities should be considered as spatial alternatives for later consultation, as part of the Issues and Options stage of the Local Plan process, i.e. that they are one of a number of potential alternatives for distributing future development levels across the Borough.
- June 2019: Local Plan Panel agreement and steer on all potential spatial alternatives.
- September 2019: Local Plan Panel to agree Issues and Options (inc. the spatial alternatives) consultation document and indicative draft preferred option.
- Then as per timetable set out in Local Development Scheme.

2.9 Officers are also exploring the possibility of submitting a bid for financial support from the Government's New Communities Prospectus. If this is progressed, it is likely to be based on providing technical and other 'knowhow' based on the overall process that the Council is engaged in, rather than site specifics. Members will be kept up to date on this.

2.10 A Member tour of new community locations is also being organised.

### **3 Proposals**

3.1 As an information report, Members are asked to note the report.

### **4 Alternative Options**

4.1 As an information report, there are no alternative options.

### **5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed**

5.1 Consultation on broad issues relating to the principle and delivery of new garden communities were canvassed via the *Looking Ahead* consultation in June 2018.

### **6 Implications**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Implications</b>
Corporate Plan	Supports the Council's corporate priorities for a borough and a community to be proud of.

Financial, Resource and Property	Within Local Plan budget.
Legal and Statutory	None anticipated at this time.
Crime and Disorder	None anticipated at this time.
Sustainability	The Local Plan process will be subject to Sustainability Appraisal.
Health and Wellbeing	None at this time.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None at this time.
Equality and Diversity	The Local Plan process will be subject to a Community Impact Assessments at appropriate points.

## 7 Appendices

7.1 Site locations plans of submitted new community proposals.

## 8 Background Papers

- [New Garden Communities Prospectus April 2018.](#)
- Detailed Prospectus Submissions (In Member's Room)

