

SEVENOAKS TOWN

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

SEVENOAKS TOWN COUNCIL

First Annual Report:
May 2024



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Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan Annual Report 23rd May 2023 – 20th May 2024

As approved by the Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring & Implementation Group on 7th May 2024 and Sevenoaks Town Council's Planning & Environment Committee on 20th May 2024.

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1. Introduction

The Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan (STNP) was produced by Sevenoaks Town Council (STC) in collaboration with local businesses, organisations and local people. Full copy of the STNP, as well as background information and a Summary document is available to download or view online via the following link: <https://sevenoaksndp.wordpress.com/>

The STNP went to Public Referendum on 4th May 2024, in tandem with the Parish/Town and District local elections, where the District Council asked Sevenoaks Town residents the following question:

“Do you want Sevenoaks District Council to use the neighbourhood plan for Sevenoaks Town to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?”

The Referendum received a 38.66% voter turnout, comprising **4,294 “Yes” votes (73.1%)** and **1,292 “No” votes (22%)**. It was subsequently “made” by Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) in their capacity as the Local Planning Authority (LPA) on 23rd May 2024, and has since been used to help SDC Case Officers decide the outcome of planning applications received within the Town.

The overwhelming support received at Referendum and successful adoption of the Plan was the result of over 10 years worth of work by its many contributors, with the area having first been designated by the District Council as a Neighbourhood Plan Area in October 2013.

This report is the first of four annual reports which will be produced over the next three years, to monitor the success and relevancy of the STNP’s policies, aims and objectives, as well as to inform the 5 year review which is set to take place in May 2028.*

The purpose of the annual reports will be to ensure that the STNP’s policies are being properly applied and adhered to, and projects which the STNP has committed to delivering are being progressed within a reasonable timeline.

They will also include detail about new planning policies and legislation which may impact the plan, and recommendations made by the STNP Monitoring & Implementation Group (STNP M&I Group) on any amendments which should be considered at the 5 year review.

The purpose of the 5 year review is to keep the STNP up-to-date and reflective of the current social, environmental and economic climate, as well as compliant with new planning policies and legislation. *Should the District Council’s Local Plan be adopted prior to May 2028 when the first 5 year review is due to take place, the review will be brought forward in order to ensure that it complies with the new local planning legislation.

2. STNP Monitoring & Implementation Working Group

On 27th September 2023, the first meeting of the Sevenoaks STNP M&I Group was held, to establish membership, scope and terms of reference for the Group, to review and agree a Monitoring and Action Plan (see below section) and any other items members felt should be added.

The purpose of the M&I Group is to oversee how successfully the Plan is being applied to applications within the Town and to make recommendations on the Actions which the STNP has identified for further study.

The Working Group reports to STC's Planning Committee, which must sign-off any decision before it can be progressed.

The Group aims to meet every 8 weeks, with the below meeting schedule having been held to date. Each meeting focuses on a different Theme within the STNP, with the intention that different groups or organisations will attend as and when the topic relates to their interests or relevant subject matter. Membership is therefore fluid and open to any person, business or organisation within Sevenoaks Town who wishes to attend and have a say on the Agenda items as and when they apply to their interests.

Meeting Date	Topic
27 th September 2023	Initial Set up
4 th December 2023	Theme One – Character, Heritage and Identity
22 nd January 2024	Theme Two – Landscape and Blue and Green Infrastructure
18 th March 2024	Theme Three – Movement and Public Realm
7 th May 2024	Review and approval of draft first Annual Report, and Theme Four – Local Economy
Date TBC	Theme Five – Community and Culture
Date TBC	Theme Six – Sports and Recreation
Date TBC	Theme Seven – Development and Housing
Date TBC	Approval of collated Themes One – Seven Actions and agreement of next steps

3. Monitoring & Implementation Plan

An initial draft of the Monitoring & Implementation Plan was created by the Planning Committee Clerk and recommended by STC's Planning Committee for adoption of the Group on 11th September 2023. It was subsequently adopted by the M&I Group, with amendment that the Actions would be structured via Themes in order to produce a clear work-stream for each meeting. A further draft has been created with this amendment, which will remain subject to edits, until the M&I Group has had opportunity to consider and comment upon the actions under all seven Themes. (See Appendix C)

This is a work in progress, with the M&I Group working through the Plan's seven Themes one meeting at a time. Actions have therefore been agreed under the first three Themes, with pending comments under the four remaining Themes due to be collated on completion, agreed by the M&I Group and approved by the Planning Committee.

4. Monitoring – planning applications

Monitoring of how the District Council has been using the STNP to help determine planning applications commenced prior to its 23rd May 2023 adoption, due to it having been used by Case Officers from 12th May 2023 onwards, and the District Council having argued that it should be considered material as early as February 2023 during a Public Inquiry.

Officer Reports produced by SDC's Case Officers, as well as Decision Notices published by SDC on planning applications received within the Town boundary have been monitored throughout the year and reported to the M&I Group. These Monitoring reports included trends and observations in how policies were being applied throughout the time period, and recommended requests to be made to SDC on how to improve this.

A summary of key findings from the reports is provided below, as well as actions which were taken in relation to them. The full report, which includes more detailed observations on trends and changes in use of policies throughout the year is available to view online or download via link found in Appendix D.

- Early monitoring reports noted various cases where the STNP had not been considered by the Case Officer in their reports detailing how an application had been reviewed against local policies. This was queried with SDC and reference made to specific planning applications which the M&I Group believed should have been reviewed against STNP policies. The result was additional training provided to SDC Officers, and a marked decrease in planning applications which did not apply STNP policies to relevant issues.
- Early Decision Notices were noted to cite STNP policies in support of a Refusal of planning permission, but not to support a condition in a Grant of Approval. SDC clarified this to be due to there being no legal requirement for Decision Notices to cite policies in Grants for Approval, and the practice instead followed by SDC as a method of good practice. STC requested that the STNP policies be used similarly to support approval conditions, and the practice has since been observed frequently in recently published decisions.
- Although the original intention for the above request was to highlight the STNP's aims for supporting high quality development as opposed to being used only to block unwanted development, the introduction of this practice has been observed as potentially more successful than originally anticipated. This is via SDC conditions for ecological enhancements being observed in some cases to have been replaced by a much more robust Biodiversity Management and Monitoring Plan condition, requiring 10% BNG. Until April 2024, this wasn't required under any other planning policy and couldn't have been conditioned without the STNP to support it, which is a significant win for the Policy when compared to the next observation.
- Policy L1 requires a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) to be delivered where possible by new developments, however due to the wording "where possible", the policy has been consistently observed as under-performing compared to Group members' expectations. Case Officers have considered the wording to allow flexibility to when the policy be applied, opting not to apply it in several cases noted within the full monitoring reports.

An additional example of the policy underperforming also includes Householder planning applications, which SDC have since clarified as being exempt from the Policy. This unfortunately means that new fences proposed under a Householder application are also therefore exempted from being conditioned as needing to remain permeable to wildlife.

- Recommendations on how Policy L1 can be strengthened at 5 year review have been made by the Group and are detailed in a later section. The new April 2024 legislation requiring smaller developments to deliver BNG is anticipated to encourage higher application of the policy in upcoming applications.

5. Monitoring – By Theme and related Objectives

The Independent Examiner for the STNP stated that:

“It is clear to me that the implementation of the policies in the STNP (as modified) will secure the realisation of the Town Council’s Vision and that Sevenoaks will retain its attractive characteristics while at the same time ensuring that a sustainable future is achieved.”

This section seeks to track the implementation of policies against the **objectives** which they support, in order to ensure that the Examiner’s prediction is achieved. This has been done via the tracking of LPA decisions on planning applications, as well as various projects which support the vision and which the Town Council is either pursuing itself, or is aware of being pursued by another authority. The latter is by no means exhaustive of supporting projects and initiatives being pursued by other organisations or authorities, listing primarily STC projects in addition to any others which it is aware of other organisations pursuing.

Analysis of how the objectives and aims are being delivered by planning decisions or other means is therefore provided below, by Theme – with a foreword relating to the Town Council’s pursuing of 2 Masterplans for the Town Centre and St John’s area, due to these having the capacity to contribute towards all seven of the STNP’s Themes.

STC’s emerging Masterplans for Sevenoaks Town Centre and St Johns Area:

As of Winter 2023, Sevenoaks Town Council has been pursuing 2 Masterplans – one for the Town Centre and one for St John’s Hill Area. These are being created in consultation with local people, businesses and organisations in Sevenoaks via Stakeholder Workshop events, one to one interviews with prominent stakeholders and surveys to local people. Draft Masterplans are expected for public consultation by June/July 2024, and preparation and publication of the final Masterplans is expected after August 2024.

The purpose of the Masterplans is to create spatial visions for the two areas, identifying locations which are not performing as well as they could be and assets which are of high value and should be enhanced. They will set out recommendations and potential uses which would best utilise the space while prioritising potential walking and cycling opportunities, improving the public realm, establishing a Cultural Quarter to support the local economy, addressing environmental matters and linking key destinations together.

