

Minutes of the Sevenoaks Town Council PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE meeting held on Monday 7th October 2024 at 7:00pm at the Town Council Chambers. Livestreamed and available on YouTube until Minutes are accepted by Town Council Meeting:

<https://youtube.com/live/MWLMcsYVeV4>

Present:

Committee Members

Quorum minimum of six members

Cllr Ancrum – Mayor	Present	Cllr Layne	Apologies
Cllr Camp – Chair	Present	Cllr Michaelides	Present
Cllr Dr Canet	Present	Cllr O’Hara	Present
Cllr Clayton	Present	Cllr Shea	Present
Cllr Daniell – Deputy Leader	Apologies	Cllr Skinner OBE – Vice Chair	Present
Cllr Dr Dixon	Present	Cllr Varley	Present
Cllr Granville	Apologies	Cllr Willis	Present
Cllr Gustard	Present	Cllr Wightman – Leader	Present

Also in attendance:

Planning Committee Clerk

Youth Committee Clerk

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

None.

333 REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

No requests for dispensations had been received.

334 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Wightman declared that the location of the below application is on the same road that he resides in. He remained open minded to the application’s contents:

- **[Plan no. 4] 24/02040/HOUSE – Inishmaan, Woodland Rise**

335 MINUTES

a) The Committee received the MINUTES of the Planning Committee Meeting held 23rd September 2024.

It was RESOLVED that the minutes be approved.

b) The Committee received and noted the Minutes from the Movement & Net Zero Working Group held on 23rd September 2024.

336 DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Councillors noted that the following application was Granted by the Development Management Committee 26th September 2024:

- **24/00859/FUL – Hollybush Tennis Centre, Holmesdale Road**

b) Cllr Clayton, who had attended and spoke at the meeting on the Town Council's behalf, summarised the proceedings as follows:

- The Development Management Committee had conditioned the approval on a noise reduction assessment being undertaken after the Padel courts had been installed. This to ensure adequate sound protection measures would be installed to protect residential amenity
- The Town Council's recommendation for operating hours to be reduced however had not been applied. Should this become an issue, it would likely need to be resolved via landowner restrictions as opposed to through the planning process.

337 CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK AND PLANNING SYSTEM

a) The Committee received and noted copy of the Town Council's submitted response to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's consultation on proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework. This as agreed by the Planning & Environment Committee on 23rd September 2024.

b) Councillors thanked the Planning Committee Clerk for her work in compiling the Town Council's response.

338 KENT COUNTY COUNCIL LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN PUBLIC CONSULTATION (Attached)

a) The Committee received and discussed a draft response as recommended by the Movement & Net Zero Working Group to Kent County Council's consultation on its draft Local Transport Plan.

b) The response as attached to the Committee papers was approved for submission and it was **RESOLVED** that the draft be submitted to Kent County Council with the following amendments:

- Addition of the Town Council's support of an amended strategic route to complete the London to Paris cycling route to Question 4
- Addition of the Town Council's recommendation that Vision Zero aims be strengthened in Question 4

339 KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – AMENDMENT 5: WAITING RESTRICTIONS AT LETTER BOX LANE AND TONBRIDGE ROAD

The Committee received notice that Kent County Council has made the following Order – originally advertised as Amendment 55 – to amend waiting restrictions on the following length of roads:

- **Letter Box Lane – on both sides from its junction with Tonbridge Road (A225) for a distance of 10 metres in a south westerly direction.**

- **Tonbridge Road – On west side of junction with Letter Box Lane between points 10 metres north and 10 metres south.**

b) It was noted that both Kippington Councillors and residents were monitoring effectiveness of the corner protections and whether they would need extension further into the road in the future.

340 KENT COUNTY COUNCIL PROPOSED AMENDMENT 4: WAITING RESTRICTIONS AT PENDENNIS ROAD

a) The Committee received notice that Kent County Council is consulting on its proposal to amend existing waiting restrictions on the following length of road:

- **Pendennis Road – On the east side remove a section of shared parking bays from a point 21 metres from its junction with Mount Harry Road for a distance of 8.5 metres in a southerly direction and replace with double yellow lines.**

b) It was noted that representations supporting or objecting to the proposed Order can be made via Kent County Council's website via the below link until 14th October 2024, and to decide whether the Town Council respond:

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/highwaysconsultations>

c) It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council write in support of the Order, with the caveat that parking on the sections of the road not affected by the new drive remain in place.

341 ASSETS OF COMMUNITY VALUE

The Committee received notice that the Town Council's nomination for the Adult Education Centre as well as the 3rd Scouts Huts at Bradbourne Vale Road had been successful, with both now having been listed as an Asset of Community Value.

342 STREET NAMING AND NUMBERING

a) The Committee received notice of the creation of the following new addresses relating to various developments, as well as details and plans attached.

- First Floor, 107 High Street newly addressed as 107A High Street
- Lindow Cottage, Ashgrove Road newly addressed as Amaryllis View, Ashgrove Road
- 360 Software Solutions Ltd Offices, 1 and 2 52 Holly Bush Lane, newly addressed as 52A Holly Bush Lane
- Stable West of Ashgrove Cottage, Gracious Lane newly addressed as Wildflowers Stable, Gracious Lane

b) Councillors questioned the process as to how house names are amended and whether residents are given the opportunity to object – particularly in relation to the amendment of locally significant or historic building names. It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Camp would enquire with District Council Officers as to this process.

343 DECISION NOTICES ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMENTED ON BY SEVENOAKS TOWN COUNCIL

The Committee received and noted details within the report, which notified of decisions made by Sevenoaks District Council on applications considered by Sevenoaks Town Council's Planning Committee, received during the two weeks ending 30th September 2024.

344 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

a) No members of the public registered to speak on individual applications.

b) The Committee considered planning applications received during the two weeks ending 30th September 2024. **It was RESOLVED** that the comments listed on the attached schedule be forwarded to Sevenoaks District Council.

345 PRESS RELEASES

a) It was **RESOLVED** that a Press Release be issued detailing the Town Council's response to the Local Transport Plan, with request to Kent County Council Member Kent County Council Cllr Streatfeild to support the Town Council's position.

b) It was also **RESOLVED** that a Press Release be issued on the Town Council's updated response to the Sevenoaks Gasholder Station planning application, with particular reference to its concerns about the potential impact to the water supply as well as the Town Council's ongoing collaboration to investigate the cause of flooding in Northern Sevenoaks.

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 8:09pm.

Signed
Chair

Dated

Appendix 1:

Sevenoaks Town Council's response to Kent County Council's Public Consultation on its draft Local Transport Plan, as approved by Planning & Environment Committee on 7th October 2024 and submitted to Kent County Council on 8th October 2024.

Are you responding...?

Please select the option from the list below that most closely represents how you will be responding to this consultation.

On behalf of a District / Borough / Town / Parish Council in an official capacity

Please tell us the name of your organisation:

Sevenoaks Town Council

Please tell us the first 5 characters of your postcode:

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please use your organisation's postcode. We use this to help us to analyse our data. It will not be used to identify who you are

TN133

How did you find out about this consultation?

