

Proposed consultation response:

Maldon District Council's response does not consider individual policies, rather it comments on the Plan as a whole.

Maldon District Council is broadly supportive of the breadth of policies in the South East Marine Plan; there are no obvious oversights or gaps.

There needs to be a statement at the start of the Plan that the policies should not be read in isolation, but as a whole. For example, it is not clear that a proposal that is supported by an infrastructure policy may also conflict with a climate change policy.

The Plan does not contain a policy hierarchy. Are some policies more important than others? How much weight should be given to individual policies or objectives? The approach taken by the National Parks would be an example to follow. National Parks have two statutory objectives, but the Sandford principle (enshrined in the 1995 Environment Act) gives greater weight to 'the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area'. Another example would be Local Plans, which have key 'strategic' policies and other, non-strategic policies.