Production of the two linked Masterplans are supported by Aim C2, which states that “the Town Council will work with the District Council and landowners to encourage development of vacant and under-used sites particularly where they have a negative impact on the townscape in Sevenoaks.”

The output of the Masterplans, while not yet fixed due to the projects being in early engagement stages, and if utilised by future developers and landowners, have the potential to support the following policies and their overarching objectives:

STNP Reference	Summary of Policy which supports the project(s):
Objective One	To respect the town's character and heritage and ensure that all new development is responsive to its context and enhances the setting of the town's historic assets
Policy C1	Protecting and enhancing heritage assets or the contribution made by its setting
Aim C2	STC to work with SDC to encourage development of vacant and under-utilised sites
Policy C4	High quality design and responding to local character area
Aim C7	Preparing design guidance for areas not in the Residential Character Area Assessment
Objective Two	To protect the setting of local landmarks and the landscape setting of the town
Policy C8	Protecting and enhancing the setting of local landmarks
Policy C9	Protecting and enhancing the landscape setting and character of the town, and its visibility to and from the open countryside
Objective Three	To enhance the gateways / arrival points into the town to create a more welcoming impression
Policy C10	Enhancing gateways and arrival points into the Town
Objective Five	To recognise the significant contribution that trees and hedgerows make to the town's character and biodiversity
Aim L3	Identifying areas where trees and hedgerows make a significant contribution to local character and biodiversity
Objective Six	To protect, improve and enhance access to existing publicly accessible open spaces and create new publicly accessible open spaces and green infrastructure
Policy L5	Development of new public open space and leisure opportunities
Objective Seven	To work with the District Council and Kent County Council, in consultation with neighbouring Parish Councils, to identify a long-term strategic approach to transport in Sevenoaks to respond to and mitigate any impacts of new developments on the existing network
Objective Eight	To promote a co-ordinated approach to transport and movement that encourages use of sustainable transport modes, including walking and cycling, and reducing pollution levels, whilst ensuring that the centre is still accessible by car
Policy M1	Promoting walking and cycling and removing barriers to pedestrian and cycle movement across the town
Policy M2	Provision of additional cycle facilities
Policy M5	Improved pedestrian and cycle crossing facilities at major junctions
Policy M7	Improve transport interchange facilities at Sevenoaks station
Policy M8	Enhancing bus services and facilities across the town
Aim M10	Discouraging HGV movements in the town centre
Objective Nine	To deliver public realm enhancements to improve the pedestrian experience in town
Policy M11	Public realm improvements, including reducing traffic impact in town and neighbourhood centres and street furniture
Aim M12	Locating paths and pavements requiring repair and improvement
Objective Ten	To support local businesses and retailers and encourage a more collaborative and entrepreneurial business environment in the centre

Objective Eleven	To consolidate and enhance both the town centre and secondary shopping areas
Policy E5	Spatial strategies that enhance function, accessibility and appearance at neighbourhood centres
Objective Twelve	To deliver enhanced community assets for the town
Policy COM1	Promoting new health and education provision, faith facilities and other necessary community infrastructure
Objective Thirteen	To develop and promote a cultural quarter in the town centre and to enhance the town's cultural offer and improve access to existing cultural assets
Policy COM2	Development of a cultural quarter
Aim COM3	Development of a new amphitheatre at Knole Environmental Park
Objective Fourteen	To deliver enhanced recreational and sports facilities for the town
Policy S1	Provision of new sports facilities
Policy S2	Provision of new and enhances play and outdoor sports and recreational facilities
Objective Fifteen	To promote high quality development that enhances the town and consolidates vacant or under-utilised land
Policy D1	Additional guidance on potential use of listed sites or those adjacent to them

Theme One: Character, Heritage and Identity

Objective One: To respect the town's character and heritage and ensure that all new development is responsive to its context and enhances the setting of the town's historic assets

Support via planning application decisions:

This objective is supported by planning policies C1 and C4.

Policy C1 seeks to preserve heritage assets within the Town, requiring proposed developments to demonstrate that they will sustain or, where practicable, enhance the significance of a heritage asset of the contribution made by its setting. This includes Conservation Areas, as well as Listed and Locally Listed assets.

Policy C4 seeks to preserve local character, requiring high quality developments which take account of SDC's Sevenoaks Residential Character Area Assessment, with a written statement on how proposals have responded to the local character.

These are the most applied of the STNP's planning policies to planning applications received within the Town, with the following approximate usage* by Case Officers having been recorded:

Supporting STNP Policy	Officer Reports	Decision Notices
C1 (Heritage)	88	12 Refusals, 21 Grants
C4 (Local Character)	168	5 Refusals, 59 Grants

**The dataset for this being OUT, FUL, HOUSE, CONVAR, MMA, and LBCALT applications.*

Aim C2, which is an Aim that outlines the Town Council's intention to work with SDC to encourage development of vacant or underused sites has also been considered in one Case Report.

Objective Two: To protect the setting of local landmarks and the landscape setting of the town

Support via planning application decisions:

Supporting STNP Policy	Officer Reports	Decision Notices
C8 (Setting of local landmarks)	1	0
C9 (Views to and from the countryside)	1	0

**The dataset for this being OUT, FUL, HOUSE, CONVAR, MMA, and LBCALT applications.*

Support via known active projects:

Purelake's development of the Old Tesco Site (136 High Street): Development has finally started as of March 2024 at the Old Tesco site located at 136 High Street. This site received planning permission for 104 apartments in April 2021, and the development once complete will provide a welcome link to the back of the estate where access to Knole Park is located.

The Royal Oak Hotel proposals: The Royal Oak Hotel, which has been vacant for some time, was granted planning permission for a change of use to residential in March 2024. As of April 2024, it is now pending an additional planning permission to increase viability and greater respect for the Grade II listed building.

Objective Three: To enhance the gateways / arrival points into the town to create a more welcoming impression

Support via planning application decisions:

Sevenoaks Quarry Outline permission for 800 residential units and 150 special care units:

Objective Three is supported by planning Policy C10, which offers support in principle to proposals which will enhance the gateways and arrival points into the Town. One of the listed locations is Bat and Ball junction and station, to which improvements are proposed by the developer as part of the Granted Outline permission. A Section 106 agreement which secures this is understood to be in late draft stages as of May 2024, with introduction of a roundabout junction and associated pedestrian and cycle crossings. The Report and Decision notice are understood to be pending publication once the Section 106 is agreed.

Supporting STNP Policy	Officer Reports	Decision Notices
Policy C10 (Gateway and arrival point enhancements)	0	0

**The dataset for this being OUT, FUL, HOUSE, CONVAR, MMA, and LBCALT applications.*

Support via known active projects:

STC's Railway Murals: During Winter 2023, STC consulted on proposals from the Darent Valley Community Rail Partnership, for two murals to be painted by London artist Olga Sielicka; one on the Bat & Ball Station bridge to highlight the presence of the Bat & Ball Station Café, and another at Sevenoaks Station. These received 90% positive feedback and painting of the first mural by Bat & Ball Station has since commenced from February 2024, completed in April 2024.

This project supports the following Aim:

STNP Policy Reference	Summary of Policy which supports the project(s):
C10	Enhancing gateways and arrival points into the Town

All three of Theme One's objectives are supported by the following known active project:

SDC's early concept proposals to improve areas Land East of High Street (Buckhurst Lane and Suffolk Way): As of April 2024, SDC is consulting on its proposals to rejuvenate the areas around Buckhurst Lane and Suffolk Way, where significant assets are owned by both SDC and KCC. Proposals include a new leisure facility, combined library and learning hub, improved links to Knole Park, a new market hall and a hotel. Once the outline designs have been agreed and developer briefs completed, a development partner will be procured, delivery plan finalised and

planning consent sought. Delivery is estimated to commence Autumn 2026/2027 and be completed Winter 2033/2034.

Although the proposals are not yet detailed enough to report compliance, the resulting buildings **could** be supported by the following policies, in addition to helping to realise the vision for a Cultural Quarter (see Theme Five):

STNP Policy Reference	Summary of Policy which supports the project(s):
C1	Protecting and enhancing heritage assets or the contribution made by its setting
C2	STC to work with SDC to encourage development of vacant and under-utilised sites
C4	High quality design and responding to local character area
C8	Protecting and enhancing the setting of local landmarks
C9	Protecting and enhancing the landscape setting and character of the town, and its visibility to and from the open countryside
C10	Enhancing gateways and arrival points into the Town

Theme Two: Landscape and Blue and Green Infrastructure

Objective Four: To protect and enhance blue and green infrastructure, enhance biodiversity and respond to climate change

Support via planning application decisions:

This policy is supported Policies L1 (10% Biodiversity Gain) and L2 (sustainable drainage), both of which the Monitoring by planning application section have highlighted as low performing compared to prior expectations.