Select all that apply.

Email from Let's talk Kent / KCC's Engagement and Consultation team

Do you support our new draft Local Transport Plan?

Partly

Please tell us the reason for your answer in the box below:

Sevenoaks Town Council does not support the basic priorities in Kent's Local Transport Plan 5, which continues to adopt a 'predict and provide' approach to road building for growing levels of road transport. It takes a much less ambitious approach to non-motorised transport, and to public transport. As a result it fails to give a convincing answer on the key challenge - and legal commitment - facing Kent, to achieve Net Zero by 2050. The summary presented in Figure 16, page 56, shows that progress on carbon reduction by 2036 / 7 will only be about half that required to decarbonise transport in Kent by the legal target date. This is unacceptable.

The Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan (STNP) recognises the Net Zero objectives of Central and Local Government, and STC expects Kent's Transport Plan to do the same.

Sevenoaks Town Council is disappointed that priority is given in the Plan to securing funding for highway maintenance, and for increasing capacity in the strategic road network without a clear plan to encourage modal shift for freight from road to rail, and for people from road vehicles to rail, bus, and active travel. Positive policies to encourage these changes must be part of a credible path to net zero; they can and should be developed in ways which encourage economic growth rather than hinder it.

The Town Council supports the policy objectives of:

- bearing down on road casualties on a risk based approach, with the objective of zero deaths; however urges Kent County Council to include all crash injuries in their assessments, recognising that even minor crash injuries act as a major disincentive to walking and cycling
- pressing for the reopening of international rail services from Ebbsfleet and Ashford, with the connecting rail services needed to make these stations into genuine hubs
- connecting Kent for the first time to at least one international airport by rail; at present we are the only county in South East England without such a sustainable link.

Policy Outcomes 8 (increased use of public transport - bus and rail) and 9 (increased active travel) need to be given much higher priority, and to be linked into the Plan's other objectives of CO2 reduction, crash injury reduction and reducing congestion. These links can easily be made through urban speed reduction schemes (20mph), Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) controls, walking zones and routes, better transport interchange facilities and provision for cycle parking and routes. All these are supported by the Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan, supported by overwhelming majority at referendum, and Sevenoaks Town Council expects the Kent Plan to articulate clearly how these and other measures will be encouraged.

The Town Council urges Kent County Council to bring its approach for urban road measures to reduce speeds into the 21st century to encourage walking and cycling. The bizarre approach to 20mph speed indicator devices - used across London and much of Europe but not permitted in Kent - should change as soon as possible. Kent's reliance on expensive hard road engineering (built out kerbs and chicanes) should be superseded where possible by planters and 'soft' traffic calming which are a fraction of the cost and much more flexible. Experience shows that Kent County Council's capacity to design and implement hard traffic measures to support active travel projects does not match the rate needed to change travel behaviour. The authority is encouraged to develop a more devolved model to respond to local needs.

Rail travel is vital for Sevenoaks, and the Town Council urges Kent County Council to be more ambitious. Getting travellers back onto trains is essential to contain congestion and CO2 emissions. This should be done by delivering the promises made since 2015 to integrate West Kent into transport networks for London:

- regular fast trains from Maidstone East via Otford and Swanley to join CrossRail at Farringdon and beyond as promised in 2016/7/8; this was the only gain for Kent from the Thameslink project, and not yet delivered
- integrating the metro services which start from Sevenoaks into Transport for London as promised in 2015, giving benefits on station staffing and quality of service management
- integration into the London ticketing system in a more seamless way, rather than the piecemeal (and error prone) approach of 'Project Oval' which if continued will distort fares across Kent.

Kent County Council should press the Department for Transport to speed replacement of its ageing and unreliable trains, especially Networkers, and to address undelivered promises and exceptionally high fares per mile.

The Town Council is particularly concerned by the fragmented and fragile state of the bus network, especially the services for schools. The use of private cars for school drop offs is the main contributor to gridlock in Sevenoaks, and the requirement for many parents to make the school run is a significant drag on productivity. Kent County Council should tackle this issue to reduce carbon emissions, reduce congestion, and to improve Kent's economy.

In addition, Sevenoaks Town Council would like to see more strategic active travel routes and encourages Kent County Council to look into and support John Grimshaw's proposed new London to Paris route which diverts via Dartford, Darent Valley, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells to complete the Avenue Verte (or Allée Verte). This is a much more pleasant and scenic route to the existing one, which avoids Kent altogether and goes via Gatwick airport. Necessary to this would be resurfacing and reclassification of public rights of way to allow cycling, as well as five new bridges over the River Darent, with the benefits of a cycling route which links six train station to Sevenoaks and increasing cycling provision for residents and tourists alike. For more information please see below article:

https://www.theguardian.com/travel/article/2024/jul/31/cycle-from-london-to-paris-avenue-verte?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other

The Town Council also supports the Public Rights of Way strategic aims, but would ask Kent County Council to recognise in these aims, the opportunities for redesignating suitable footpaths into bridleways to support integrating cycling infrastructure into Public Rights of Ways.

Finally, the Town Council does not consider that enough weight is put on supporting and delivering Vision Zero. Vision Zero talks about speed reduction – not just 30mph to 20mph but also 60mph to 50mph. Sevenoaks Town Council supports this and as a Town has particular ambitions for speed limit reductions on both major and urban roads.

Sevenoaks Town Council considers that Kent needs to update its priorities in line with those of other areas of the country and actively move towards implementing or facilitating 20mph speed limits in more urban locations, as well as procuring Speed Indicator Devices that are sensitive enough to be used on 20mph roads which would help with compliance and awareness.

In addition, Vision Zero is about designing the network to reduce accidents. The Town and District Councils within Kent have ambitions to deliver significant cycle infrastructure, and Sevenoaks Town Council's Highway Improvement Plan details the need for multiple new pedestrian crossings which the Town Council would welcome support in implementing.

You can now provide feedback on each or all of the themes in this section. You can answer all or as many of the questions on each of these as you like.

Please select which theme(s) you would like to comment on:

Select all that apply.

Strategic Road Network
Local Road Network

Public and Shared Transport Network

Walking, cycling and other forms of non-motorised travel.

Do you agree with the proposals identified for the Strategic Road Network?

Select one response option per proposal/row.

Lower Thames Crossing	Partly
A282 (M25) Junction 1A capacity enhancement	Yes
International haulage traffic management	Partly
M25-M26-A21 East-facing slips	Partly

If you would like to make any comments on the Strategic Road Network proposals or would like to suggest any new proposals for consideration in our Local Transport Plan, please tell us in the box below.

If your comment relates to a specific proposal, please make this clear in your answer.

Lower Thames Crossing:

This would be very helpful in shortening journeys and moving traffic heading to midlands from Sevenoaks and London. Sevenoaks Town Council would welcome a public transport facility for this.

The A282 capacity enhancement:

Sevenoaks Town experiences significant congestion when the approach to the Dartford crossing is at a standstill and the Town Council would therefore welcome improvements to alleviate that.

International haulage traffic management:

Sevenoaks Town Council recommended that Kent County Council should also liaise with central government to reduce the impact of border controls on residents of Kent.

