

Respond by 11:59pm, Thursday 17 September 2026

The window is just eight weeks and covers the summer holidays — please don't leave it until you're back.

Why respond again?

- **Your Regulation 18 comments don't automatically carry through.** The council will send the Inspector only a summary of the Regulation 18 responses, not your response in full.
- **If you want the Inspector to see your points in your own words, make them again now** in a Regulation 19 response.
- **It's also how you ask to take part in the examination hearings in 2027.** Making a Regulation 19 response is the way to request a place at the hearings.
- **The good news: you've already done the thinking.** Check whether your Regulation 18 concern has been answered in the new documents, then reframe it as a Regulation 19 point.

The Inspector's four tests of soundness

Regulation 19 asks one question: is the Plan **sound**? The Inspector checks that against four tests, naming the test helps to make your response count.

1. Positively prepared

Does the Plan meet the area's real needs, the right amount and kinds of housing, jobs and infrastructure and has SDC worked with its neighbours?

2. Justified

Is this the most appropriate strategy? Did SDC properly consider the reasonable alternatives, and is the evidence behind each choice up to date and robust?

3. Effective

Will it happen? Can the sites, roads, schools and utilities genuinely be delivered, with real funding and named owners, within the Plan period?

4. Consistent with national policy

Does it follow the government's rulebook (the NPPF) for example, the strict rules on when Green Belt land can be released?

You don't need to be a planning expert. The Planning Inspectorate says members of the public are not expected to be experts. Inspectors simply need to understand what the concern is, why it matters, and what change you would like. Every Regulation 19 representation submitted on time will be considered during the examination.

The recipe: four steps to a Regulation 19 response

1. **Name the problem and the test.** For example: "The Plan is not sound because [the problem] fails the 'effective' test..."
2. **Point to the evidence.** Quote the Plan's own documents, e.g., the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), flood assessment or policy wording, and say what's missing or doesn't add up.
3. **Add your experience.** "This road floods every winter" or "my GP wait is four weeks", real local knowledge the Inspector can't get anywhere else.
4. **Say what would fix it.** "The Plan should not allocate this site until X is funded", a specific change the Inspector could make.

Use your own words. Identical copy and paste responses carry far less weight, and duplicated text may be disregarded.

Turning a concern into a soundness point

The pattern from tonight's examples (illustrative until Sevenoaks District Council publishes the Regulation 19 documents):

- **Healthcare** (positively prepared) - Not "the medical centre is already busy", but: the upgrade is only identified for a 2032–2042 window with no confirmed programme or start date, so the Plan has not shown healthcare capacity will be delivered when growth needs it.
- **Rail connectivity** (justified) - Not "Edenbridge is not well connected", but: the council has not shown that the proposed station improvements, dependent on unsecured future funding, would increase capacity or materially improve connectivity.

Turning a concern into a soundness point (continued)

- **Walking & cycling (LCWIP)** (justified / accuracy matters) - Don't overstate an option ("it could close the High Street"). Instead: the council has not shown how changes to High Street access, parking and station areas, taken together, would affect local businesses and people who need to park.
- **Infrastructure phasing** (effective / national policy) - Not "no homes until everything is finished", policy allows phased delivery. Instead: housing phases and occupation levels should be tied to delivery of the IDP projects, with firm costs, funding and triggers, so building doesn't run ahead of infrastructure.

Quick reminder: what counts, what doesn't

Likely to count

- Traffic, road safety, parking, trains and buses
- Schools, GPs, water, sewage and utilities capacity
- Flooding and drainage
- Green Belt, wildlife and landscape
- Genuinely affordable homes and housing mix
- Whether infrastructure keeps pace with building

Won't help your case

- Effect on your house price
- Views about developers' motives
- Simply not liking change
- Copy-and-paste template objections
- "I object" with no link to a soundness argument

Further help is coming, with sessions from NEDRA, Edenbridge Town Council and Sevenoaks District Council. All dates once known will be published on our website and Facebook page.

Don't forget to respond by 11:59pm, Thursday 17 September 2026

Every on-time response will be considered by the Inspector.

8

weeks to respond

28,000+

comments at
Regulation 18

4

tests of soundness

The road to adoption



Your response in four steps

1

Problem

2

Evidence

3

Experience

4

Fix