One of the reoccurring justifications observed in Officer Reports, as to why Policy L1 is not being consistently applied, is that Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) was not legally required for small site developments until April 2024. It is also not applicable to Householder applications. In addition, the wording under Policy L1 (“whenever possible”) allows for flexibility in whether the Case Officer deems it reasonable to enforce the Policy.

It is hoped that the recent introduction of BNG requirements for small sites will lead to an increase of Policy L1’s usage, and that the next Annual Report due in May 2025 will therefore report very different results.

Policy L2 is similarly perceived by the M&I Group as underutilised. Advice was sought from SDC Officers in early May 2024 as to whether there are any limitations to when it can be applied.

Approximate usage* of the two policies by Case Officers are recorded thus:

Supporting STNP Policy	Officer Reports	Decision Notices
Policy L1 (10% BNG)	22	2 Refusals, 14 Grants
Policy L2 (SuDs)	10	4 Grants

**The dataset for this being OUT, FUL, HOUSE, CONVAR, MMA, and LBCALT applications.*

STC’s Bug and Bee Hotel-making event: As part of The Great Big Green Week in 2023, STC offered local people the opportunity to make bee or bug hotels which the Town Council would then distribute between its green spaces such as at The Vine, Greatness Recreation Ground and Sevenoaks Common.

The Town Council has also been provided two bird boxes for use at Woodside Road open space, as well as providing three of its own additional bug hotels at various locations. These projects are supported by the following policy:

STNP Policy Reference	Summary of Policy which supports the project(s):
Policy L1	Delivering a 10% net gain in biodiversity

STC & SCAN’s Sevenoaks Climate Fair: On 4th May 2024, STC will be partnering with Sevenoaks Climate Action Network (SCAN) by hosting the second Climate Fair on the Vine Gardens. This is a free event with stalls, talks and workshops to help educate people on how they can help to tackle climate change and contribute towards achieving Net Zero. Via education and networking opportunities, this event is supported by the following policies:

STNP Policy Reference	Summary of Policy which supports the project(s):
Policy L1	Delivering a 10% net gain in biodiversity
Policy L2	Sustainable drainage
Aim L3	Identifying areas where trees and hedgerows significantly contribute to character and biodiversity
Policy L4	Retaining and protecting trees and hedgerows

STC's Climate Change Youth Forum: This was set up as initiative from STC's Youth Council as a way of young people voicing their concerns over the current climate crisis and how this is addressed within the Town and schools. The Forum aims to meet four times per year with presentations from guest speakers on a range of different topics to do with climate change initiatives to educate attendees on what they can be doing to help tackle climate change.

STC's Green Community Investment Plan: STC published its Green Community Investment Plan in 2021 following considerable consultation with the local community. It was adopted again as an extension to the new term of Councillors' Community Investment Plan 2023-2027, with climate change initiatives continuing to be delivered. The aim of the document is to put in place affordable and practical initiatives with long term benefits for the local community, as well as to encourage residents to pursue actions individually. Projects and aims include improving carbon use of Town Council buildings, improving cycling and pedestrian facilities, extending STC's tree planting programme, reducing consumption and providing access to information on how public can pursue their own improvements.

Objective Five: To recognise the significant contribution that trees and hedgerows make to the town's character and biodiversity

Support via planning application decisions:

Supporting STNP Policy	Officer Reports	Decision Notices
Policy L4 (Retaining / replacing trees/hedgerows)	31	4 Refusals, 16 Grants

**The dataset for this being OUT, FUL, HOUSE, CONVAR, MMA, and LBCALT applications.*

Support via known active projects:

Green Flag Status for The Vine: The Vine, which is owned and maintained by STC and officially recognised as one of the country's best parks, was awarded Green Flag Status in July 2023. This was the result of tireless efforts from volunteers from local organisations and businesses in collaboration with STC, who worked to make the gardens look their best and set the benchmark for other parks and green spaces.

Both Objectives Four and Five are supported by the following known active projects:

- 1. STC's Adopt a Tree in Sevenoaks:** STC offers members of the public to adopt a tree and choose a planting location from STC's various owned open spaces. Fruit and nut trees

are encouraged, and the type of tree depends on the native species to that area.

2. **Sevenoaks Society donation of trees:** In February 2024, STC reported that Sevenoaks Society had agreed to donate £300 for tree planting, in the hopes that the new trees will better the landscape and set an example for environmental improvement. STC has proposed to plant the new trees on the bank adjoining Mill Lane and the playground, and is grateful to Sevenoaks Society for the donation. This follows a second previous donation from 2021.

3. **STC – Additional tree planting:** In December 2023, the Mayor of Sevenoaks planted an Oak Tree in Greatness Recreation ground to commence replacement of trees lost in a fire earlier in the year. This is one example of tree planting programmes which the Town Council promotes.

4. **STC Entries to South & South East in Bloom:** In September 2023, STC won four awards for its entry for South & South East in Bloom, achieving Gold for the Town Centre, The Vine and Upper High Street Gardens entries as well as Thriving for its “It’s Your Neighbourhood” entry at HOUSE in the Basement Youth Café.
In Bloom is a competition across South & South East Britain, where public spaces are judged in a number of categories centred around gardening, planting and creating attractive spaces for the local community to visit. The purpose is to highlight the importance of our green spaces and heritage gardens and landscapes, as well as caring for the environment and getting people involved in caring for their spaces. STC facilitates tidy-up and planting days and recruits local volunteers to help with gardening and preparing the Town’s entries. An In Bloom Working Group of local volunteers, Town Council Councillors and Officers also meet to coordinate action plans, partnerships and contents.

All four of the above projects are supported by the following policies and aims:

STNP Policy Reference	Summary of Policy which supports the project(s):
Policy L1	Delivering a 10% net gain in biodiversity
Aim L3	Identifying areas where trees and hedgerows significantly contribute to character and biodiversity
Policy L4	Retaining and protecting trees and hedgerows

Objective Six: To protect, improve and enhance access to existing publicly accessible open spaces and create new publicly accessible open spaces and green infrastructure

Support via planning application decisions:

Sevenoaks Quarry Outline permission for 800 residential units and 150 special care units:

Objective Six is supported by planning Policy L5, which supports the development of new public open spaces and leisure opportunities in the Town. It also includes those identified for Sevenoaks Quarry in the Northern Sevenoaks Masterplan – significant because the site has since received planning permission for Outline development proposals. A Section 106 agreement is understood to be in late draft stages as of May 2024, with provision of a

watersports lake and community use of the Oast House. The Report and Decision notice are understood to be pending publication once the Section 106 is agreed.

Supporting STNP Policy	Officer Reports	Decision Notices
Policy L5 (New Open Space)	0	0

**The dataset for this being OUT, FUL, HOUSE, CONVAR, MMA, and LBCALT applications.*

Aim L6, which is an Aim that outlines the Town Council's intention to work with and support Kent Wildlife Trust in enhancing access to the Reserve has also been considered in one Case Report.

Support via known active projects:

Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve's Redevelopment project: In November 2023, Kent Wildlife Trust were successful in its bid for £250,000 CIL funding from SDC towards its redevelopment project. This includes refurbishment of the visitor centre to include a new café, retail and event spaces, improved toilets, an outdoor seating area, play area, resurfaced car park and biodiversity safeguarding provision. This project is supported by the following policies and aims:

STNP Policy Reference	Summary of Policy which supports the project(s):
Policy L5	New public open space for community and leisure use
Aim L6	Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve – facilities and access improvements

KCC Public Rights of Way improvements to path leading to Bradbourne Lakes: In November 2023, Kent County Council (KCC) was successful in its bid for £209,000 CIL funding from SDC to make improvements to 9 Public Rights of Way (PROWs) across the District, one of which is located in Sevenoaks Town (being SU11). SU11 comprises a footpath leading to Bradbourne Lakes, which are located in the Northern Ward of Sevenoaks and was proposed for improvements to provide a continuous accessible and improved route to the Lakes' path. In addition to being supportive of Policy M1, under which the Town Council has pledged to work with KCC to improve and enhance the PROW network, this project is supported by the following Policy:

STNP Policy Reference	Summary of Policy which supports the project(s):
Aim L7	Bradbourne Lakes – improvements and restoration

SDC's "Bradbourne Re-bourne" project at Bradbourne Lakes: On 7th May 2024, SDC reported that they had been successful in applying for a £1.6 million grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund towards major improvements at Bradbourne Lakes. A further £502,000 had been secured from housing developers, with works to include draining and restoring the lakes, fixing sluices and leaks, planting new greenspaces, silt removal and reuse, path improvements, new play area and benches, new toilets and bird and bat homes. This project is supported by the following Policies:

STNP Policy Reference	Summary of Policy which supports the project(s):
Policy L1	Biodiversity
Policy L5	New public open space

Aim L7	Bradbourne Lakes – improvements and restoration
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STC’s refurbishment of the Skateboard Park at Greatness Recreation Ground: This Skateboard Park is highly used and was refurbished in October 2023. New benches have also been installed as of February 2024. STC has been hosting events such as a re-opening event, a Skateboarding and BMX showcase event, and Skateboard Sessions for Girls whereby 20% of the park is closed to accommodate these pre-booked coaching sessions.