East facing slips:

In the absence of current plans to implement east facing slip roads, Sevenoaks Town Council considers it imperative that Kent County Council in the meantime supports the Town Council's ambition of removing Sevenoaks Town and as much of the A25 from use of HGVs for through-use. The Town Council's Highway Improvement Plan requests such improved signage as well as additional signage to divert HGVs from the historic centre of the town, which the Town Council would welcome support via the Local Transport Plan with.

Sevenoaks District Council's Local Plan proposes that the population of Sevenoaks Town will grow by some 20% in coming years via several significant developments. The Town continues to suffer from haulage and other traffic diverting along the A25 with the congestion and pollution that this brings. Improvements to the slip roads would significantly improve quality of life to Sevenoaks Town residents and ease of access to the highway network for all. The Town Council

would welcome this being an immediate ambition, with the shorter term being to make significant improvement to signage to prevent HGVs from travelling through the town.

Do you agree with the proposals identified for the Local Road Network?

Select one response option per proposal/row.

Maintaining the road network	Yes
Road Safety Vision Zero	Yes
Development Management	Yes
Supporting the shift to electric vehicles through new charging points	Partly

If you would like to make any comments on the Local Road Network proposals or would like to suggest any new proposals for consideration in our Local Transport Plan, please tell us in the box below.

If your comment relates to a specific proposal, please make this clear in your answer.

Maintaining the road network:

Sevenoaks Town Council recommends that improvements to surfacing should take every opportunity to create options for active travel and reduce the use of personal transport – which would in turn reduce unnecessary wear and tear on the road network, lowering car use and frequency in which these roads may need maintaining.

In addition, the Town Council believes that roads need to be designed to accommodate the increasing weight of vehicles.

Finally, it would be beneficial for local road network proposals to adopt a road and traffic management approach which recognises that the roads through many historic towns and settlements are no longer suitable for A road designation.

Road Safety Vision Zero:

As mentioned in previous Question about why the Town Council partly supports the new draft Local Transport Plan, Vision Zero talks about speed reduction – not just 30mph to 20mph but also 60mph to 50mph. Sevenoaks Town Council supports this and as a Town has particular ambitions for speed limit reductions on both major and urban roads.

Sevenoaks Town Council considers that Kent needs to update its priorities in line with those of other areas of the country and actively move towards implementing or facilitating 20mph speed limits in more urban locations, as well as procuring Speed Indicator Devices that are sensitive enough to be used on 20mph roads which would help with compliance and awareness.

In addition, Vision Zero is about designing the network to reduce accidents. The Town and District Councils within Kent have ambitions to deliver significant cycle infrastructure, and

Sevenoaks Town Council's Highway Improvement Plan details the need for multiple new pedestrian crossings which the Town Council would welcome support in implementing.

Supporting the shift to electric vehicles through new charging points

Sevenoaks Town Council would like on street electric vehicle charging reprioritised for delivery in the short, if not medium term, as opposed to the proposal that it be a long term aim. This needs to be delivered quickly and effectively, especially in dense urban areas such as Sevenoaks and particularly in neighbourhoods where there is limited off street parking.

At present, lack of access to on street electric charging is discouraging those who would otherwise wish to purchase an electric vehicle, making the current arrangement discriminatory to those who do not have a drive-way.

Sevenoaks Town Council therefore urges Kent County Council to follow the example set by other authorities such as Bromley and work on enabling householders to charge directly from house to kerbside without endangering the public e.g. via gulleys.

Development Management:

Sevenoaks Town Council agrees that the infrastructure-first approach is essential, especially with large scale developments which will require a significant volume of construction traffic – of which Sevenoaks Town alone expects to see a number of in the near future.

In addition, the Town Council would urge Kent County Council to add Active Travel options as a key component in designing any new highway assets – in particular new junctions such as that proposed at the Bat & Ball junction as part of the Sevenoaks Quarry development. Such designs should prioritise pedestrian and cyclist access and safety.

Finally, new developments must be delivered in a way which makes it easy for residents to choose public transport or active travel.

Do you agree with the proposals identified for Public and Shared Transport Network?

Select one response option per proposal/row.

Rail freight gauge enhancement for international traffic	Yes
Gatwick access improvements	Yes
Dover / Folkestone High Speed rail journey time improvements	Yes
International rail passenger services for Kent	Yes
Sturry and Canterbury West rail corridor improvements	Yes
Local rail services	Yes
Bus Service Improvement Plan (county-wide)	Yes

Mobility as a Service	Yes
Cycle Hire trials	Yes
Shared transport hubs (also known as Mobility Hubs)	Yes
Elizabeth line extension to Ebbsfleet	Yes
Opposition to Gatwick expansion	Yes

If you would like to make any comments on the Public and Shared Transport Network proposals or would like to suggest any new proposals for consideration in our Local Transport Plan, please tell us in the box below.

If your comment relates to a specific proposal, please make this clear in your answer.

Maidstone mainline rail journey time improvements:

Sevenoaks Town Council would like new Maidstone services into London to go through the Thameslink core and link with the Elizabeth line to integrate Kent into the London underground transport system. This would give better access to the London transport system for users of the Darent Valley line including the 3000 new residents expected from the Sevenoaks Quarry site. The Town Council would ask for reinstatement of the original planned services for this link which would see 2 paths per hour through the Thameslink core allocated for Kent services to Maidstone via Swanley and Otford.

Gatwick access improvements:

Sevenoaks Town Council supports this and recommends that a direct connection from Kent to Gatwick be investigated so that visitors are not diverted via London.

International rail passenger services for Kent:

Sevenoaks Town Council supports this because it makes international services more accessible to Sevenoaks and Kent residents.

Local rail services:

Sevenoaks Town Council supports integration of metro services starting from Sevenoaks to London into the TFL network because this would enable Sevenoaks to get manned stations and zonal fares which would make contactless payments much easier to operate. The Town Council further advises that there needs to be recognition that residents of Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Tonbridge Wells form part of the labour network in London, by way of integrating them into the TFL network. In addition, Kent County Council are recommended to continue to support current and emerging Community Rail Partnerships, which encourage local residents to use sustainable public transport.

Bus Service Improvement Plan:

In light of the announcement made by central government on 9th September 2024 which indicated that principle authorities will be given authority to coordinate bus services to improve

service reliability, coordination and connectivity, Sevenoaks Town Council urges Kent County Council to collaborate with its other local authorities and seize this opportunity to do so.

Furthermore, Sevenoaks Town Council has a proposal to deliver a zero emission bus service in Sevenoaks for the Number 8 circular route and would welcome support for this and similar schemes recognised in the Transport Plan.

Thameside Fastrack network growth:

Sevenoaks Town Council requests a fasttrack service to also be investigated between Greatness, Sevenoaks Town Centre and the two railway stations (Bat & Ball and Sevenoaks). Linking this to the upcoming residential extension of Greatness in the Sevenoaks Quarry site would also benefit the new residents and integrate the area into the rest of Sevenoaks Town.

