



Summary report responding to the consultation on changes to the Planning Validation Checklist – Swale Borough Council

PLANNING VALIDATION CHECKLIST - CONSULTATION REPORT

26 January 2026

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Introduction

The Planning Validation Requirements set out the plans and documents that must be submitted alongside planning applications.

The draft Planning Validation Requirements have been produced in accordance with Paragraph 44 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which advises that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should publish a list of their information requirements for applications submitted for planning permission.

There are two types of Planning Validation Requirements:

- National validation requirements are set by central government. They are the same for all LPAs in England.
- Local validation requirements set out the conditions and documents required for planning applications in Maidstone and Swale Borough Councils.

National Planning Policy Guidance sets out a three-step process for preparing and revising local validation requirements. According to the guidance, the Council must:

- Review the existing requirements
- Consult on any proposed changes
- Publish the revised validation requirements on the LPAs websites

Last year, the Council reviewed the existing requirements and consulted on the following proposed changes:

1. Introduce a limit on the age of documents and information (**Maidstone and Swale**):
 - A5: Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment
 - A6: Ecological/Protected Species Survey

Maidstone Only

2. To include the requirement for a Parking Stress Surveys (A16 & A17) to be undertaken for all applications for new or converted Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and designated settlements (agreed by Cabinet in July as part of the HMO SPD).
3. To introduce the requirement for applications to demonstrate how they have used Building for Life 12 (BfL12) when designing developments.

The survey was open between 9 September 2025 and 21 October 2025. It was promoted online through Maidstone Borough Council's Let's Talk website, social media channels and a banner, with hyperlink to the survey, was placed on Swale Borough Council's website.

Residents who are signed up to consultation reminders were notified and sent an invitation to participate. External planning consultants, developers and agents

were also sent a notification regarding the consultation and were invited to participate in the survey via email.

There were 101 responses to the Let's Talk survey (including four parish councils and one 'other' stakeholder).

There was one response to the proposed changes in relation to Swale Borough Council:

- A5 Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment and
- A6 Ecological/Protected Species Survey

Findings – Swale Borough Council Response

- **100% The one response received for Swale Borough Council did not support the proposal to only accept Flood Risk Assessments and Exception tests that have been updated/created in the 12 months prior to the application being submitted.**
- **100% The one response received for Swale Borough Council supported the proposal to only accept ecological information that has been updated/created in the 18 months prior to the application being submitted**

Notes on the report

As an online survey is a self-selection methodology with residents free to choose whether to participate or not, it is not fully representative of the wider adult population.

This report discusses the unweighted results to the survey.

Please indicate if you are responding in relation to the Validation Requirements for Maidstone Council or Swale Council.

Maidstone Council (-)

Swale Council (1) 100%

In what capacity are you responding to this consultation?

Swale Borough Resident (-)

Swale based business (-)

Planning Agent (1)

Developer (-)

Architect (-)

Someone who works in Swale (and lives elsewhere) (-)

Parish Council - please specify - please specify (-)

Other - stakeholder - please specify - please specify (-)

100%

A5: Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment

Are you in favour of the proposal to only accept Flood Risk Assessments and Exception tests that have been updated/created in the 12 months prior to the application being submitted?

Yes - I support the proposal (-)

No - I do not support the proposal (1)

Not sure/Don't know (-)

100%

A6: Ecological/Protected Species Survey

Are you in favour of the proposal to only accept ecological information that has been updated/created in the 18 months prior to the application being submitted?

Yes - I support the proposal (1)

No - I do not support the proposal (-)

Not sure/Don't know (-)

100%

Additional Comments

Please use the box below for any additional comments regarding the Planning Validation Requirements.

You need better training for the staff, the validation service is the worst in the South East in my experience the training is bad, constant changes in requests, failures consistency etc. It's beyond a joke.

Mid Kent Planning Services Local Validation Checklist response: Comment noted.

Outcome of the Consultation

As the majority of respondents, to the joint consultation, supported the proposed changes they will be adopted from publication of this response. For Swale Borough Council these are:

- A5: Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment
- A6 Ecological/Protected Species Survey.

Survey Demographics

Are you...?

Male (-)

Female (-)

Other - please specify (-)

Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

Yes (-)

No (-)

Prefer not to say (-)

Which of the following age groups do you fall into?

18-24 years (-)

25-34 years (-)

35-44 years (-)

45-54 years (-)

55-64 years (-)

65-74 years (-)

75 years and over (-)

Which of these ethnic groups do you belong to?

Asian/Asian British (Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi/Chinese/Any other Asian background) (-)

Black/African/Caribbean/Black British (African/Caribbean/ Any other Black background) (-)
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups (White & Black Caribbean or African/White & Asian/Any other Asian background) (-)
White (English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British/Irish/Any other White background) (-)
Other ethnic group - please specify (-)

Which of these activities best describes what you are doing at present?

Employed full-time (30 hrs or more a week) (-)
Employed part-time (under 30 hrs a week) (-)
Employed (no guaranteed hrs per week) (-)
Self-employed (-)
In education or training (-)
Looking for work (-)
Looking after the home (-)
Permanently sick or disabled and unable to work (-)
Volunteering (-)
Wholly retired from work (-)
Other - please specify (-)