

BOROUGH GREEN GARDEN CITY & THE LOCAL PLAN

We have all heard of a plan called Borough Green Garden City where a group of local sandpit owners propose 4000 new houses stretching from Darkhill Roundabout near H+H Celcon to Nepicar on the A20 at Wrotham Heath.

Although this land is all barred from development by Greenbelt and Kent Downs AONB policies, TMBC are considering allowing it because it will "provide Infrastructure" in the form of a "Relief Road" , an attempt to invoke our past support for the Borough Green Bypass. But make no mistake, those 4000 houses will generate so much traffic that we will get no traffic relief, and with TMBC's plans for thousands more houses in the Borough, we will suffer even worse gridlock.

The full 4000 homes proposal is bigger than the existing parishes of Platt, Wrotham Heath, Borough Green, Ightham, Plaxtol and Wrotham combined. It would join us all together in an urban conglomeration as big as Tonbridge itself.

Large parts of the land needed for this road hold unexploited Strategic Mineral Reserves, and so cannot be developed until after extraction and restoration. But the last Area Plan, the LDF, showed that we cannot trust TMBC to abide by the rules to protect our interests. There is a strong suspicion they may fudge, grant the housing permission and allow a phased introduction of the road. Some existing sand permissions extend to 2042, and other extraction has not yet even been applied for. So we could get the bulk of the houses without a road at all.

H+H Celcon tell us they need to excavate sand from their Western Extension, running from their entrance at Darkhill, north of the railway up to Fenpond Rd, in order to ensure the factory's viability into the future. Their need to persuade us to support that sand extraction may lead them to block the Borough Green Garden City Relief Road where TMBC want to run it across H+H land. Without a complete route for the road, Borough Green Garden City is dead!

All our villages have suffered for over 100 years with the noise, HGVs and dust from constant sand and stone extraction, and it is difficult to expect us to agree to any more. But in the final analysis we may need to make a choice between a 20-30 year sandpit to be restored to Greenbelt when finished, or 4000 houses that will destroy that rolling farm and woodland forever.

Tim Shaw & Mike Taylor Borough Green Parish Council & TMBC Ward Members

LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK email Mike or Tim, or drop a letter in the Library.

mike.truck@btconnect.com tim.shaw@tmbc.gov.uk

more at www.boroughgreen.gov.uk