Mobility as a service:

Sevenoaks Town Council supports this in principle, however, in order to work there must be a network which allows users to make multiple mode journeys (for instance buses to train) – this infrastructure does not currently exist. The Town Council would welcome support to develop “last mile solutions”.

Cycle Hire trials:

Sevenoaks Town Council would be eager to host a cycle hire pilot scheme and is already actively working on such a project, with a local provider and sponsor having been identified that would be willing to back an e-bike hire scheme. The Town Council would therefore welcome opportunity to work with Kent County Council on delivery on this – in conjunction with delivery of the cycle network designed by Sustrans in Sevenoaks District Council’s LCWIP. It is the Town Council’s view that delivering safe routes first is the precondition to the success of cycling projects.

Shared transport hubs (also known as Mobility Hubs):

Sevenoaks Town Council has recently started a hybrid car club which it hopes to expand and make fully electric in future and welcomes support of such schemes.

Do you agree with the proposals identified for walking, cycling and other forms of non-motorised travel?

Select one response option per proposal/row.

Our 15 initial proposed walking zones we will focus on from our Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan	Yes
Our 15 initial proposed cycling route corridors we will focus on from our Kent Cycling and Walking infrastructure plan	Yes
Public Rights of Way improvements	Yes

If you would like to make any comments on the walking, cycling and other forms on non-motorised travel proposals or would like to suggest any new proposals for consideration in our Local Transport Plan, please tell us in the box below.

If your comment relates to a specific proposal, please make this clear in your answer.

Kent Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan:

As mentioned in previous Question about why the Town Council partly supports the new draft Local Transport Plan, Sevenoaks Town Council urges Kent County Council to examine and integrate into its plans John Grimshaw's proposed new London to Paris cycle route passing through Dartford, Darent Valley, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells to complete the Avenue Verte (or Allée Verte). This is a much more pleasant and scenic route to the existing one, which avoids Kent altogether and goes via Gatwick airport. Necessary to this would be resurfacing and reclassification of public rights of way to allow cycling, as well as five new bridges over the River Darent, with the benefits of a cycling route which links six train station to Sevenoaks and increasing cycling provision for residents and tourists alike. For more information please see below article:

https://www.theguardian.com/travel/article/2024/jul/31/cycle-from-london-to-paris-avenue-verte?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other

The Town Council also supports the Public Rights of Way strategic aims, but would ask Kent County Council to recognise in these aims, the opportunities for redesignating suitable footpaths into bridleways to support integrating cycling infrastructure into Public Rights of Ways.

Please select which district(s) you would like to comment on:

You can answer all or as many of the questions on each of the district proposals as you like. If you would rather not provide feedback for a question/district, please move on to the next section.

Select all that apply.

Sevenoaks

Do you agree with the proposals identified for the district of Sevenoaks? Select one response box per proposal/row.

M25-M26-A21 – slips for journeys eastwards on M26 to avoid Sevenoaks town centre	Yes
Opposition to Gatwick expansion due to noise disturbance from flight paths	Yes
Bat and Ball junction improvements	Yes
Bus Service Improvement Plan	Yes

Improvements to cycling corridors in Sevenoaks

Yes

If you would like to make any comments on the proposals for Sevenoaks or would like to suggest any new proposals for consideration in our Local Transport Plan, please tell us in the box below.

If your comment relates to a specific proposal, please make this clear in your answer.

Accessibility:

Sevenoaks Town Council recommends that priority be given to accessibility considerations, due to the aging population and their growing need for public transport and safe footpaths.

Bat & Ball Junction:

Sevenoaks Town Council looks forward to improvements at Bat & Ball junction and is in regular communication with Tarmac about the proposal. Through its Highway Improvement Plan, the Town Council has requested round table talks with Kent County Council, Tarmac, Sevenoaks Town Council and Sevenoaks District Council to consider ways of improving the design to favour pedestrian and cyclist movement, and any support to set this up would be greatly appreciated.

Also related to the Bat & Ball junction improvements in terms of the Sevenoaks Quarry development through which they are proposed, is the need for improvements to be made to the footbridge between Moor Road and Watercress Drive. This will be essential to integrate the ~3000 residents of the new development at Sevenoaks Quarry with the retail and employment sites to the west of the railway line.

Bus service improvement plan:

Sevenoaks Town Council hopes that it can continue to work with Kent County Council on improving bus services within Sevenoaks, building upon the success of the No 8 circular bus route. An important element of this will be live service information at bus stops to inform local users, and the Town Council would also appreciate support in its proposals for the No 8 bus to become electric.

Improvements to cycling corridors in Sevenoaks:

Sevenoaks Town Council requests acceleration of the Sevenoaks Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan delivery as a network, as opposed to one route at a time. The Town Council would also welcome support to deliver this Plan in a cohesive and comprehensive way, as the current proposals for Route 1 stop short of the A25 and there is no current funding to connect it to existing cycle routes.

In addition, the Town Council is currently working to identify ways to deliver Route 8 of the Sevenoaks Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (Sevenoaks to Dunton Green), which would link Dunton Green Station and Sevenoaks stations, and would welcome Kent County Council's support to do so.

Highway Improvement Plans:

Related to the above, Sevenoaks Town Council would recommend increased support for road reconfiguration and improvements to walking & cycling via Town and Parish Councils' Highway Improvement Plans. This could help to deliver walking and cycling routes outside of the Local or Kent Walking and Cycling Improvement Plans. For instance, the Town Council's Highway

Improvement Plan proposes a number advisory cycling lanes which do not feature in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and which we would seek Kent County Council's support to deliver.

The Highway Improvement Plan process does not currently include active travel and neither does it currently cater for towns/parishes looking to make significant changes.

We want to make sure that everyone is treated fairly and equally, and that no one gets left out, which is why we are asking you some additional questions. We will use this information to help us make decisions and improve our services.

It is not necessary to answer these questions if you are responding on behalf of an organisation.

If you would rather not answer any, or all, of these questions, select 'No'. This will take you to the end of the questionnaire where you can submit your response.

If you select 'Yes' but change your mind, you can skip any of the questions, just please make sure you click through to the end of the questionnaire and click 'Submit'.

Are you willing to provide more information about yourself?

Responding on behalf of an organisation

Thanks again

Let's talk Kent

Appendix 2:

Planning Applications Considered

Applications considered on 7-10-24

1	Plan Number	Planning officer	Town Councillor	Agent
	21/01254/FUL	Sean Mitchell 09/10/2024	Cllr Dr Canet	Barton Wilmore
Applicant	House Name	Road	Locality	
c/o Agent	Sevenoaks Gasholder Station	Cramptons Road	Northern	
Town	County	Post Code	Application date	
			19/09/24	

21/01254/FUL - Amended plan

Construction of a residential development of 136no. dwellings, new vehicular accesses from Otford Road and Crampton's Road, associated parking, landscaping, drainage, boundary treatments and earthworks.

A summary of the main changes are set out below:

Amended orientation of 2 car parking spaces, further information relating to noise (agent of change) and details and comments relating to highways and proposed car club.

Comment

Sevenoaks Town Council recommended refusal on the following grounds:

1. Layout and density of the development are not consistent with the Allocations and Development Management Plan of 2015 (including but not limited to policies SP1 and SP7), or the Local Plan for the site, being very significantly taller and more dense.