STC’s new handrails and step repairs on the path from Brittain’s Lane to The Middlings and at Millpond Wood: In February 2024, STC completed repairs to the steps between Brittain’s Lane and The Middlings, installing new posts and handrails to accommodate walkers at both this location and at Millpond Wood to facilitate access to existing open spaces.

STC’s Márcia Clayton art installation: STC is due to install an outdoor art piece by Maria Clayton above Greatness Recreation Ground to give a focal point for walkers and encourage the public to enjoy the outdoor area. The installation will utilise 65 chestnut fencing poles displayed vertically in the shape of an infinity symbol, each one inscribed with poetry and words chosen by members of the Sevenoaks community.

All three of the above projects are supportive of the below Policy:

STNP Policy Reference	Summary of Policy which supports the project(s):
Policy L5	New public open space for community and leisure use

All three of Theme Two’s objectives are supported by the following known active project:

STC’s Longspring Woods acquisition and improvements: STC successfully registered two large plots of ancient woodland as Assets of Community Value in September 2023, giving community groups the opportunity to bid on the asset should it come up for sale.

One of the parcels of land registered by STC, being Longspring Woods on Oak Lane, was put up for sale and an Intention to Bid subsequently submitted by STC. A hugely successful funding campaign was launched, whereby STC asked members of the public to help it acquire an additional £100,000 on top of its own available match-funding in order to purchase and make accessible Longspring Woods. This goal was surpassed in just 23 days, with £102,975 pledged and purchase of the Woods now being progressed.

Once acquired, STC plans to investigate feasibility of biodiversity intensification at the site, potentially via field and habitat surveys followed by analysis of potential ecological enhancements. Such enhancements could be delivered either by STC or outside parties; STC will also be investigating whether they could be delivered by developers of local sites, should they be required but unable to deliver BNG on-site.

Public access improvements will be immediately pursued, via signage, parking, boundary repairs, litter bins, as well as enhancing of existing routes and Public Rights of Way. This project is supported by the following Theme Two policies and aims:

STNP Policy Reference	Summary of Policy which supports the project(s):
Policy L1	Delivering a 10% net gain in biodiversity

Aim L3	Identifying areas where trees and hedgerows significantly contribute to character and biodiversity
Policy L4	Retaining and protecting trees and hedgerows
Policy L5	New public open space for community use

Theme Three: Movement and Public Realm

Objective Seven: To work with the District Council and Kent County Council, in consultation with neighbouring Parish Councils, to identify a long-term strategic approach to transport in Sevenoaks to respond to and mitigate any impacts of new developments on the existing network

Objective Eight: To promote a co-ordinated approach to transport and movement that encourages use of sustainable transport modes, including walking and cycling, and reducing pollution levels, whilst ensuring that the centre is still accessible by car

Support via planning application decisions:

Sevenoaks Quarry Outline permission for 800 residential units and 150 special care units:

Objective Eight is supported by planning Policy M1, which promotes walking and cycling and Policy M2 which supports the District Council's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). A number of routes are proposed via the Granted Outline permission including throughout the site, and linking it to Bat and Ball Road. A Section 106 agreement which secures this is understood to be in late draft stages as of May 2024. The Report and Decision notice are pending publication once the Section 106 is agreed.

Supporting STNP Policy	Officer Reports	Decision Notices
Policy M1 (Walking and Cycling promotion/support)	2	0
Policy M2 (Supporting the LCWIP)		

**The dataset for this being OUT, FUL, HOUSE, CONVAR, MMA, and LBCALT applications.*

Support via known active projects:

STC's proposed 20mph speed limit for Sevenoaks Town: Proposals for a town-wide 20mph zone in Sevenoaks Town was first consulted on by KCC in 2022 as part of a legal Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). The proposals were referred to the Sevenoaks Joint Transportation Board (JTB) for consideration and their recommendation to KCC's Portfolio Holder. This was due to the consultation receiving more than 5 objections, and resulted in a Working Party being formed of JTB members who revised the plans in response to the objections received.

STC as the proposed financier and a promoter of the scheme offered to run a second consultation on the revised scheme, which commenced from 1st November 2023 to 14th December 2023.

This project supports the following Theme Three policies under both Objective Seven and Eight:

STNP Policy Reference	Summary of Policy which supports the project(s):
Policy M1	Promoting walking and cycling, removing barriers that restrict this
Aim M4	Introduction of 20mph speed limit close to schools and in some residential areas

Policy M9	Encouraging a shift towards greener modes of transport
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STC's Car Club project: On Thursday 2nd May 2024, STC launched a Car Club in collaboration with Enterprise, operating from the Bat & Ball Centre and parked in two free allocated parking spaces at the Centre's car park. This will allow local people who do not own a car to hire one for a short time for activities like shopping and day trips without needing to purchase and maintain one they may not need everyday – thus cutting down on emissions.

STC's Electric Vehicles and charging points: As part of its Green Investment Plan, STC has committed to replacing its Town Council vehicles when needed with electric vehicles. In March 2023, STC purchased its second fully electric van, which covers 174 miles and is used by the Town Wardens who inspect play areas and carry out tasks on the Town Council's public open spaces. Friendly advertising of the Zero Carbon impact of the vehicles is painted on the sides, to promote electric vehicles and their benefits. STC has also installed publicly accessibly vehicle charging points both at the Town Council Offices and at the Bat & Ball Centre.

STC's proposed Electric Bus: In November 2023, In November 2023, STC received notification that it had been unsuccessful in its bid for £310,000 CIL funding from SDC to provide an electric bus for the well-used local No. 8 bus route. This route originated from the early STNP consultation events, when the desire for a circular route connecting residential areas around Sevenoaks was identified and subsequently delivered by STC. Since then, the route has been tendered and overtaken by KCC and continues to run. Although unsuccessful on the grounds that SDC did not consider it as great of a priority as other schemes, STC still intends to pursue the project via future CIL applications and exploring other funding avenues.

The above three projects are supported by the following policies:

STNP Policy Reference	Summary of Policy which supports the project(s):
Policy M9	Encouraging a shift towards greener modes of transport

KCC Public Rights of Way improvements to path leading to Bradbourne Lakes: In November 2023, Kent County Council (KCC) was successful in its bid for £209,000 CIL funding from SDC to make improvements to 9 Public Rights of Way (PROWs) across the District, one of which is located in Sevenoaks Town (being SU11). SU11 comprises a footpath leading to Bradbourne Lakes, which are located in the Northern Ward of Sevenoaks and was proposed for improvements to provide a continuous accessible and improved route to the Lakes' path. In addition to being supportive of Aim L7, under which the Town Council gives support to improvement proposals to Bradbourne Lakes, this project is supported by the following Policy:

STNP Policy Reference	Summary of Policy which supports the project(s):
Policy M1	Promoting walking and cycling, removing barriers that restrict this – including Town Council initiative to work with and support KCC in PROW improvements.

STC's funding of a new pedestrian crossing on Dartford Road: In 2022, KCC consulted on proposals for a 20mph scheme in Sevenoaks Town (see previous project). Part of the consulted upon designs included a new pedestrian crossing on Dartford Road north of the War Memorial,

which STC has agreed to fund. KCC are currently investigating feasibility and where the crossing should be located to maximise use and benefit to the community.

STC's lobbying for safer pedestrian crossings: In addition to agreeing to fund a new pedestrian crossing, STC has been lobbying KCC to review the safety of existing crossings – especially those in the Town Centre triangle.

The two above projects are supported by the following policies:

STNP Policy Reference	Summary of Policy which supports the project(s):
Policy M1	Promoting walking and cycling, removing barriers that restrict this
Policy M5	Improving pedestrian and cycle crossing facilities at major junctions in the Town
Policy M9	Encouraging a shift towards greener modes of transport
Policy M11	Public Realm improvements

Objective Nine: To deliver public realm enhancements to improve the pedestrian experience in town

Support via planning application decisions:

Supporting STNP Policy	Officer Reports	Decision Notices
Policy M11	1	0

**The dataset for this being OUT, FUL, HOUSE, CONVAR, MMA, and LBCALT applications.*

Support via known active projects:

STC's Town Team Public Realm Upgrade: In 2022 a major scheme by the Town Team* was undertaken to refresh the blue lamp posts, belisha beacons, bollards and road markings in the town centre and St John's Hill area. Work continues to date, with a red phone box having also been repurposed with a defibrillator, lampposts replaced/repared, and installation of a memorial bench as well as a King's Coronation Bench sponsored by Warners Solicitors on London Road. This project has been delivered in collaboration with KCC and with UKSPF funding.

**The Town Team is a partnership made of local businesses and organisations within the Town, which works to promote and improve the town, its economy and the wellbeing of its inhabitants.*

STC's refurbishment of Public Toilets at St John's Hill and new doors at The Vine toilets:

Work on the refurbishment of the St John's Public Toilets commenced in January 2024 and has since been completed. This is an important asset which provides shoppers in the secondary shopping centre of Sevenoaks Town amenities which encourage longer and more flexible trips to the area, thereby also supporting the local economy and enhancing function and accessibility of the neighbourhood centre. New steel doors were put in place at The Vine toilets in order to prohibit ongoing vandalism and keep the amenities open and accessible to public who need them.