**Appendix 1 Submitted new community proposals**

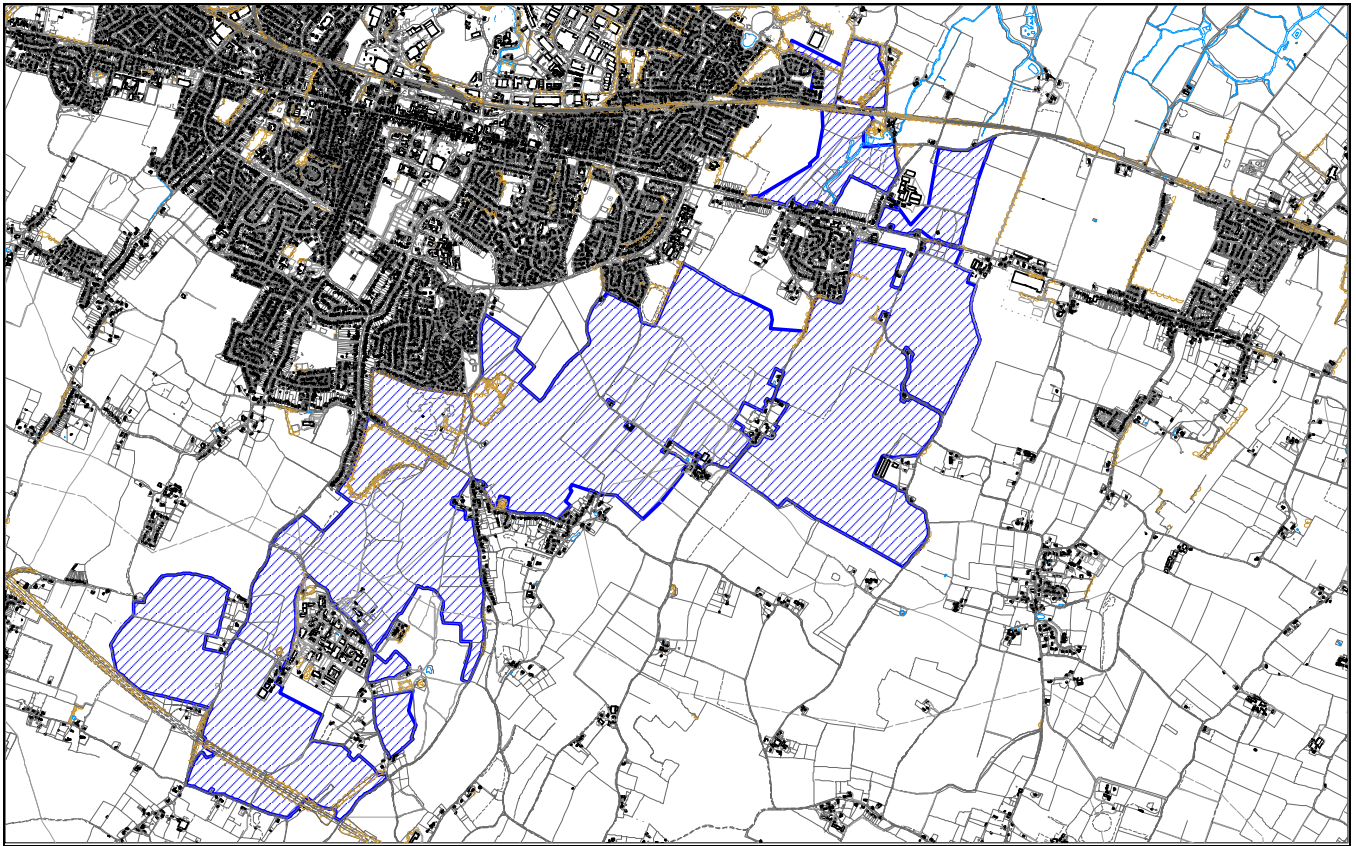


Figure 1 NS1 Land at south east Sittingbourne