In addition, it is not consistent with the Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan (STNP) Policy D1, which states that any development at the Sevenoaks Gasholder Station should be designed at "a scale and massing that responds to the context (i.e. two storey buildings on Cramptons Road but with potential for four storeys on Otford Road)." The STNP was adopted or "made" by the Local Planning Authority in May 2023 and now forms part of the legally binding planning policy framework. At Examination stage, the Independent Examiner described the policy information as "of significant value to the decision maker (as well as to, for example, local residents and businesses)." For this reason the Town Council believes that the guidance as set out in Policy D1 should be given substantial weight as a publicly endorsed and legally binding planning policy document, and used by developers as a set list of minimum requirements and maximum site constraints.

2. The ten-storey rotunda tower is overdeveloped, overbearing, out of character and of a height incongruous with the residential character of the area. There are no buildings above four storeys in that locality and the loss of the former industrial gasometers which it mimics is welcomed by residents of the area;

3. The design and materials are out of keeping with the District Council's Residential Character Area Assessment for the areas local to it;

4. The rotunda tower would be intrusive to the green belt and SSSI which it would be immediately adjacent to;

5. The rotunda tower would be solid, impermeable to light and views, and internally lit at night, unlike the predecessor (and now non-existent) gasometer, impacting visual amenity for a considerable distance;

6. The townhouses on Cramptons Road are not in keeping with the Residential Character Area Assessment. The mismatch in heights of windows to neighbouring homes create significant issues of overlooking and loss of privacy;

7. Parking is insufficient with a risk of overspill into the on-street parking in an area with already high demand. Works would significantly reduce existing on-street parking. Sevenoaks Town Council recommends that the Kent County Council policy of one space per unit be adhered to;

Planning Applications Considered

Applications considered on 7-10-24

8. Lack of social housing - The proposal includes a very small number of homes at a discounted market price on the initial sale only. Sevenoaks Town Council recommends that 40% of the units be made available as affordable social rented housing, as per Sevenoaks District Council and STNP policy, in perpetuity.

9. South East Water has raised significant concerns with regards to groundwater pollution and abstraction which the Town Council strongly supports. The piling on contaminated land, which is necessary for the tower block, would interfere with and potentially damage or even compromise the watercourses and supply of water to a significant portion of Sevenoaks Town residents. Furthermore, the Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan requires via Policy L2 that developments demonstrate they will not overbear the existing network or cause difficulties to the local water supply, sewerage and sewage treatment or waste disposal.

Finally, Sevenoaks Town Council reiterated the detailed informative report which was previously submitted with previous responses to this planning application. The report has been updated and attached for reference, in addition to a copy of South East Water's letter dated 9th February 2024 and uploaded to the Planning Portal on 12th February 2024 which is supplied as evidence and reiterated by the Town Council.

2	<i>Plan Number</i>	<i>Planning officer</i>	<i>Town Councillor</i>	<i>Agent</i>
	24/01654/HOUSE	Christopher Park 21/10/2024	Cllr O'Hara	N/A
<i>Applicant</i>	<i>House Name</i>	<i>Road</i>	<i>Locality</i>	
S V Ying		4 Bosville Drive	Northern	
<i>Town</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>Post Code</i>	<i>Application date</i>	
			30/09/24	

Rear and side extension, hip-to-gable loft conversion with rear dormer, rooflights, removal of chimney, provision of vehicle crossover and driveway, EV charging point, alterations to fenestration and internal alterations.

Comment

Sevenoaks Town Council recommended approval subject to the Planning Officer being satisfied there is no loss of amenity to neighbours.

3	<i>Plan Number</i>	<i>Planning officer</i>	<i>Town Councillor</i>	<i>Agent</i>
	24/01988/FUL	Anna Horn 16/10/2024	Cllr Michaelides	National Trust
<i>Applicant</i>	<i>House Name</i>	<i>Road</i>	<i>Locality</i>	
M Wherry	Knole House	Knole Lane	Town	
<i>Town</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>Post Code</i>	<i>Application date</i>	
			25/09/24	

24/01988/FUL - Amended plan

Reinstatement & repair works to the Icehouse entryway with new proposed entry gates and internal viewing platform.

A summary of the main changes are set out below:

The applicant has provided an updated Arboricultural Report and an Ancient Woodland Assessment.

Comment

Sevenoaks Town Council recommended approval provided the Conservation Officer continues to be satisfied with this application.

Planning Applications Considered

Applications considered on 7-10-24

4	<i>Plan Number</i> 24/02040/HOUSE	<i>Planning officer</i> Samantha Yates 11/10/2024	<i>Town Councillor</i> Cllr Wightman	<i>Agent</i> Carmen Austin Architectu
<i>Applicant</i>		<i>House Name</i>	<i>Road</i>	<i>Locality</i>
Mr & Mrs Carmen		Inishmaan	Woodland Rise	Wilderness
<i>Town</i>		<i>County</i>	<i>Post Code</i>	<i>Application date</i>
				20/09/24
Demolish rear conservatory and replace with single storey flat roofed extension with roof lanterns and solar panels. Construct single storey garage extension. Demolish portico range to front; replace with pitch roof, single storey infill extension, and two storey extension with balcony, stone columns and entablature. Changes to fenestration. Add stone corner quoins, door and window surrounds. Remove 1 chimney, replace concrete roof tiles with slates, internal alterations.				

Comment

Sevenoaks Town Council recommended approval, noting the request from the Conservation Officer for a sample of the proposed new roof tiles.

5	<i>Plan Number</i> 24/02245/HOUSE	<i>Planning officer</i> Stephanie Payne 18/10/2024	<i>Town Councillor</i> Cllr Willis	<i>Agent</i> N/A
<i>Applicant</i>		<i>House Name</i>	<i>Road</i>	<i>Locality</i>
Mr J Horgan			7 Granville Road	Town
<i>Town</i>		<i>County</i>	<i>Post Code</i>	<i>Application date</i>
				27/09/24
Installation of a greenhouse. Resurfacing front paths and tiling by the front door.				

Comment

Sevenoaks Town Council recommended approval, providing both the Planning Officer and the Conservation Officer are satisfied with the materials and design, that there is no overall loss of biodiversity, and subject to a condition for the tree proposed for removal to be replaced as per Policy L4 of the Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan.

6	<i>Plan Number</i> 24/02246/LBCALT	<i>Planning officer</i> Stephanie Payne 18/10/2024	<i>Town Councillor</i> Cllr Willis	<i>Agent</i> N/A
<i>Applicant</i>		<i>House Name</i>	<i>Road</i>	<i>Locality</i>
Mr J Horgan			7 Granville Road	Town
<i>Town</i>		<i>County</i>	<i>Post Code</i>	<i>Application date</i>
				27/09/24
Installation of greenhouse, shed, resurfacing front paths and tiling by the front door.				

Comment

Sevenoaks Town Council recommended approval, providing both the Planning Officer and the Conservation Officer are satisfied with the materials and design, that there is no overall loss of biodiversity, and subject to a condition for the tree proposed for removal to be replaced as per Policy L4 of the Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan.

