

# DEVELOPMENT, AFFORDABILITY & SITE ASSESSMENTS

If you are concerned about the size and amount of development and the delivery of the development, you may wish to comment on:

## What the Plan says

[Vision Statement 1 \(Comment Box 3\)](#) At the heart of all development in the borough will be connectivity, active travel, an appropriate mix of uses and accommodation and, above all, the timely delivery of relevant infrastructure, which will have been funded by development: this infrastructure will have mitigated the impact of development, and, wherever possible, resulted in 'betterment' for existing residents, users, businesses, visitors, etc.

[Vision and Objectives 2 1. \(Comment Box 4 \)](#) To deliver the housing, economic, and other needs identified for the borough by the end of the plan period through well designed, sustainable, plan led, and high quality development.

[Vision and Objectives 2 2.\(Comment Box 4\)](#) To achieve the delivery of all forms of infrastructure to mitigate the impact of development and where possible to result in 'betterment'

## Notes

- Reference to the Infrastructure delivery plan in 2.18 does not appear to address many of the issues inherent with the proposed scale of development e.g. no additional health provision in Sissinghurst despite the addition of approximately 100 more houses in addition to the 80 already built. The three surgeries in Cranbrook are expected to cope with the increased needs of 900 + dwellings and inhabitants.

## What the Plan says

[2.29 \(Comment Box 1A and 1B\)](#) Evidence from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment(15) and the Office for National Statistics indicates notable affordability pressures for market house purchases, with **entry level house prices approximately 13 times earnings of households in the borough**. This compares to a **ratio of 6.5 nationally**, and an average of 10 within Kent as a whole. The analysis also suggests some real impacts arising from high housing costs. Over the 2001-11 period, home ownership fell (with increasing numbers of households renting privately). Levels of over-occupied households and those in shared housing increased,

[Vision and Objectives 2 4.\(Comment Box 4\)](#) To boost significantly the supply of affordable housing, and to seek to redress the disparity between house prices and income in the borough.

## Notes

- 'Affordable' means 80% of market value for rent or to buy (with the appropriate deposit)
- ***Does building MORE houses drive down the cost of housing???!?***
- We commend the intention for development to fund local facilities ***BUT BKF for example, is sending part of its Section 106 monies to fund the new Benenden Primary School building (a good thing, but it is NOT in our community)***

## What the Plan says

[2.46 \(Comment Box 1A and 1B\)](#) At the local community level, the provision of leisure, recreation, and cultural facilities will enhance the sustainability of communities and, at a wider borough level, will create a more vibrant economy that will attract businesses, visitors, and tourists to the area. It is important that contributions from development are secured to facilitate the delivery of new and/or improved leisure and recreation provision where these are required.

4.40 ([Comment Box 1A and 1B](#)) Sustainable development of an appropriate scale at the smaller settlements to provide opportunities at the local level to meet housing needs and sustain local services and infrastructure, as well as the support for new local facilities where required, and at all times being aware that such development is taking place on valued and (in many cases) protected landscapes.

#### Notes

- One reason for allowing Brick Kiln Farm estate to be built, was that it was only just outside the LBD (Limits to Built Development). **The intention of this plan is to MOVE the LBD** so that BKF is inside the development. This allows the same reasoning for accepting the large estate development at Turnden.

#### What the Plan says

[Policy STR 1 6. \(Comment Box 2A and 2B\)](#) Development at the other settlements across the borough within their respective Limits to Built Development boundaries and through the delivery of allocations as per Table 3 below, and other suitable windfall developments;

4.80 ([Comment Box 1A and 1B](#)) Limits to Built Development (LBDs) are used to differentiate between the built up areas of settlements and areas of countryside beyond. Generally, and subject to compliance with other policies in this Plan, there will be a presumption that proposed development such as infilling, redevelopment, and/or changes of use will be acceptable inside the LBD, while land and buildings outside the LBD will be considered as countryside where there is much stricter control over development.

4.87 ([Comment Box 1A and 1B](#)) Although very close to the LBD boundary, the site at Turnden Farm, Hartley Road, to the south west of Cranbrook has also been excluded at this stage. However, it is anticipated that these sites will be reviewed and refined for the next stage of the Local Plan.

#### Notes

- When BKF was allocated, the developer was told to take a masterplanning approach. This has not happened. ***Can we be assured that this approach will be enforced by the Planning Department?***

#### What the Plan says

4.44 ([Comment Box 1A and 1B](#)) To achieve the strategic objectives of this Draft Local Plan, it is essential for development to be planned in a coordinated way and, for some of the strategic sites and locations, it will be appropriate to deliver this through a comprehensive masterplanning process

#### Notes

- There is no land allocated at this point for a Medical Facility and no guarantee that there will be more GPs wishing to work in this area

#### What the Plan says

[Policy STR 5 5. \(Comment Box 2A and 2B\)](#) New residential and commercial development will be supported if sufficient infrastructure capacity is either available, or can be provided in time to serve the development.

#### Notes

- Infrastructure plan for Cranbrook (see Supporting Documents) is lacking in basic infrastructure e.g. transport, employment opportunities and sustainability

## What the Plan says

[Policy STR8 1. \(Comment Box 2A and 2B\)](#) The urban and rural landscapes of the borough, including the designated High Weald AONB, will be conserved and enhanced;

### Notes

- The above statement is entirely negated by

[Policy STR8 5. \(Comment Box 2A and 2B\)](#) Within the area designated as AONB and its setting, development will be managed in a way that conserves and enhances the natural beauty of the area, and developers will be expected to demonstrate (through relevant documentation submitted as part of a planning application) how proposals have had regard to the objectives of the High Weald AONB Management Plan. Proposals that would harm the natural beauty of the AONB will not be permitted unless it is clearly in the public interest to do so. In such instances, effective mitigation should form an integral part of the development proposals;

### Notes

- With the allocation of the adjoining site of Brick Kiln Farm for housing, the green fields of Turnden form the last remaining separation between Cranbrook (with the character of a town) and Hartley (with the character of a hamlet).
- The site is highly visible from well used footpaths which cross the fields and allow local people to experience a feeling of naturalness and rurality along the Crane Valley.

[Agricultural Land 6.227 \(Comment Box 1A and 1B\)](#) The National Planning Policy Framework expects local planning authorities to take into account the economic and other benefits of **the best and most versatile (BMV)** agricultural land which is land in Grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC), Grade 1 being the highest. Agricultural land which falls into these categories is considered to be the most flexible, productive and efficient in response to inputs

### Notes

- Turnden is Agricultural Land Grade 3
- Turnden reflects the High Weald's typical Medieval character. It lies within a distinct Medieval den which formed part of the Manor of Godmersham and its character remains agricultural, unlike the adjoining den of Cranbrook which developed into a town.
- Turnden represents a significant survival of a Medieval farmstead surrounded by its own fields and associated with other Medieval features typical of the High Weald including a historic routeways (Hartley Road and a PROW), a Medieval common/ green (Goddards Green) and ancient gill woodland (Crane Valley).