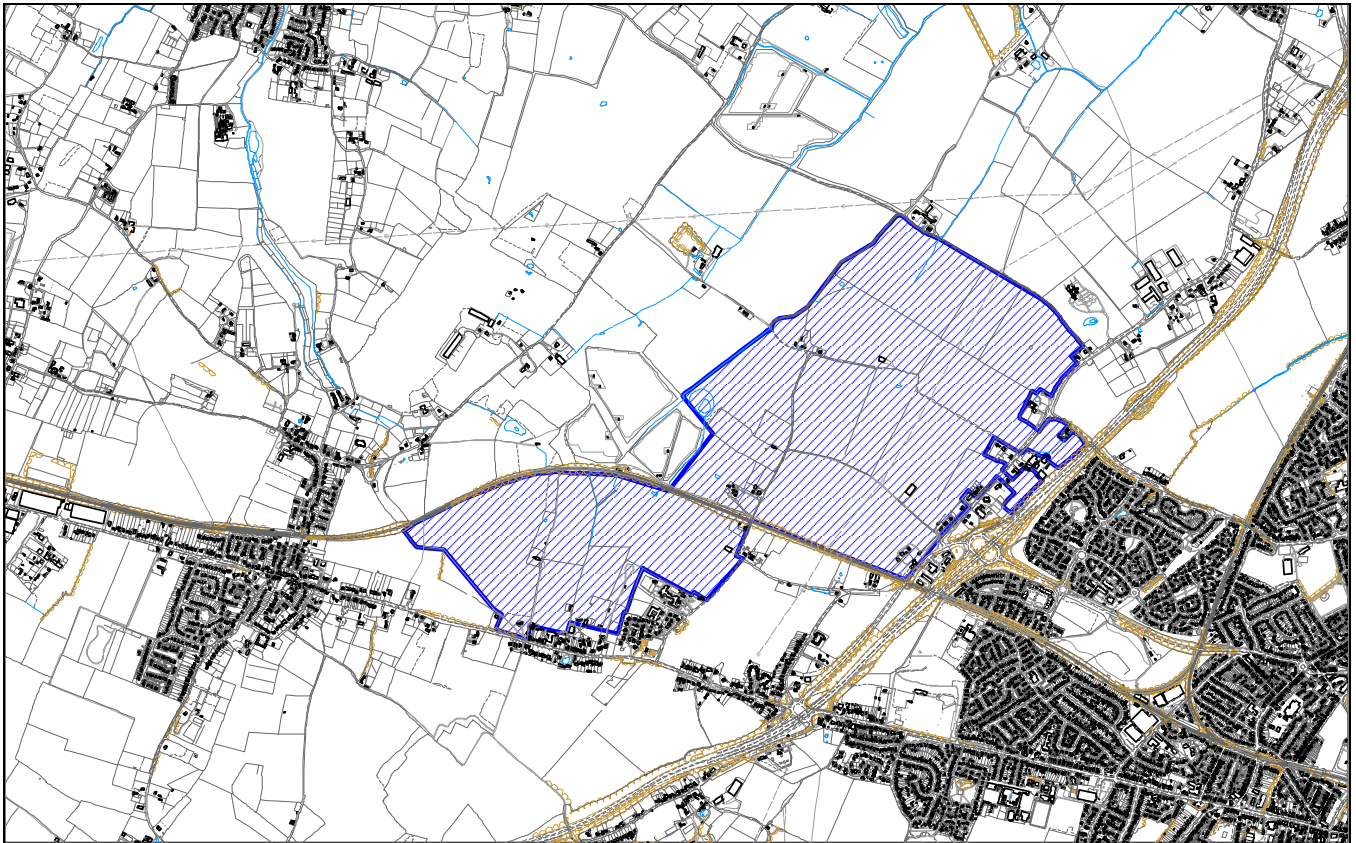


Figure 2 NS3 Land at Bobbing

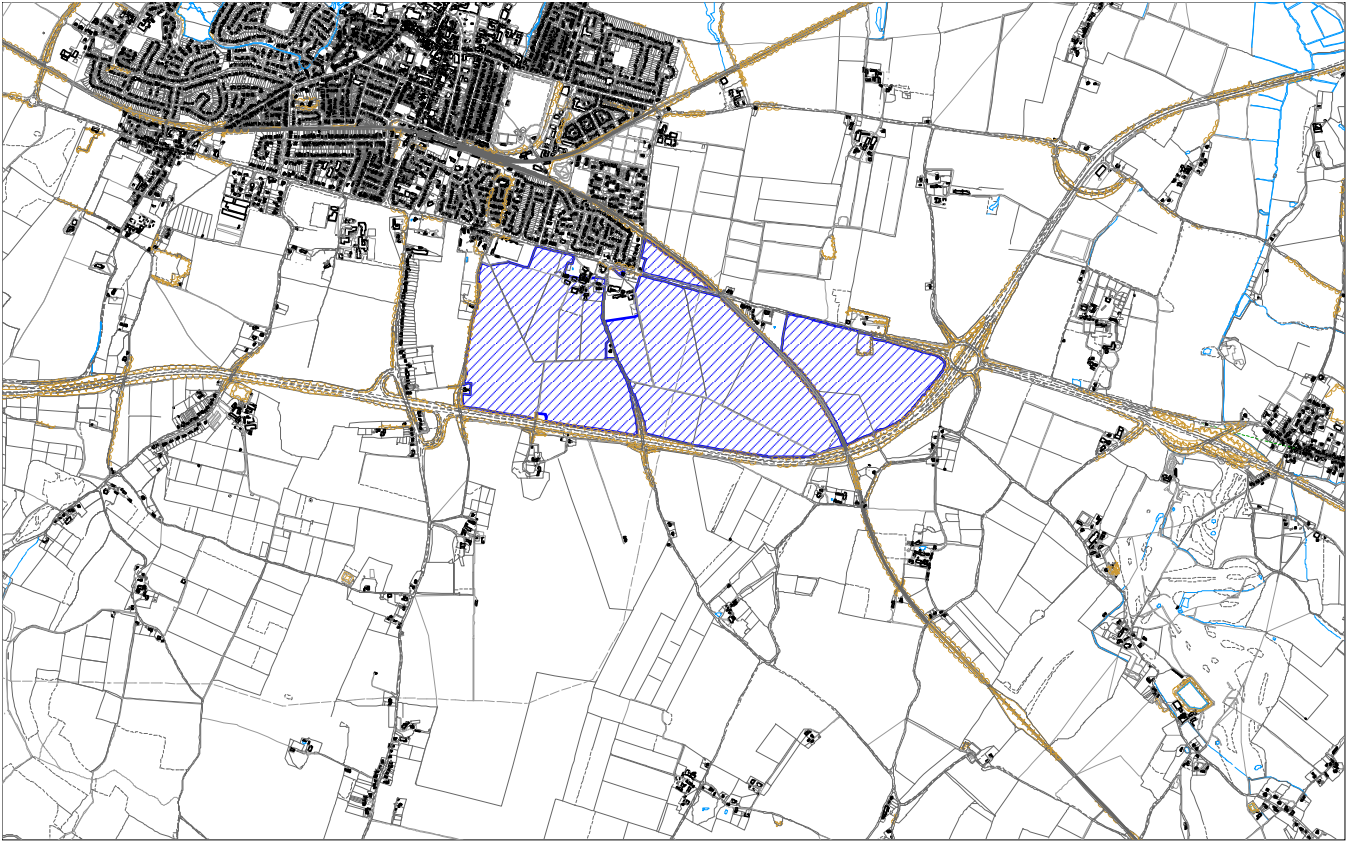