Planning Applications Considered

Applications considered on 7-10-24

7	<i>Plan Number</i> 24/02340/HOUSE	<i>Planning officer</i> Summer Aucoin 11/10/2024	<i>Town Councillor</i> Cllr Gustard	<i>Agent</i> Mr Eren Munir
<i>Applicant</i> Ms J Locke		<i>House Name</i>	<i>Road</i> 79A Weald Road	<i>Locality</i> Kippington
<i>Town</i>		<i>County</i>	<i>Post Code</i>	<i>Application date</i> 20/09/24
3m rear extension with new steps.				

Comment

Sevenoaks Town Council recommended approval, subject to:

- The Arboricultural Officer being satisfied that the proposed construction method statement is sufficient to protect the TPO trees,
- Any removed trees being conditioned for replacement as per Policy L4 of the Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan.

8	<i>Plan Number</i> 24/02413/HOUSE	<i>Planning officer</i> Abbey Aslett 11/10/2024	<i>Town Councillor</i> Cllr Shea	<i>Agent</i> Blackburn Architects Limit
<i>Applicant</i> Mr I Osburn		<i>House Name</i> Pounsley House	<i>Road</i> Pounsley Road	<i>Locality</i> Adjoining Northern
<i>Town</i>		<i>County</i>	<i>Post Code</i>	<i>Application date</i> 24/09/24

Adjoining Parish Consultation:

Extend roof, insert new dormers, roof lights, and juliet balcony. Demolish side extension, to be replaced with new single storey, flat roofed, extension with roof lanterns. New rear conservatory to replace existing. Infill extension to rear. Changes to fenestration. Demolish existing garage and laundry building and construct ancillary annexe building. Demolish two outbuildings. Erect two new free-standing car ports.

Comment

Sevenoaks Town Council did not provide comment, as the application site is outside it's boundary.

9	<i>Plan Number</i> 24/02420/HOUSE	<i>Planning officer</i> Summer Aucoin 15/10/2024	<i>Town Councillor</i> Cllr Skinner	<i>Agent</i> Kent Building Control Ltd
<i>Applicant</i> Mr & Mrs Dasgupta		<i>House Name</i>	<i>Road</i> 97 Bradbourne Park Road	<i>Locality</i> St Johns
<i>Town</i>		<i>County</i>	<i>Post Code</i>	<i>Application date</i> 24/09/24

New flat roof dormer with rooflights, and extension to existing dormer. Alterations to fenestration.

Comment

Sevenoaks Town Council recommended approval.

Planning Applications Considered

Applications considered on 7-10-24

10	Plan Number	Planning officer	Town Councillor	Agent
	24/02452/FUL	Stephanie Payne 18/10/2024	Cllr Camp	Offset Architects
Applicant		House Name	Road	Locality
Mr E Cloke		Burlanes Interiors	41 Dartford Road	St Johns
Town		County	Post Code	Application date
				27/09/24
Change of use of part of the ground floor and the entire first floor from an interior design showroom (Class E) to a flat (Class C3 Dwellinghouses) Addition of rooflight. Alteration to fenestration. Proposed cycle store.				

Comment

Sevenoaks Town Council recommended approval.

Informative:

Sevenoaks Town Council also raised concerns as to whether this location - being the edge of the Town Centre - is appropriate for a reduction in employment space.

11	Plan Number	Planning officer	Town Councillor	Agent
	24/02456/HOUSE	Abbey Aslett 14/10/2024	Cllr Ancrum	Studio Charrette
Applicant		House Name	Road	Locality
C Whitehead			44 Quakers Hall Lane	Eastern
Town		County	Post Code	Application date
				23/09/24
Detached outbuilding for ancillary use in rear garden area as a detached annexe to the main house.				

Comment

Sevenoaks Town Council recommended approval subject to the Planning Officer being satisfied that there is no undue loss of amenity and privacy for the neighbouring properties on each side.

Informative:

The Town Council requested that Building Control pay particular attention to the quality of construction and the infill, as well as the sustainability of the drainage.

12	Plan Number	Planning officer	Town Councillor	Agent
	24/02476/MMA	Summer Aucoin 17/10/2024	Cllr Ancrum	Offset Architects
Applicant		House Name	Road	Locality
Mr & Mrs Garcia-Almendros & Fortmann-Shalhour			5 Holly Bush Lane	Eastern
Town		County	Post Code	Application date
				24/09/24
Amendment to 24/00943/HOUSE to extend single storey extension, alteration to fenestration. Alterations to interior layout.Mr & Mrs Garcia-Almendros & Fortmann-Shalhour, 5 Holly Bush Lane, Eastern, ,				

Comment

Sevenoaks Town Council recommended approval.

Planning Applications Considered

Applications considered on 7-10-24

13	<i>Plan Number</i>	<i>Planning officer</i>	<i>Town Councillor</i>	<i>Agent</i>
	24/02488/HOUSE	Summer Aucoin 15/10/2024	Cllr Layne	Harringtons 2006
<i>Applicant</i>		<i>House Name</i>	<i>Road</i>	<i>Locality</i>
Mr L Axelsson			2 Holly Bush Lane	Eastern
<i>Town</i>		<i>County</i>	<i>Post Code</i>	<i>Application date</i>
				24/09/24
Erect an above door porch canopy on the east elevation, with enlarged step and landing area.				

Comment

Proposed by Cllr Clayton with Cllr Layne's apologies:

Sevenoaks Town Council recommended approval.

14	<i>Plan Number</i>	<i>Planning officer</i>	<i>Town Councillor</i>	<i>Agent</i>
	24/02504/HOUSE	Summer Aucoin 16/10/2024	Cllr O'Hara	Mr Glen Butterfield
<i>Applicant</i>		<i>House Name</i>	<i>Road</i>	<i>Locality</i>
Mr R Moore			2 Meadow Close	Northern
<i>Town</i>		<i>County</i>	<i>Post Code</i>	<i>Application date</i>
				25/09/24
Glass conservatory to rear elevation in PVCu with aluminium bi-folding doors to ground level.				

Comment

Sevenoaks Town Council recommended approval.

15	<i>Plan Number</i>	<i>Planning officer</i>	<i>Town Councillor</i>	<i>Agent</i>
	24/02517/DEMNOT	Abbey Aslett 14/10/2024	Cllr Michaelides	N/A
<i>Applicant</i>		<i>House Name</i>	<i>Road</i>	<i>Locality</i>
E & M Allen		Grove House	15 Clarendon Road	Town
<i>Town</i>		<i>County</i>	<i>Post Code</i>	<i>Application date</i>
				23/09/24
Demolition of garage.				

Comment

Sevenoaks Town Council recommended approval.

Comments:

This scheme is to regenerate the former gasholder site which lies between Cramptons Road and Otford Road. The proposal is for the creation of 136 new homes on the site which is just under a hectare in area, and the use of this brownfield site for housing in this important site is consistent with planning at District and Town level.

Primary **access** to and from the site is to be from the Otford Road opposite Bakers Yard, with a secondary, one-way, inwards only route from Cramptons Road.

