



Bulletin

Sevenoaks District Council draft Local Plan consultation is open for comments until 3 February 2019.

This is the last chance to have your say.

In addition to this consultation, comments are being invited for additional potential strategic development sites in the Green Belt. One of these sites is :

MX4/MX61 LAND SOUTH OF REDHILL ROAD, NEW ASH GREEN.

The location address for this site indicates that it is part of New Ash Green, however this site is **pristine Green Belt and not part of the existing village envelope.**

Green Belt is protected from development under the current National Planning Policy Framework and can only be built on if "exceptional circumstances" are met.

The proposal should offer additional infrastructure to meet an existing need, in this case a school, community building and burial ground extension have been offered to off-set the building of approximately **580 homes** in the Green Belt. The proposed infrastructure is not required and therefore does not meet the "exceptional circumstances" test.



PARISH COUNCIL SUBMISSION

Green Belt where “exceptional circumstances exist”

Inappropriate development is, by definition harmful to the green belt and should not be approved.

GREEN BELT: The proposed plans are all in the Green Belt on productive agricultural land. New Ash Green was designed and built as a planned village with a structure and is self-contained. Its containment is signalled by woodland and the proposed site currently provides clear separation and settings for Ash village itself. It clearly justifies the description of the Sevenoaks District Council as “strongly performing Green Belt”. The woodland provides an important habitat that should be protected¹. Bio-diversity could be at risk.

The essential characteristics of Green Belts are the “openness and permanence”

- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas. This it does.
- To prevent neighbouring built up areas merging into one another. This it does.
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. It does this very strongly especially given the topography.
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns. It preserves the setting of the historic core of Ash, which contains significant listed buildings at least one is Grade I.

PRIMARY SCHOOL: The promise of a site for a new Primary School is spurious. Kent County Council indicates that there are no plans for additional schools² within the area. The current school is centrally positioned on a large site and in the unlikely event requiring enlargement, has ample space for it.

BURIAL GROUND: The Parish Council is currently attempting to purchase land for a burial ground and has alternative process in progress, therefore the potential offer does not constitute “very special circumstances”. It is currently also making provision for the burying of ashes and providing for permanent memorials. Nationally 75% of committals are for cremations.

COMMUNITY HALL: The locality is well provided for by no fewer than 4 community halls³ plus at least 8 other venues all of which are rentable and have capacity for further usage, therefore an additional hall is not required.

The local medical practice is under great strain due to shortage of qualified medical professionals and the leader of the team has written to support this. The local hospital is similarly under stress and there are plans for a substantial increase in population in North West Kent which will add to this.

The builders claim that entries to their site can be made from Ash Road and Hartley Bottom adequate for the size of KCC requirements but this is not clear on their site plan.

The local road network and transport system is not designed for the current level of traffic and adding to it will make matters worse. A cul-de-sac is not appropriate for this number of houses. The emergency provision onto Hartley Bottom Road is not adequate as this is a rural single track lane. We note that traffic survey results are not available.

In short, the proposed “special circumstances” are unnecessary and virtually of no community requirement or benefit.

This Parish’s contribution to the housing shortfall is of 154 units already in the Draft Plan.

¹ Draft Local Plan site appraisal MX4.

² P. 121 Review of Kent Commission for Education Provision 2018—2022.

³ Community Halls - Ash Village Hall, Hodsoll Street & Ridley Village Hall, New Ash Green Village Hall, Youth and Community Centre.

If you would like to make representations using your own words, here are some points for consideration:

- The site is strongly performing Green Belt. Exceptional circumstances have not been met.
- Ancient woodland and linked hedges—this is an irreplaceable habitat. Natural England guidance gives a minimum of 15m buffer to protect ancient woodland.
- The setting of the Church and Manor House is in an elegant setting which should be maintained.
- The village of Ash should remain separated from New Ash Green.
- The special character of New Ash Green should be retained.
- There is no current requirement for another primary school.
- There is no current requirement for another community building.
- Development will increase the pressure, even further, on the local medical practice and hospital.
- Gas pipeline is located in this area.
- Development of this scale, in this location will have an impact on the capacity of the road network which is made up of a country lane, single tracked in places, with unofficial passing points south to A20 and M20. Travel to Longfield railway station, M25 and A2/M2 is via already busy roads, with congestion at peak times. Hartley Bottom Road is a narrow country lane and would not support the suggested emergency access.
- Overcrowding of commuters travelling from Longfield station will be increased.

The explanation of why Sevenoaks District Council is consulting is available at:
<http://planningconsult.sevenoaks.gov.uk/consult.ti/SSGB2018/consultationHome>

The submission from the Berkeley Group and site plan are available at:
https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/info/20069128/new_local_plan/412/proposed_submission_version_of_the_local_plan

The page for making comments is:
<http://planningconsult.sevenoaks.gov.uk/consult.ti/SSGB2018/respondByQuestionnaire>

**Comments should be made to Richard Morris, Sevenoaks District Council, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks, TN13 7HG or at www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/draftlocalplan before
3 FEBRUARY 2019.**

Sevenoaks District Council will be holding a consultation drop-in session. Come along and talk to them about the Local Plan, no appointment necessary:

Thursday 10 January (5-8pm) : New Ash Green Primary School, North Square, New Ash Green, DA3 8JT

Other local sites included in the draft Local Plan are:

New Ash Green Village Centre	70 units
The Manor House, North Ash Road	35 units
The Forge, Ash Road (Orpin)	29 units
Oast House Nursery, Ash Road	20 units



NEW ASH GREEN VILLAGE CENTRE



THE MANOR HOUSE



THE FORGE



OAST HOUSE NURSERY