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My Ref: SDC DBC Examination Response Oct 22
Your Ref: DBC Local Plan Examination S2 M2 I1
Q7
Date: 29th September 2022

Dear Programme Officer,

Dartford Borough Local Plan Examination Stage 2 Matter 2 Issue 1 Question 7.

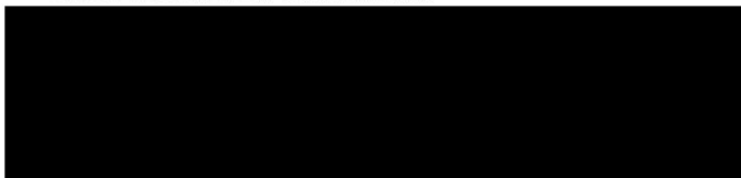
Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) is currently preparing a Local Plan which covers the period up to 2040 and is being issued for consultation under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012. Details of the consultation will be presented to the Development and Conservation Advisory Committee on 11th Oct 2022 and Cabinet 13th Oct 2022. <https://cds.sevenoaks.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=361&MId=2902&Ver=4&J=2>

The Consultation Draft comprises 11 chapters, reflecting the main planning matters that are expected to influence development in the District up to 2040. Overall, the document seeks to manage the tension between meeting development needs and protecting our natural environment.

The Development Strategy can be summarised as seeking to make best use and most efficient use of land in existing settlements, only releasing Green Belt land where there are exceptional circumstances for doing so. Reflecting this approach, the Consultation Draft focuses on the potential to meet residential needs in existing settlements. In accordance with the LDS, a further Regulation 18 version of the Local Plan, including development opportunities outside of settlements, will be published for consultation in 2023.

The Consultation Draft focusses rigorously on making the most of development opportunities in existing settlements, through a number of mechanisms including optimising the density of new development and proactively identifying development opportunities. This approach, taking into account outstanding

Chief Executive: Dr. Pav Ramewal



planning permissions as at April 2022, has led to a housing supply of approximately 7,500 units resulting in an **unmet need of approximately 6,000 units**.

Paragraph 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that *“Before concluding that exceptional circumstances exist to justify changes to Green Belt boundaries, the strategic policy-making authority should be able to demonstrate that it has examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development. This will be assessed through the examination of its strategic policies...and whether the strategy...has been informed by discussions with neighbouring authorities about whether they could accommodate some of the identified need for development, as demonstrated through the statement of common ground.”*

We refer to the statement of common ground (SoCG) between Sevenoaks District Council and Dartford Borough Council (DBC) that sets out the relationship between the two Local Authority areas. It concludes that *“Whilst it is recognised that Sevenoaks District and Dartford Borough do not share a housing market, there are clear relationships between the two areas, particularly between Swanley and Dartford.”* And that *“Given that there are some functional cross-boundary housing links between parts of SDC and DBC, there is a case to be made for DBC to assist with some unmet needs from SDC (if required and if not met at source housing market area) in the future should they have the capacity to do so, and where consistent with DBC’s sustainable development, and national policy.”*

Therefore, given that the SDC Local Plan can identify a supply of approximately 7,500 units in existing settlements outside of the green belt, SDC consider that, in accordance with the SoCG, there is a case for DBC to assist with some of the 6,000 unmet need.

I trust the above is clear, if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Planning Policy Team.

Yours Sincerely,

Helen French MRTPI

Principal Planning Officer
Sevenoaks District Council