On the Cramptons Road frontage, 8 **townhouses** are proposed. These have three storeys and flat, green roofs. The front façade is ‘crenellated’ giving the homes an appearance of a Spanish mountain village, albeit in red brick with bronze coloured window frames, doors, balustrades and trims. Externally, the houses have two parking spaces and bin/ bike stores at the front but no other garden. They each have a roof terrace accessed from the second floor bedrooms, which look across the street at the existing houses, and full height windows to first floor bedrooms with one having a small balcony. All but one window is full height on the Cramptons Road façade of each house. These homes are earmarked as “Discounted Market Sale”. The level of discount is 20%, and this is the only “**affordable**” **housing** in the scheme, there being no social rented accommodation included. These homes make up 5% of the total number of units. The external finishes to the buildings are red/ brown/ mixed brick with bronze coloured window frames, panels and balustrades to the balcony available to every flat.

In the development behind are two further townhouses, back to back with those on Cramptons Road, and on either side, South and North, are two four-storey blocks of apartments. The **North Block** stands on a podium which houses parking spaces, bike spaces and plant. Flats are a mix of two and three bedrooms and one studio flat. Lifts are included and there is one wheelchair-accessible designed townhouse (although since this will be in private ownership, not RSL, it’s appeal will be limited).

To the West, and closest to the Otford Road, stands a **rotunda**. This is designed to reflect the gas towers which previously occupied the site. It stands 10 storeys high and at almost exactly the same height as the tallest of the two gasometers which stood here. The façade treatment picks out the structure of the fretwork of the gas towers, with vertical spines picked out in white tiles on the outer face and highlighted with glazed green and yellow tiles on the inward faces, horizontal features every few storeys as per the old towers and set against warm grey brickwork (or possibly red, depending on which document you look at) with bronze window frames, insert panels and balconies. Internally, each floor includes a mix of seven one-, two- and three-bedroom flats. It is stepped away from the boundary with Otford Road by the car parking spaces around it.

A **garden** in the centre of the development is landscaped extensively on varying levels and using excavated material to create grassy mounds in the central area with paths running between, and 'natural play' spaces incorporated. There are indications that this space will be open to the public, a most welcome development in a neighbourhood with no public green spaces. There is a comprehensive planting strategy of trees, shrubs and biosolar roofs. The **PROW** which runs through the site currently will be opened up and fully integrated as an access route across the site.

Car parking is arranged in a number of locations: in the podium of the rotunda and the North block, in front of the Cramptons Road Townhouses, around the western side of the rotunda and south and west of the South Block. There are 97 spaces in this scheme of 136 homes, 16 of them dedicated to the 8 townhouses, being on their driveways. The remaining spaces divided by the remaining units gives a rate of 0.63 spaces per unit. 184 covered cycle spaces are designed into the scheme in a variety of locations.

In addition to low parking provision, there will be a loss of **informal on-street parking** on Cramptons Road. The Town Council's estimate is in the region of 15 spaces along the stretch which the townhouses will occupy. Many existing Cramptons Road residents are reliant on on-street parking, and increasingly live in multicar households as young family members cannot afford to move into homes of their own and continue to live with parents. On street parking is also used extensively by visitors and workers at the nearby industrial units and other commuters. The loss of spaces will have a considerable impact upon the neighbours.

The low parking provision is justified by the developer on the basis of the sustainable location of the scheme and the provision of a **travel plan**, with a Travel Plan Coordinator post for five years. Car sharing schemes will be promoted (although the Town Council is not aware of any existing ones in Sevenoaks, the scheme given as an example does not extend this far out of London at present) and the viability of a Car Club is being explored. Walking, cycling and public transport are to be promoted, although the document correctly notes the infrequency and limited operating hours of buses and trains in this location.

It would be fair to say that **residents** around this site are upset by the proposal. They received a consultation during the winter of 2021 which many reported having had a three-day turnaround on to meet the deadline, and they are upset by the scale of project being vastly different from that which has been widely consulted on through the STNP and Northern Masterplan development of recent years. All that Sevenoaks Town Council's Councillors have spoken to or been in contact with are concerned about the precedent for density on other sites such as the waterworks and quarry, although most are keen for the brownfield site to be developed for housing to meet local needs. None miss the gas towers, and almost all are surprised by the design inspiration they have offered. Councillors have detected no love for the industrial heritage of the site. In talking to them, Councillors have been hard pressed to find anyone who could remember the last time the gas towers were fully raised and occupying the void of the frame, although the answer to that seems to be sometime in the mid 1990's, perhaps earlier. Many then consider the solid 10-storey design to be overbearing and dominating on their neighbourhood. They have serious concerns about parking in particular – both the loss of parking spaces on street which are already in keen demand and overflow parking from residents of the scheme which has significantly fewer than the KCC policy 1 space per unit.

The analysis of the local facilities recognises the close access to supermarkets and small retailers at St John's, but misunderstands the rhythm of Sevenoaks – in listing leisure facilities, it describes two local private gyms but doesn't make clear the distance to the civic leisure centre and pool; in describing healthcare, it mentions the hospital and the private medical centre, but makes no study of GP's or their capacity for 136 new households; describing schools, it includes Dorton House which was highly specialised and is now closed, makes no distinction between state and private schools and suggests access to primary schools already operating on very tight catchment areas. The application sets out where social infrastructure lies but offers no analysis of their capacity for a large, unplanned-for development. Having been asked in pre-application to include pedestrian and cycle routes, there is no analysis of this at all.

With all that said, the design is interesting, unusual and sustainably built, and the Town Council especially welcomes the inclusion of public green space and play facilities in this neighbourhood which has none, as well as the significant improvements to the PROW which traverses the site, and which is open and secure through the proposed development. It effectively remediates this brownfield site and opens up the space.

Additional information relating to STC's decision advice:

Sevenoaks Town Council recommended **refusal** on the following grounds:

Layout and Density of Building

- ADMP – the Allocation and Development Management Plan adopted by SDC in 2015 identifies this site as having the potential for 39 new homes at a density of 40 homes per hectare;
- STNP – the Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan, which was adopted as part of the local planning framework in May 2023 states in Policy D1 that any development should be designed at a "scale and massing that responds to the context (i.e. two storey buildings on Cramptons Road but with **potential** for four storeys on Otford Road)"
- Local Plan – SDC's previous draft local plan mooted the possibility of increasing density on this site in order to achieve housing targets. It suggested a maximum of 98 homes on the site, although of course this isn't adopted policy currently.

It is clear that this proposal is considerably more dense than foreseen by either local council in any of its' planning documents, adopted or otherwise. The planning document in force is the ADMP at 39 homes.

The height of the rotunda is a factor of the proposed density. At ten storeys, it would become a landmark site on this gateway into Sevenoaks where no landmark has been envisaged thus far. It will be visible and distinct from a considerable distance, and is considerably higher than anything else in the area by some six storeys.

Design, Appearance and Materials

The SDC Residential Area Character Assessments for the surrounding areas identifies it as an area characterised and identified by two-storey terraced housing with some flats of three-storeys, and proposes developments are in keeping with that style. For Cramptons Road it notes the detracting view of the gas holders, still standing at the time of the assessment. The assessment for Berwick Way notes that the residential character is harmed by views of the gas holders.