STC's new drinking fountains: In September 2023, STC installed two new drinking fountains at The Vine and Greatness Recreation Ground, alongside signage encouraging people to fill up their water bottles and help reduce plastic cups.

STC's pending installation of lights in trees at The Vine: In February 2024, STC received £10,000 funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund via SDC to illuminate the Trees at The Vine. In addition to making the trees look more attractive at night, this project will have the added bonus of improving public safety and complementing the proposed Cultural Quarter. It is currently in the design stages.

STC's proposed Wayfinding Scheme: In November 2023, STC received notification that it had been unsuccessful in its bid for CIL funding from SDC to fund a Wayfinding Scheme in Sevenoaks. This project proposed to produce clear signage around the town, providing a guide for public towards key facilities in the town while promoting its offer. Although unsuccessful on the grounds that SDC did not consider it an infrastructure project, STC still intends to pursue the project via future CIL applications and exploring other funding avenues.

All five of above projects support the following Theme Three policy:

STNP Policy Reference	Summary of Policy which supports the project(s):
Policy M11	Public Realm improvements

All three of Theme Three's objectives are supported by the following known active projects:

- 1. STC's Highway Improvement Plan (HIP):** KCC as the Local Highways Authority offer their town and parish councils opportunity to submit a yearly HIP document, with a list of priorities as well as indication of any funding which that local council can contribute towards their implementation. KCC review the list of priorities, with the intention of delivering 1-2 of the actions per year. Actions requested on STC's HIP (full copy of which can be viewed [via this link](#)) include pavement and crossing improvements, reduction of speed limits, and review of parking arrangements in locations which could benefit from corner protections or reprioritisation of pedestrian safety.

The HIP as an action document is supported by the following Theme Three policies:

STNP Policy Reference	Summary of Policy which supports the project(s):
Policy M1	Promoting walking and cycling, removing barriers that restrict this
Policy M5	Improving pedestrian and cycle crossing facilities at major junctions in the Town
Policy M7	Improving transport interchange facilities
Aim M10	Redirecting HGV movements from the Town Centre
Policy M11	Public Realm improvements
Aim M12	Locating potential path and pavement improvements

- 2. LCWIP routes:** SDC is currently pursuing, in collaboration with KCC, three of the walking and cycling routes identified in its Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. This includes:

LCWIP Route Name	Latest Update
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Route 1 – Otford to Sevenoaks	Detailed feasibility study and outline designs almost complete as of May 2024. Detailed design work to be completed late 2024 and further funding to be bid for towards construction of the route.
Route 3 – East to West	Consultation by SDC/KCC on revised designs expected Summer 2024. Construction aimed to take place in the later half of the year.
Route 6 – Sevenoaks to Otford Retail Park, via Seal	Additional funding obtained by SDC to extend the route to Kemsing and progress outline design. Detailed design work aimed for late 2024 and further funding to be bid for.

- 3. STC Dunton Green Active Travel link:** STC is pursuing a Feasibility Study for a Green link between Sevenoaks and Dunton Green, as identified in the STNP and further supported in SDC’s Sevenoaks LCWIP.

Both actions 2 and 3 above are supported by the following Theme Three policies:

STNP Policy Reference	Summary of Policy which supports the project(s):
Policy M1	Promoting walking and cycling, removing barriers that restrict this
Policy M2	Support of the Sevenoaks LCWIP and provision of cycling facilities
Policy M3	Delivery of a walking and cycling route connecting Bat and Ball / Otford Road with Dunton Green
Policy M5	Improving pedestrian and cycle crossing facilities at major junctions in the Town
Policy M7	Improving transport interchange facilities
Aim M10	Redirecting HGV movements from the Town Centre
Policy M11	Public Realm improvements
Aim M12	Locating required path and pavement improvements

Theme Four: Local Economy

Objective Ten: To support local businesses and retailers and encourage a more collaborative and entrepreneurial business environment in the centre

Support via planning application decisions:

Supporting STNP Policy	Officer Reports	Decision Notices
Policy E1	2	0

**The dataset for this being OUT, FUL, HOUSE, CONVAR, MMA, and LBCALT applications.*

Support via known active projects:

STC's Town Team: The Town Team is a partnership made of local businesses and organisations within the Town, which works to promote and improve the town, its economy and the wellbeing its inhabitants.

STC Town Team's Business Improvement District proposal: The Sevenoaks Town Team has been investigating feasibility of creating a Business Improvement District (BID) in Sevenoaks. A BID is a defined area in which businesses are required to pay an additional tax (or levy) in order to fund projects. These such projects could include collective promotion for independent retailers, provision of a system to measure and obtain footfall data, new signage, shared use premises, car parking initiatives and an electronic business forum.

STC's Business Show: STC holds an annual Business Show every year which provides a valuable opportunity for local businesses to network and advertise their services to fellow business people and locals. Sponsorship from FM Conway was secured for the 9th June 2023 Business Show, to provide four start-up businesses a free stand at the event.

STC's Business Awards: STC also holds an annual Business Awards event, with the last one held 20th October 2023 being the most successful Awards event so far. This event, which celebrates local businesses, saw 28 businesses entered, 22 nominated for customer choice, thousands of votes from public, and a sell-out evening with 120 attendees. Categories were Independent Business of the Year, Larger Business of the Year, Sustainability in Business, New Business less than 5 years old, Micro-Enterprise, Customer Choice and Judges Choice.

The two above events (Business Show and Business Awards) both support Objective Ten, in their support of local businesses and retailers and encouragement of a more collaborative working environment amongst peers. The advertising and marketing to public about the services provided by local businesses, especially via the publicity gained via the nomination and voting activities, also help to promote the visitor economy.

Objective Eleven: To consolidate and enhance both the town centre and secondary shopping areas

Support via planning application decisions:

Supporting STNP Policy	Officer Reports	Decision Notices
Policy E5	2	0

**The dataset for this being OUT, FUL, HOUSE, CONVAR, MMA, and LBCALT applications.*

Support via known active projects:

SDC's plans for Land East of High Street: SDC are currently working on early concept ideas for the Land East of High Street – including proposals for a new leisure facility, combined library and learning hub, new market hall and hotel and improved links to Knole Park. STC is working with the District Council to ensure that both STC's Town Centre Masterplan and SDC's plans for this area complement each other and deliver a Cultural Quarter which links to the rest of the Town.

Although the proposals are not yet detailed enough to report compliance, the resulting buildings **could** support the above objective, in addition to helping to realise the vision for a Cultural Quarter.

Theme Five: Community and Culture

Objective Twelve: To deliver enhanced community assets for the town

Support via planning application decisions:

Sevenoaks Quarry Outline permission for 800 residential units and 150 special care units:

Objective Twelve is supported by planning Policy COM1, which promotes new health and education provision, faith facilities and other necessary community provision as an integral part of new development. Land for a primary school has been included as part of the Granted Outline planning permission, as well as up to 2,000m² space for business, service and commercial uses. A Section 106 agreement which secures this is understood to be in late draft stages as of May 2024, with safeguarding of 2.05 hectares land for a primary school, and financial contributions towards its construction and that of a secondary school off-site understood to be included. The Report and Decision notice are pending publication once the Section 106 is agreed.

Supporting STNP Policy	Officer Reports	Decision Notices
Policy COM1 (Health, education and faith provision)	1	0

**The dataset for this being OUT, FUL, HOUSE, CONVAR, MMA, and LBCALT applications.*

Support via known active project:

STC's upcoming repurposing of Greatness Pavilion: The current pavilion at Greatness Recreation Ground is currently leased by STC to the Sevenoaks Town Football Club (STFC), however with funding and planning permission having been recently acquired by STC and STFC for a new clubhouse and changing room building, STC is now considering how the existing building can be put to community use once it becomes available. STC consulted on potential uses for the pavilion amongst other potential improvements in the area in August 2023, and a Working Group has since been set up to discuss results of the survey as well as make recommendations to the Town Council's Open Spaces & Leisure Committee on proposed next steps.

Objective Thirteen: To develop and promote a cultural quarter in the town centre and to enhance the town's cultural offer and improve access to existing cultural assets

Support via known active project:

SDC's plans for Land East of High Street: SDC are currently working on early concept ideas for the Land East of High Street – including proposals for a new leisure facility, combined library and learning hub, new market hall and hotel and improved links to Knole Park. STC is working with

the District Council to ensure that both STC's Town Centre Masterplan and SDC's plans for this area complement each other and deliver a Cultural Quarter which links to the rest of the Town.

Although the proposals are not yet detailed enough to report compliance, the resulting buildings **could** support the above objective, in addition to helping to realise the vision for a Cultural Quarter.

