



Bradbourne Residents' Association (BRA)

Newsletter Extra – November 2016

A PLETHORA OF PLANS

In recent times it seems one only has to open the Sevenoaks Chronicle, tune into Kent Radio, or look at a council website to find there's some new plan being proposed. Your Committee is doing its best to be alert to those that have some bearing on our neighbourhood and list below a few that fall into that category.

Plans for a Premier Inn hotel in Hitchen Hatch Lane

Well known has been the granting, by Sevenoaks District Council's Development Control Committee on 20th October, of planning permission for this 83-bed hotel on the site of the District Council's Sennocke car park, opposite the railway station. Construction works is expected to begin in the early summer of 2017 lasting around 14 months. See:

<http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/news/news-for-2016/october/sevenoaks-set-to-join-the-inn-crowd-with-new-hotel>

The Local Plan

The current Local Plan for Sevenoaks District Council (SDC), (that's covering Sevenoaks, Swanley & Edenbridge) was agreed in 2012. The plan projects housing development over 20 years and maintains this is achievable without any infringement of the Green Belt.

However, SDC is now considering a new Local Plan, again covering 20 years. See: <http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/services/housing/planning/local-plan-and-planning-policy/new-local-plan-2015-35>. This is because of a Central Government imposed target of 12,400 new housing units over that period. That's a 375% increase over the 2012 plan target. As the district is 93% Green Belt, this will not be achievable without some encroachment on it.

It has led SDC to action the following:

- 1) A **Call for Sites** to be offered for development. Some 600 submissions have been received, 89% of which are in the Green Belt.
- 2) To commission **Ove Arup & Partners** to review Green Belt zones in the District, to determine which fulfil the purpose of Green Belt and to see which might be suitable for housing. The review is due to be delivered on 17 January 2017 and an obvious concern is that it will be used to justify development in the Green Belt.

The various residents' associations of Sevenoaks, including BRA, have come together to co-ordinate a response to this concern. However, there are some specific worries relating to our own locality. To date, submissions resulting from the Call for Sites include 2 within the Bradbourne neighbourhood. They are the small park at the rear of 27-43 Pontoise Close and the field on the northern side of the A25, opposite the end of Robyns Way, currently used to graze Peter Feldgate's horses. These were submitted by the current owners, Sevenoaks Town Council and SDC respectively. See:

<http://documents.sevenoaks.gov.uk/Environment%20and%20Planning/Planning/Planning%20Policy/Evidence%20Base%20and%20Topic%20Papers/SHLAA/21%20Sevenoaks%20Northern%20combined.pdf>.

In addition, land next to the Magistrates Court, owned by the police and currently used as a temporary car park, has been submitted, and also the field between Marlborough Crescent and Croft Way, along Brittain's Lane. See:

<http://documents.sevenoaks.gov.uk/Environment%20and%20Planning/Planning/Planning%20Policy/Evidence%20Base%20and%20Topic%20Papers/SHLAA/20%20Sevenoaks%20Kippington%20combined.pdf>.

Why the Brittain's Lane field affects BRA is because the Bradbourne flows through it and thus it has the highest category of flood risk. If the site were developed for the proposed 110 houses with associated hard standing and run off, the risk of flooding downstream in the Bradbourne Lakes area would be significantly increased.

However, one should also take account of what the District Council says on its website:

<http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/services/housing/planning/local-plan-and-planning-policy/strategic-market-housing-availability-assessment> . "The call for sites does not determine if a site should be allocated for development. It is a technical exercise aimed at identifying potential sites for development."

Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan

A Neighbourhood Development Plan can establish general planning policies for the development and use of land in an area and it carries weight when it comes to individual planning applications. The Town Council began preparation work on a Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan (STNP) in 2013 and BRA is represented on the Steering Committee. See:

<https://sevenoaksndp.wordpress.com/> . Residents will remember the town-wide questionnaire in 2014, covering topics such as parking, education, housing densities, employment and many others. Documents relating to the STNP include an Integrated Transport Strategy, see: <https://sevenoaksndp.files.wordpress.com/2015/08/sevenoaks-its-july-2015-sml.pdf> . There have been some delays in formulating the plan and the current idea is that it should be ready to be put to the town's people for approval by referendum in mid 2018.

Northern Sevenoaks Master Plan.

This differs considerably from the District Council's Local Plan and the associated Call for Sites. While that was motivated by Central Government's imposition of housing targets, the purpose of the Northern Sevenoaks Master Plan is to look at local assets to see how they can be better used for the benefit of the community. In other words, to make our town a better place in which to live. This is a Town Council project, with design consultants **Urban Initiatives** appointed to consider north Sevenoaks up to the M26 motorway, to look at the preeminent features found

within it and to recommend how best use could be made of them. What might be done to revitalise St John's village, for instance, how the gateway to northern Sevenoaks at Bat & Ball could be improved and what could be done to make such attractions as the Wildlife Reserve and Greatness Park more accessible are the kind of issues to be considered, along with ways to make pedestrian travel safer and more attractive. That's not to say, of course, that housing won't come into it. One can expect recommendations for housing use where not detrimental to the surroundings and alternatives are considered impracticable. The consultants, Urban Initiatives, are due to deliver their recommendations to the Town Council by Easter. They are experienced in this kind of work as can be seen from their website: <http://www.uistudio.co.uk/> .

Local Care in West Kent

This last item is by its very nature a sensitive one for many residents. Two papers have been published recently. One, by the **NHS West Kent Clinical Commissioning Group** can be found under <https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s73440/NHS%20West%20Kent%20CCG%20Paper.pdf> and has implications for Sevenoaks Hospital. The plan suggested is for local care to be organised, in association with GPs formed into Federations, via a number of local hubs. The model includes Sevenoaks as a possible hub. According to the paper, "discussions have started with local GPs and other providers of services on the Sevenoaks hospital site (including Darent House) to explore whether it will be possible and sensible to locate a hub at the hospital and whether there is an appetite within the local GP group to co-locate a GP surgery on the site." Another doctor's surgery in Sevenoaks would certainly be welcome, but what that means for existing facilities at the hospital is unclear.

The other paper, **Kent & Medway Sustainable Transformation Plan (STP)**, sets out the aims of an integrated health and social care model. It refers to public consultation as being from June 2017 but one can already respond to a survey on care provision, see <http://www.healthwatchkent.co.uk/news/kent-medway-sustainable-transformation-plan-get-involved> which also provides the link to the STP paper.

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