



# Ashford Local Plan 2030 – Main Modifications – September 2018

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### What is the Local Plan?

The Local Plan 2030 allocates sites for development as well as establishing planning policies and guidance to ensure local development is built in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.

It addresses housing, employment, retail, leisure, transport, community infrastructure and environmental issues such as adapting to climate change and ensuring high quality design.

The general principle of the Local Plan is to encourage growth within the economy of Ashford to provide homes, employment, retail floor space and infrastructure such as community facilities. Whilst growth in the economy is important, the plan also seeks to protect Ashford's valued assets such as heritage, leisure, nature and open spaces.

### The Local Plan process so far

Draft versions of the Local Plan went out for consultation in June 2016 and July 2017, and following this a final 'submission' version was sent to the Secretary of State in December 2017. They appointed two Independent Inspectors to undertake an Examination to assess whether the Plan was 'Sound' and had been prepared in accordance with legal requirements.

Part of the Examination process involved hearing sessions where those who had commented on the plan during consultation stages were invited to attend and had the opportunity to respond to matters and issues raised by the Inspectors in person. These hearings were held between April and June 2018.

### Why are the Council making these Modifications (changes)?

Following the close of the public hearing sessions on the Local Plan, the Inspectors provided the Council with a Post Hearing Advice Note, indicating where they recommend changes to be made to the Local Plan to address 'soundness' concerns. The Council has taken these recommendations forward and is making modifications to the Plan to address them.

In addition to changes outlined in the Inspectors Post Hearing Note, a number of other changes/modifications were proposed throughout the Examination process, either through Statements of Common Ground agreed with statutory bodies, through hearing statements or verbally in hearing sessions following discussion with the Inspectors and/or other parties. All documents are available to view on the Local Plan examination webpages at <https://www.ashford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-to-2030/examination-documents/>

### What are Main Modifications and Additional Modifications?

Where any of the changes proposed are significant and would alter the Plan's intention or policy application, these are known as 'Main Modifications' and require public consultation in accordance with regulations.

However, some of the modifications are minor and deal more with factual updates and/or adding clarity. These are known as 'Additional Modifications' and are not open for consultation, but are provided in a separate schedule alongside the consultation for clarity.

### Where can I view the consultation documents?

The consultation documents can be viewed online via the consultation portal <https://www.ashford.gov.uk/your-community/consultations/>

Hard copies of the consultation documents are available to view, during opening hours, at the following deposit points in the Borough:

Ashford Borough Council, The Civic Centre,  
Tannery Lane, Ashford, Kent, TN23 1PL

Ashford Gateway,  
Church Road, Ashford, Kent, TN23 1AS

Charing Library,  
Market Place, Charing, Ashford, TN27 0LR

Tenterden Gateway,  
2 Manor Row, Tenterden TN30 6HP

Wye Library,  
6 Upper Bridge Street, Wye, Ashford, TN25 5AF



Parish Councils, Community Forums and other community groups and statutory bodies will receive copies of the documents at the start of the consultation period.

### When can I make comments?

The consultation is open between the 13th September 2018 and 5pm on the 26th October 2018.

Comments must be received by the Council by 5pm on the 26th October 2018

### How can I make comments?

The easiest way to make comments is through the consultation portal, via the schedule of modifications: <https://www.ashford.gov.uk/your-community/consultations/>

This is a simple process which enables you to add and manage your comments directly to each modification, however you will need to be registered and log-on before you can submit your comments.

You can submit comments by clicking on the "Add comments" link that you will find at the bottom of each main modification. This will in turn open a representation form where you can provide your written response. This includes the option to upload a file (pdf, MS Word, etc) to support your comments.

Please note that if your attachment includes text which is the comment itself, please copy it in Word format to [planning.policy@ashford.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@ashford.gov.uk), so that the council are able to copy the text into the portal on your behalf

There is also the option to download and print copies of the document and representation forms. Hard copies of the schedule and forms are available at The Civic Centre in Ashford, at Tenterden Town Hall and public libraries throughout the borough, or can be requested from the Council. You may submit as many individual comments as required.

Representation forms may be submitted by email or in hard copy. You should send your comments:

by email to [planning.policy@ashford.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@ashford.gov.uk)

by post or in person to: *Planning Policy Team, Ashford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford, TN23 1PL*

### What comments can I make?

The consultation is limited to comments on the Main Modifications (MM) only. The consultation does not offer the opportunity to repeat or raise further representations about other parts of the Plan, or seek wider changes, which are not relevant to a Main Modification.

Comments made during the previous public consultations on the draft Local Plan and during the Examination process are in front of the Inspectors and will be considered by them in their final report to the council.

In commenting on the 'Main Modifications' to the Local Plan the emphasis should be on whether the Local Plan, taking account of the proposed modification, is 'legally compliant' and that it is 'sound'. Guidance Note 2 explains what these terms mean and will aid making comments on these issues which is available to download from the consultation portal here: <https://www.ashford.gov.uk/consultations>

### What will happen to my comments? And what happens next?

As the Local Plan is now within Examination stage, the comments received will be sent to the appointed Inspectors for them to consider. If the Inspectors believe they require further discussion about any comments made, they may request clarification in writing from the relevant parties or re-open the hearing sessions for public discussion.

Once the Inspectors are satisfied they have all the information they require, they will provide the Council with their final written report on whether they consider the modified Local Plan is 'sound' and whether it can be adopted by the Council.

### Need assistance to make comments?

If you require assistance in making representations or using the portal please do not hesitate to get in touch with a member of staff in the policy team who will be happy to assist you.

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[planning.policy@ashford.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@ashford.gov.uk)