Theme Six: Sports and Recreation

Objective Fourteen: To deliver enhanced recreational and sports facilities for the town

Support via planning application decisions:

Sevenoaks Quarry Outline permission for 800 residential units and 150 special care units:

Objective Fourteen is supported by planning Policy S1, which offers support to provision of new sports facilities across the Town – including new sports/watersports facilities at Sevenoaks Quarry. Proposals for this are included in the Granted Outline permission, and a Section 106 agreement which secures when it will be delivered is understood to be in late draft stages as of May 2024. The Report and Decision notice are pending publication once the Section 106 is agreed.

Supporting STNP Policy	Officer Reports	Decision Notices
Policy S1 (Provision of sports facilities)	0	0

**The dataset for this being OUT, FUL, HOUSE, CONVAR, MMA, and LBCALT applications.*

Support via known active projects:

STC Sports Strategy: Following its first Sports Strategy in 2015, of which most of the priorities have since been delivered, STC is now pursuing a second updated Strategy. This is being progressed via a Sevenoaks Town Sports Strategy (STSS) Working Group, whose membership is made up of representatives of local sports providers, groups and organisations. The first Strategy resulted in over £1.2 million being invested in local sports provision, as well as additional £3 million on the Bat & Ball Centre which includes a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) and floor-based sports facilities. The second strategy will similarly set out updated priorities, and will be usable as a supporting evidence base by local groups in securing funding for enhanced sports provision.

SDC Indoor and Outdoor Sports Strategy: SDC are conducting their own Sports Strategies for the entire District; one for provision and need via Built Facilities and similarly for Playing Pitches. The former is expected for completion April 2024 and the latter August 2024.

Funding available for indoor cricket provision: At a previous STSS meeting held in March 2024, STC reminded attendees that SDC hold £150,000 funding earmarked strictly for indoor cricket provision. This was provided by STC via a planning condition under a previous planning application and has been held for some time due to not being applied for.

Sevenoaks Town Football Club New Clubhouse and changing facilities: In December 2023, STC was successful in applying for £787,500 CIL funding from SDC towards the development of a new football pavilion at Greatness Recreation Ground. This will be matched by £87,500 CIL funding from STC and takes the total funding received by the Club to £1 million. The project will deliver additional benefits to the community, including a new cycling and pedestrian path into the grounds and additional cycling and car parking. The project will also open up the current

pavilion used by the Football Club for community use (see entry under Theme Five, objective Twelve).

Proposals for Padel Courts: STC has received and is considering requests for provision of Padel Courts at its Roleys site. STC is in discussion with SDC's Planning Team about feasibility, due to previous planning permissions at the site having been refused in the past on the grounds of impact to the Green Belt as well as provision of other sports.

All of the above projects are supported by the following policies:

STNP Policy Reference	Summary of Policy which supports the project(s):
Policy S1	Provision of new sports facilities
Policy S2	Provision of new and enhanced play and outdoor sports facilities and recreational facilities

Theme Seven: Development and Housing

Objective Fifteen: To promote high quality development that enhances the town and consolidates vacant or under-utilised land

Support via known active projects:

SDC's plans for Land East of High Street: SDC are currently working on early concept ideas for the Land East of High Street – including proposals for a new leisure facility, combined library and learning hub, new market hall and hotel and improved links to Knole Park. STC is working with the District Council to ensure that both STC's Town Centre Masterplan and SDC's plans for this area complement each other and deliver a Cultural Quarter which links to the rest of the Town.

Although the proposals are not yet detailed enough to report compliance, the resulting buildings **could** support the above objective, in addition to helping to realise the vision for a Cultural Quarter.

Opposition via known active projects:

SDC's proposal for four new light industrial units and café drive-through at 12 Otford Road:

Contrary to other projects identified throughout the Annual Report, this initiative does not actively support any of the STNP objectives, but rather has the **potential to oppose** Policy D1 under objective fifteen. Policy D1 identifies six vacant or underutilised sites in the near vicinity of the proposed project site (shown on the following map) – including Travis Perkins, Bat and Ball (labelled “2” and being directly adjacent to the site), and Carpetright/Wickes Otford Road (labelled “4” and being above it). For reference, the proposed site is underneath the “2” label. Design guidance for both of these sites recommends existing light industrial uses to be **relocated** north to the Vestry Industrial Estate where they are more appropriate, and proposes that the residential character of the area be strengthened. Delivering four new light industrial units in the heart of this area would therefore further detract from this vision and the advice under the Travis Perkins site for “removal of conflict between light industrial employment uses and residential accommodation within the Bat and Ball area”.



Introduction of further light industrial uses at the site could also threaten the quality of use gained from the proposed connection between Bat and Ball railway station and the new Wildlife Reserve entrance as supported by Aim L6. This route, shown in Policy Plan figure 4.4 of the STNP, travels along the already busy Otford Road, which is currently distinctly un-pedestrian friendly, with limited pavement or crossing facilities. Encouraging higher volume of HGVs would detract from the proposed route by discouraging pedestrians and cyclists to frequent it, contrary to the recommendation for “improved access towards Bat and Ball station and better animation of the streets in that area” under the Travis Perkins design advice, and “strengthen[ing] the residential character of the area” under Carpetright/Wickes.

Finally, reinforcing the light industrial character of the area would also be contrary to Policy C10, which seeks to enhance the gateways and arrival points at various locations including Otford Road.

In conclusion, the proposed project has the potential to oppose the following policies:

Opposing STNP Policy	Summary of Policy which opposes the project(s):
Policy C10	Enhancing gateways, including Otford Road
Aim L6	Enhancing access to the Wildlife reserve, including from Bat & Ball Station
Policy D1	Relocating light industrial uses from Bat & Ball / Otford Road area towards Vestry Industrial Estate

Objective Sixteen: To deliver a range of new homes to meet local needs

Support via planning application decisions:

Sevenoaks Quarry Outline permission for 800 residential units and 150 special care units:

The above Granted Outline permission is supported by Policy D2 under Objective Fifteen, as well as Policy D3 under Objective Sixteen. Policy D2 sets out benefits which should be delivered as part of any resulting development proposals for the site, and Policy D3 requires affordable housing provision and a range of homes to meet the local needs. The current proposals are for 40% affordable housing, comprising a total 320 affordable homes. Representatives of Tarmac, the developer, reported the mix to be 65% social rent (208 units), 25% first homes (80 units) and 10% intermediate (32 units), with a minimum of 25% of the affordable housing to be delivered in each phase. A Section 106 agreement which secures this 40% affordable housing provision is understood to be in late draft stages as of May 2024, including delivery timeline and housing mix. The Report and Decision notice are understood to be pending publication once the Section 106 is agreed.

Supporting STNP Policy	Officer Reports	Decision Notices
Policy D3	1	0

**The dataset for this being OUT, FUL, HOUSE, CONVAR, MMA, and LBCALT applications.*

Support via known active projects:

SDC Draft Emerging Local Plan 2040: SDC are producing their Emerging Local Plan 2040, which is anticipated for adoption by December 2026. This will include housing site allocations and housing policies which will aim to boost the delivery of homes, including affordable housing, homes for older people, self-build and co-housing options.

Objective Seventeen: To provide homes that are energy efficient and minimise environmental impact

Support via planning application decisions:

Supporting STNP Policy	Officer Reports	Decision Notices
Policy D5	1	0
Policy D6	1	0

Support via known active projects:

STC's Thermal Imaging Cameras project: STC has purchased two Thermal Imaging Cameras to help residents identify internal and external locations where heat may be being lost in their homes, as well as particular cold and damp spots. These will be loaned out to Sevenoaks residents to borrow for free, although a late fee of £25 will be chargeable if the camera is not returned at the agreed time.

SDC, KCC and Solar Together solar panel group-buying scheme: SDC have teamed up with KCC and Solar Together to help residents purchase solar panels, save on their energy bills and reduce their carbon emissions. The scheme works by allowing residents to register their interest in purchasing solar panels, receive competitive bids for the contract from pre-vetted installers, and then make a decision based on deals and recommendations based on their requirements.

Both of the above projects will help residents to retrofit their homes and make them more energy efficient, cheaper to maintain and better for the environment. They are supported by the following policy:

Supporting STNP Policy	Summary of Policy which supports the project(s):
Policy D5	Retrofitting existing homes to make them more energy efficient

6. Summary of progress:

There are a multitude of currently pursued projects and initiatives which will contribute towards the realisation of the STNP's Vision for the future of Sevenoaks Town. Monitoring these puts the Town Council in a strong position to ensuring that the Vision and objectives are met. While there is more tangible progress being made under some Themes more than others, there is no one Theme or objective under which no actions are being taken. It also puts the M&I Group in a more informed position for recommending more pertinent actions within the Monitoring & Implementation Plan to ensure that all objectives are being met.

Recognition for the valuable content and impact of the STNP has also since been received, by way of its shortlisting in the Royal Town Planning Institute's Excellence in Plan Making Practice 2024 South East Awards. Notification of its successful shortlisting alongside one other Plan under the "Best Plan" category for South East was received on 20th May 2024, with announcement of the winner due 4th July 2024.

