



Town Forum – Members’ Report 26 July 2007

Benhall Mill Road Land Association

Our Association has been informed of an outline planning application by Charles Church Homes to build nearly 500 homes on the border of Tunbridge Wells and Wealden east of Benhall Mill Road and south of Forest Road.

All the homes would be in the Wealden District, and the northern part of the development with 80-120 homes will be built on an SNCI (Site of Nature Conservation Importance) site, a green field site.

A development of this size would place great strain the roads, infrastructure and services provided by Tunbridge Wells, while the residents of the development would be paying rates to another Authority.

Keith Perry and Altan Omer would like to add this item for discussion to tonight’s agenda

Wealden District Council Local Development Framework

July 2007 - Core Strategy - Issues and Options Consultation Paper (- 15 Aug 2007) [p.66 & 67]

The Edge of Tunbridge Wells

5.22 Part of the District includes the fringes of Tunbridge Wells around the suburb of Hawkenbury. Ensuring that Tunbridge Wells maintains an attractive setting is a policy of the South East Plan. However there is a gap in the High Weald AONB boundary here and it is outside the Tunbridge Wells Green Belt which runs North of the District; but access problems, biodiversity and sensitivity of the setting of Tunbridge Wells rule out development on the Windmill Farm side of the railway. Issues on the land off Benhall Mill Road are more complex. This option might only be practical and desirable as part of a possible joint approach towards consideration for options for Tunbridge Wells with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and which employs the highest standards of urban and landscape design to enhance the town’s setting.

Question Thirteen

The Edge of Tunbridge Wells Option

Option 13a

Please tell us whether you agree or disagree that consideration should be given to a small urban extension to the South East of Tunbridge Wells but outside the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Green Belt?

Question 13b

If you have any further brief comments please tell us.

Figure 16 Main Option for Development on the Fringe of Tunbridge Wells

PART 5 WEALDEN'S PLACES

Table 4 Main Option for Development on the Fringe of Tunbridge Wells

Ref. & Broad

13a South of Hawkenbury

Approximate Potential Scale of Development

- 80-140 units on area at Northern part
- 200-350 units at Southern part

Impacts & Issues

Landscape & Biodiversity

- Part of area was designated as a site of nature conservation importance in 1991. Central area is most important. Needs to be re-surveyed.
- Landscape impact limited in this area because of generally enclosed nature and lack of impact on key issues public views of setting of Tunbridge Wells.

Transport & Accessibility

- Access would need to be off road to West in Tunbridge Wells Borough and Borough. Access via existing single storey employment use(s) is a possibility.
- To South narrow width may require access restrictions e.g. no left turn out

Infrastructure, Services & Other

- Will impact on services in Tunbridge Wells. Response needed from Tunbridge Wells, Kent County Council and other Kent service providers
- Was considered in local plan review and not taken forward into Non Statutory Local Plan
- Good potential access but large development may pose junction capacity issues