Figure 3 NS4 Land at south east Faversham

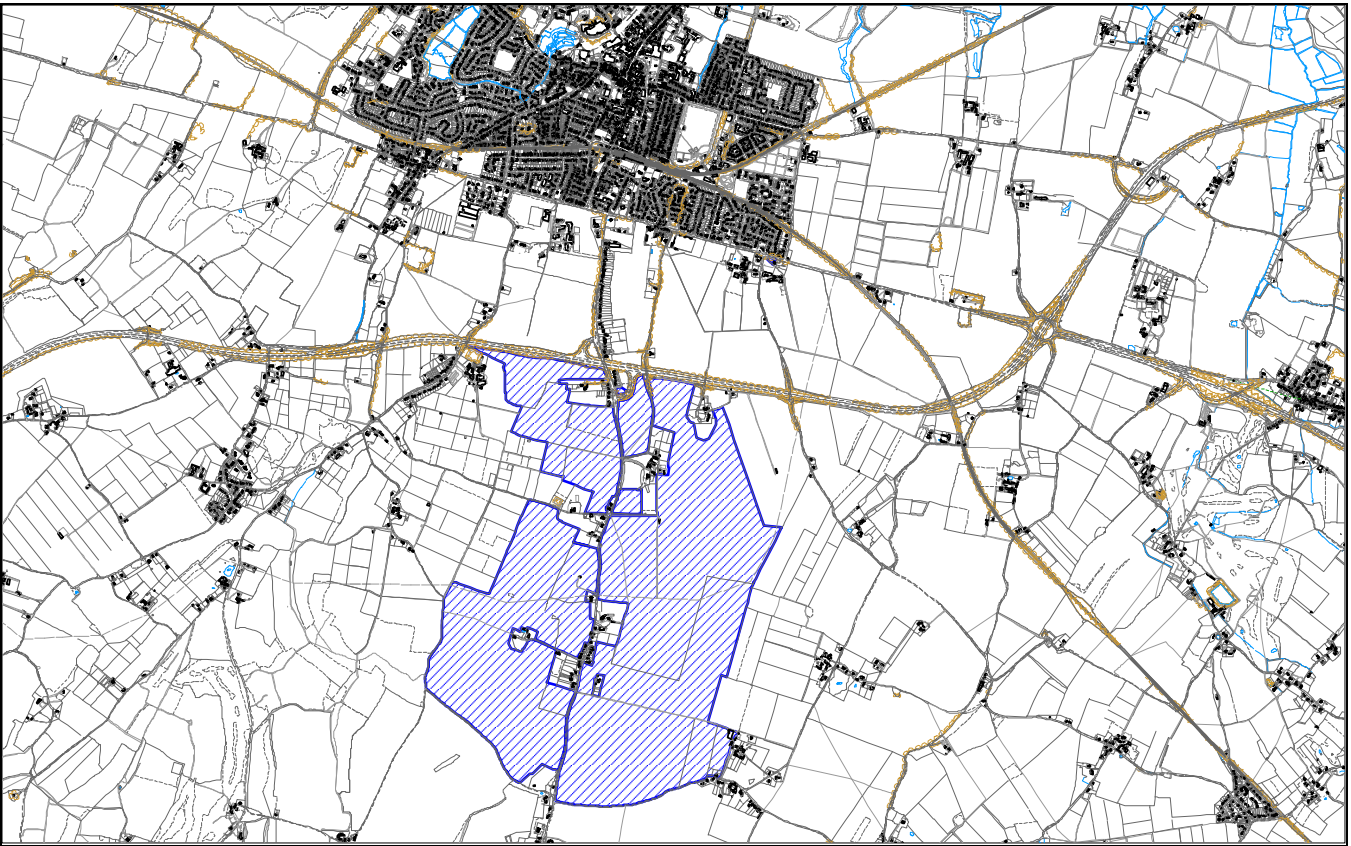


Figure 4 NS5 Land at Ashford Road, North Street, Faversham