7. Pending projects and actions as identified in the STNP

Theme One: Character, Heritage and Identity Work Stream – APPROVED 4th December 2023

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
1.1	The Town Council will work with the District Council and landowners to encourage development of vacant and under-used sites particularly where they have a negative impact on the townscape of Sevenoaks.	The main three sites affected by this are: • 136 High Street (Previously Tesco), • Edwards Electrical, • Farmers Site.	STNP – Aim C2 And supporting text of Aim C3	STC Collaboration with: • Sevenoaks District Council • Landowners • Developers
1.2	The Town Council will prepare guidance on the treatment of locally listed buildings and any other buildings with heritage value. Whilst adopted policies provide a good level of protection some buildings may remain vulnerable to insensitive development. This includes unlisted buildings that are not in Conservation Areas or locally listed buildings (that do not require listed building consent). The Town Council will create additional guidelines to protect these structures	Low priority , due to guidance in the Residential Character Area Assessment being considered sufficient. Solar panels in particular were noted as an issue.	STNP – Aim C3 And supporting text of Aim C3	STC
1.3	The Town Council will work with the District Council to encourage the naming of new streets to reflect people and places of historic significance to the town	Medium priority , due to a number of large developments and subsequent new roads expected to be delivered in Sevenoaks within the next few years.	STNP – Aim C5	STC Collaboration with: • Sevenoaks District Council
1.4	The Town Council will normally require major planning applications or proposals on sites within sensitive locations, to be submitted to a Design Review panel for review early in the planning process. The Town Council will either utilise a panel established by the District Council or utilise another established panel.	The District Council's emerging Local Plan 2040 has a proposed policy for this. Pending Action: STC to liaise with SDC to request representation on any resulting review panel, of either STC or the STNP M&I Group.	STNP – Aim C6 STNP – Supporting text of Aim C6	STC Collaboration with: • Sevenoaks District Council Design Review Panel Collaboration with:

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
	The Town Council will engage with the District Council to undertake a design review or if necessary utilise an alternative panel.			• Sevenoaks District Council Design Review Panel • Alternative panels
1.5	The Town Council will work with the District Council and/or other design advisors to prepare design guidance for areas not included within the Residential Character Area Assessment.	Pending Action: To identify where the gaps are for areas not included, and report back for re-consideration of the M&I Group.	STNP – Aim C7	STC Collaboration with: • Sevenoaks District Council • Design advisers
1.6	Masterplanning at locations which are important gateways and arrival points into the town.	High priority, with a Town Centre and separate St Johns Masterplan due to be undertaken by STC once CIL funding becomes available. Comments from M&I Group 7th May 2024: There needs to be coordination between how cycle routes including the East to West route affect the townscape, pedestrian flow and street furniture. Noted that SDC's Local Plan 2040 Evidence Base now includes Development Briefs for Baseline sites – including Sevenoaks Station. Policy C10 was amended following recommendation PM4 in the Independent Examiner Report, to read “will be supported in principle at:”. The definition of “support” in this case was provided in STC's Answer to	Examination Process – Town Clerk	STC

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
		Question 11 of the Examiner's procedural questions, and included potential financial contributions, Masterplanning , and/or Planning Committee recommendations.		
1.7	Theme 1: Character OR Theme 7: Development via Policy D6 (Retrofitting) To provide solar panels guidance – especially within Conservation Areas where their installation (as well as double glazing) are severely limited. Potential to add a Policy in support at REVIEW stage	Medium priority, as review and addition of any new policies will take place in 5 years. Note to monitor Emerging Local Plan 2040 in case this adds new policy guidance. Whether or not solar panels should be allowed in Conservation Areas has been heavily debated by the Planning Committee multiple times. If an evidence base or design guidance could be prepared for this and to respond to the increasing demand for solar panels, this could help to clarify for homeowners and the Planning Committee. This is also in line with Aim C3 – whereby the Town Council will prepare guidance on the treatment of locally listed buildings and any other buildings with heritage value.	Town Clerk/Town Council Officers –	STC

Theme Two: Landscape and Blue and Green Infrastructure – APPROVED 22nd January 2024:

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
2.1	The Town Council will identify areas where trees and hedgerows make a significant contribution to local character and biodiversity.	Ongoing project, with STC having listed two parcels of ancient woodland as Assets of Community Value and registered an Intention to Bid on one of them in December 2023. STC Action: STC to use the Sevenoaks Residential Character Area Assessment to extract and collate all instances where trees or hedgerows are acknowledged for their contribution to the character. This to be provided to the Planning Committee members to encourage application of Policy L4 in the assessment, as well as initial creation of, planning applications.	STNP – Aim L3	STC
2.2	The Neighbourhood Plan supports the development of new public open space and leisure opportunities in the town. This includes new public open space, community use and leisure opportunities at Sevenoaks Quarry (the Tarmac Site) in Greatness when sand extraction has been completed. The timetable for the delivery of this open space must be agreed by the local planning authority (as the decision-making authority) in conjunction with STC, prior to residential development commencing on this site, and subsequently conditioned in any Grant of Planning Permission	Further update is awaited via submission of Full planning applications for the Sevenoaks Quarry site, providing detail on the previously Reserved Matters.	STNP – Policy L5 – Open space delivery timetables	STC Collaboration with: Sevenoaks District Council
2.3	The Town Council will work with and support Kent Wildlife Trust to enhance access to the Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve and improve 'on-site' facilities	STC Action: To pursue discussions with Kent Wildlife Trust following change of administration, in particular about providing access via Otford Road to encourage greener modes of transport and access	STNP – Aim L6	STC Collaboration with: Kent Wildlife Trust

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
		via Sevenoaks Station, as well as STNP related matters.		
2.4	The Town Council will support improvement and restoration proposals for Bradbourne Lakes developed in consultation with the local community	This is registered as an Asset of Community Value. Update is awaited on a HLF funding bid which is understood by STC to be in the process of production.	STNP – Aim L7	Collaboration with: Local community
2.5	The Town Council will develop new allotment provision adjacent to their site on Bradbourne Vale Road	STC action: STC to pursue registration of the land as an Asset of Community Value.	STNP – Supporting text of Policy L8	STC

Theme Three: Movement and Public Realm – APPROVED 18th March 2024:

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
3.1	The Neighbourhood Plan promotes walking and cycling and supports the removal of barriers to pedestrian and cycle movement across the town. In particular the Town Council will support initiatives that reduce these barriers to pedestrian and cycle movement and will promote new routes that provide safer streets and convenient access to schools and other community assets.	<i>Officer note:</i> On 11th March 2024, Tarmac’s representatives indicated that they were not planning on refurbishing the pedestrian bridge which provides access from the Tarmac site to Sainsburys Supermarket. Recommendation to keep this matter under review. Comments from M&I Group 18th March 2024: Noted that the pedestrian bridge connecting the Tarmac site and Sainsburys Supermarket does not appear to form part of Tarmac’s intentions for the site, despite its disrepair and KCC’s initial insistence at early planning stages that its repair be included in any subsequent proposals for the site. M&I Group agreed to remind KCC of this and to keep proposals for the bridge under review to ensure it is resolved – either by Tarmac, or potentially from contribution from the Town Council using CIL monies it received from the development. Also noted that the bridge forms part of one of SDC’s LCWIP routes. Comments from M&I Group 7th May 2024: There needs to be coordination between how cycle routes including the East to West route affect the townscape, pedestrian flow and street furniture.	STNP Policy M1 Supporting text of Policy M1	
3.2	The Town Council will work with KCC’s Public Rights of Way and Access Service to improve and	<i>Officer note:</i>	STNP	STC

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
	enhance the network of public rights of way within Sevenoaks.	<i>There are at least two currently known projects, being the imminent purchase of Longspring Woods by the Town Council, and the other being the less immediate development at Sevenoaks Quarry – both of which provide opportunity to enhance PROWs within Sevenoaks.</i> <i>Longspring Woods could be linked to Sevenoaks Common via PROW routes SU38 and SU43, as well as having SU36 enhanced and extended into the woods.</i> <i>Sevenoaks Quarry has a PROW which Tarmac have indicated they will be providing enhancements to during development.</i>	Supporting text of Policy M1	Collaboration with: Kent County Council
3.3	The Neighbourhood Plan supports the Sevenoaks District Cycling Strategy and Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and provision of additional cycle facilities to support new development. The Town Council will promote the development and implementation of the [Sevenoaks District Cycling Strategy and the LCWIP] and any updating that may be required to reflect other changes in the town.		STNP Policy M2 Supporting text of Policy M2	
3.4	The Town Council will work with the District Council to encourage increased provision for cyclists and with Kent Council Council PROW and Access Service and Kent Highways and Transportation to upgrade the status of public footpaths or convert them to cycleways, where appropriate, and progress the delivery of cycle routes in the town.		STNP Supporting text of Policy M2	STC Collaboration with: • Sevenoaks District Council • Kent County Council