The rotunda is very far removed from that character, and its height is incongruous with the residential character in the immediate neighbourhood and the town as a whole. It will dominate the existing neighbourhood of two-storey terraced homes.

The nearest 'tall' building is perhaps the Conway offices at 4/5 storeys, and that is very visible from the surrounding countryside including the SSSI Nature Reserve. The Town Council does not believe that a building of this height and dominance is appropriate or desirable in this location.

The industrial heritage of the gas towers drawn upon by the architect is not one which defines Sevenoaks or which is missed by its residents. The gas towers were last full over 25 years ago, only their fretwork has been visible in the time since, and their dismantling was broadly welcomed. Unlike the unused gas holders, this building will be impermeable to light and internally lit at night impacting the **visual amenity** for a considerable distance. There is no precedent for individual tall buildings in Sevenoaks which is characterised by two storey houses and low blocks of flats.

The townhouses on Cramptons Road are not in keeping with the residential Character Area Assessment, being three-storey, flat roofed with variable façade and full-height windows roof terraces to the upper floors at the front. They have an uncomfortable relationship with the neighbours opposite, with roof terraces at a level similar to upstairs bedroom windows, creating issues of **overlooking and loss of privacy**.

Adequacy of Parking

The scheme envisages parking levels of 0.7 spaces per unit. This is not compliant with KCC design guidance which requires 1 space per unit for homes in a suburban location. It is noted that the 0.7 figure includes the 8 townhouses which each have two spaces allocated, and therefore the ratio for the remaining properties with shared parking access is close to 0.6 spaces per unit.

Whilst the Town Council supports the intention to reduce reliance on cars, it does not seem probable that the infrastructure of frequent buses, fast rail connections and safe cycle lanes can be in place in time to persuade residents that personal vehicles are not needed. The Town Council therefore recommends that a 1:1 ratio should be adhered to, as per KCC policy.

The scheme will cause the loss of some 15 on-street parking spaces in Cramptons Road. Residents frequently report that parking is at a premium in this location and is used not only by residents of increasingly multigenerational homes but also visitors to the several industrial facilities in the area.

Lack of Social Housing

It is vital that a scheme in this location of this mix makes 40% of homes available as Affordable Housing in accordance with national and district policy. Discounted sale values to the initial buyers of just 5% of the stock is not acceptable, and will not serve the 800 families on the local housing list who do not have the capital to purchase property.

Informative:

The application includes a comprehensive **travel plan**, which includes frequent reviews of resident journeys and a car club as mitigation for lower parking levels and assumptions of residents not needing personal transport in this location. With the further delay to fast services from Bat and Ball Rail Station and with existing bus routes being tailored to a neighbourhood of car owners, any Travel Plan must be binding and enforceable.

The application also considers that the scheme makes a positive contribution to the green spaces of the area, and indeed there are very few **green public spaces** or play facilities in the Cramptons Road/ Moor Road/ Swanzy Road area. Public access to maintained public space and play facilities must be permanently ensured.

The applicant states that the infrastructure for **vehicle charging points** can be provided. Any development should be conditional upon comprehensive provision of charging points for electric cars and bikes given their rapid increase in popularity and availability.

The scheme as submitted is substantially larger than envisaged in the ADMP or STNP. It is vital that **infrastructure** is able to cope with 136 new families in the area and at present healthcare and education (particularly primary education) are at capacity. The applicant's Design and Access Statement draws attention to schools which are operating at very tight catchments, plus one which doesn't exist any longer. It covers medical centres without reference to a single GP practice, which the Town Council knows to be under great pressure. Public transport infrastructure in this location is not designed for dense, low-car owning developments with few bus services serving the area at infrequent intervals and, whilst the site is undeniably close to a rail station, the services from Bat and Ball station do not compete for most London-bound commuters with those at Sevenoaks station. Bat and Ball junction is highly congested with unsignalled and hard-to-use pedestrian crossings and zero cycle infrastructure. Significant investment will be needed in local infrastructure to meet the expectations of this development and should be reflected in the **Section 106/ CIL heads of terms**.

Appendix 4: Copy of South East Water's response dated 9th February 2024, with support from Sevenoaks Town Council

Planning Comments

From: Sean Mitchell
Sent: 12 February 2024 13:01
To: Planning Comments
Subject: FW: Sevenoaks Gasholders - Updated Reports 21/01254/FUL - further consultation request - further information for SEW

Please Idox this consultation response from South East Water for the above-mentioned application - PUBLIC

Many thanks,

Sean

From: Murrell, Iain J <Iain.Murrell@southeastwater.co.uk>
Sent: Friday, February 9, 2024 7:58 PM
To: Sean Mitchell <Sean.Mitchell@sevenoaks.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Sevenoaks Gasholders - Updated Reports 21/01254/FUL - further consultation request - further information for SEW

EXTERNAL EMAIL: Exercise caution unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Sean,

Apologies for the delay in responding.

Our consultants, whom we support, ultimately haven't reached the same conclusions as those set out in Stantec's letter of the 18th of December 2023 (Ref 31392). A sufficient level of uncertainty persists, and I do not believe the current process of each party challenging the technical opinion of their counterpart is bringing us any closer to resolution. We are no nearer to gaining the necessary level of assurance to allow us to accept the proposed re-development of the former Sevenoaks Gasholder site, in its current form.

Given the significance of Cramptons Road WTW to maintaining supply to thousands of our customers we have no alternative but to continue with this stance, and hence cannot remove our objection. The historic levels of contamination will persist for an undefined if not indefinite period of time, and the piling works in their current form will introduce an unacceptable level of risk to the local water resources.

Sevenoaks District Council's new Local Plan, Plan2040 through Policy W3, Water Management, Stress and Efficiency identifies the need to undertake an appropriate site investigation and risk assessment when considering proposals in a Source Protection Zone. That process has now for all intents and purposes concluded, and the evidence provided hasn't been sufficient to change our opinion. We have no alternative but to take a precautionary position as in the event that the Cramptons source was compromised, however unlikely, there is no obvious means to recover.

For the record, the following remain key points of concern;

- Source –the potential for DNAPL to be present, which the development could impact, has not been fully considered in the presented assessments. It does not appear that investigative works have extended to the depth of the proposed works, and therefore the risk assessments presented have not fully considered all associated risks.
- Receptors –we do not agree that the abstraction points are not receptors to the development. Groundwater flow appears to be flowing towards Cramptons Road Water Treatment Works

in December 2022 and January 2023. The cause and implications of this have not been sufficiently considered in the assessment.

- Data –We believe that the groundwater level data collected and presented have been fully considered. Statement that the abstraction wells are up hydraulic gradient appear factually incorrect, based on data presented in the report.

Regards

Iain

Iain Murrell

Supply Demand Manager

Water Resources

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Iain.Murrell@southeastwater.co.uk / www.southeastwater.co.uk



south east water  **Pure know h₂ow**

South East Water, Rocfort Road, Snodland, Kent, ME6 5AH