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
3.5	The Neighbourhood Plan promotes the delivery of a new walking and cycling route that connects Bat and Ball / Otford with Dunton Green	<i>Officer note:</i> <i>Sevenoaks Town Council has commissioned a Feasibility Study for this route, which has been delayed due to difficulty in contacting landowners.</i> Comments from M&I Group 18th March 2024: Noted that this would provide a safer alternative route for walkers and cyclists to Dunton Green, as opposed to via Riverhead and two major junctions.	STNP Policy M3	
3.6	The Neighbourhood Plan supports the introduction of a 20mph speed limit close to schools and in some residential areas	<i>Officer note:</i> <i>Sevenoaks Town Council held a public consultation on the Joint Transportation Board's revised proposals for 20mph limits in Sevenoaks Town, which received 53% overall support and 61% town-only support. The JTB recommended approval with several road removals, and STC is currently working with KCC to find an agreeable solution and final scheme.</i>	STNP Aim M4	
3.7	The Neighbourhood Plan supports proposals for improved pedestrian and cycle crossing facilities at major junctions across the town	<i>Officer note:</i> <i>The Town Council's Highway Improvement Plan (HIP) requests details from KCC as to why the pedestrian guard rails were installed on the bend of Hitchen Hatch Lane onto London Road – and whether the design could be rethought to dissuade commuters from bypassing the sheltered pavement to walk on the road.</i> <i>Also on the HIP is request to find out why one of the pedestrian crossing indicators were removed at Bat & Ball junction crossing, as well as request to work with KCC and Tarmac on designs for the Bat & Ball junction to ensure that the proposed roundabout prioritises safe pedestrian crossing.</i>	STNP Policy M5	

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
3.8	The Town Council will progress proposals to refurbish Bat and Ball station and improve access to the station The Town Council will continue to improve access to the station and surrounding area and investigate the potential to provide additional car parking should this be required.	Comments from M&I Group 18th March 2024: Noted that the Bat & Ball Station refurbishment and station access had been completed.	Policy M6 Supporting text of Policy M6	STC – COMPLETED
3.9	The Neighbourhood Plan supports proposals to improve transport interchange facilities at Sevenoaks station	Comments from M&I Group 18th March 2024: STC will be launching a Car Club from the Bat & Ball Centre very soon.	Policy M7	
3.10	The Neighbourhood Plan supports enhancements to bus services and facilities to serve the town	<i>Officer note re 3.10 and 3.11:</i> <i>STC's previous bid for SDC CIL funding for an electric No. 8 bus was rejected, however SDC have said STC can re-apply in future. Recommendation made via 3.16 to update Policy M8 or M9 at STNP 5 year review stage, to include support of electric buses.</i>	Policy M8	
3.11	The Neighbourhood Plan supports measures that will encourage a shift towards the use of greener modes of transport by businesses and residents		Policy M9	
3.12	The Town Council will work with the District Council, and Kent County Council to ensure that, wherever possible, HGV movements are directed away from the town centre.	<i>Officer note:</i> <i>This is one of the Priorities in the Town Council's HIP, and Kent County Council have recently completed a traffic survey in the Town Centre to investigate the issue and whether HGVs can be redirected via positive signage. This is awaiting engineer advice.</i>	Aim M10	STC Collaboration with: • Sevenoaks District Council • Kent County Council
3.13	The Neighbourhood Plan supports proposals for public realm improvements within the town centre	<i>Officer note:</i>	Policy M11	

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
	particularly linking key town centre destinations. Such improvements should be part of a town centre wide strategy to help improve the pedestrian experience in the town centre. It should be informed by the character and heritage assets within an area. Where appropriate, the Neighbourhood Plan will support innovative proposals, such as shared surfaces, to improve the pedestrian environment and reduce the impact of traffic in both the town and neighbourhood centres. The Neighbourhood Plan supports the removal of street clutter, including unnecessary street furniture and the adoption of a coordinated palate of materials and street furniture for the town and neighbourhood centres. A town centre public realm strategy should be prepared to guide public realm improvements across the town. This should include an analysis of existing movement patterns, review of the paving quality and audit of street furniture/signage and clutter across the town centre. The strategy should set out key priorities for the public realm across the town centre addressing the issues above and any others identified.	<i>See attached Sevenoaks Town Centre and St Johns Masterplan specification documents.</i> Comments from M&I Group 18th March 2024: STC is pursuing two Masterplans – one for Sevenoaks Town Centre and another for St Johns Area.	Supporting text of Aim M12 (below)	
3.14	The Town Council will identify locations across the town where repairs and improvements to paths and pavements are required to improve the pedestrian environment.		Aim M12	

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
3.15	Installation of real time travel information throughout the town, improvements to bus shelters.	These were proposed as examples of what type of enhancements would be supported by Policy M8 at the Examination stage.	Examination Process	STC

Theme Four: Local Economy – APPROVED 7th May 2024

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
4.1	The Town Council will work with local providers, businesses and the District Council to develop a tourism strategy for the town to promote the visitor economy. As part of this strategy the Town Council will: • Work with local businesses to market the district as a place to work, live, travel and stay; • Help facilitate growth in the tourism industry; • Co-ordinate partnership working to develop longer-term destination plans to enhance the district's offer as a key tourism destination in Kent; and • Support existing accommodation providers and attractions through training and knowledge sharing. Sevenoaks Town Council would hope to work with other parties to promote destinations along the Sevenoaks to Swanley via Otford railway line. This would be branded as the 'Darent Valley Railway' and aim to enhance local tourism opportunities	Comments by M&I Group 7th May 2024: All actions (4.1-4.1 and 0.1) will likely be fed into by the current Masterplanning exercised being undertaken by STC for the Town Centre and St Johns. Cllr Hogarth suggested that SDC would likely welcome the opportunity to work with STC on a tourism strategy and offered to facilitate STC dual hatted Cllrs potentially getting involved with SDC's collaboration with Visit Kent.	STNP Aim E2 Supporting text of Aim E2	Town Council in collaboration with: • SDC • Local businesses Other parties
4.2	The Council will work with stall-holders to develop proposals to expand provision and diversify the offer	Comments by M&I Group 7th May 2024: STC is working with stallholders while looking to the future of Sevenoaks as a market town, with worry being expressed by stallholders as to footfall and the nature of new market stall provision.	STNP Supporting text of Policy E4	Town Council in collaboration with: Local stall holders

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
4.3	The Town Council will work with local business owners to identify the spatial and land use issues that they feel should be addressed in the centres. This information will be used to establish parameters for assessing future development proposals.	This is currently in progress via the production of a Masterplan for Sevenoaks Town Centre and St Johns area, in collaboration with local people, businesses and organisations.	STNP Supporting text of Policy E5	Town Council in collaboration with: Local businesses / organisations
0.1 *	Review and potential updating of existing evidence base to ensure that the information is satisfactorily accurate enough to inform the Plan's policies. Existing evidence base: - Sevenoaks Town Portrait - Sevenoaks Transport Strategy - Sevenoaks Cultural Strategy - Sevenoaks Town Sports Strategy - Northern Sevenoaks Masterplan	Comments by M&I Group 7th May 2024: Update of the supporting evidence base has started to be created via the Masterplans which would feed into updating particular aspects of the documents; for instance, the transport aspect of the Masterplans would provide updated evidence to the Transport Strategy, and the spatial considerations for the Town Centre would feed into the Cultural Strategy. Rather than each document being replaced by an updated version therefore, it was considered more likely that the evidence base would grow. The function of the Appendices are to “inform the policies within the Plan”, and on this basis the Independent Examiner confirmed that he was satisfied for the appendices to be retained. He noted however that evidence may change over the life of the STNP, and advised therefore that it be reviewed. The evidence base documents relevant to Theme Four are: - Sevenoaks Town Portrait - Sevenoaks Transport Strategy - Sevenoaks Cultural Strategy	Examination Process – Independent Examiner	STC

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
		Whether update of the Northern Sevenoaks Masterplan is necessary and to be pursued in the future is to be confirmed .		

*Action 0.1 applies to all Work Streams, with different evidence base documents feeding into each Theme. Comments under each Work Stream for Action 0.1 will be collated once available, in order to have a final list of which evidence base documents should be prioritised for updating.

Theme Five: Community and Culture – Pending approval of M&I Group

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
5.1	Promote new health and education provision, faith facilities and other necessary community infrastructure as an integral part of new development. The Town Council will work with the District and County Councils, and also with health providers, to ensure that this community infrastructure is provided.		STNP Policy COM1 Supporting text of Policy COM1	Town Council in collaboration with: • SDC • KCC • Health providers
5.2	The Town Council will promote the development of a cultural quarter in the town centre together with an arts and cultural strategy.	The Town Centre Masterplan will support the development of a cultural quarter and provide a spatial vision for how this could be delivered.	STNP Policy COM2	Town Council
5.3	The Town Council will support the development of a new amphitheatre at Knole Environmental Park	See above comment.	STNP Aim COM3	Town Council
0.1*	Review and potential updating of existing evidence base to ensure that the information is satisfactorily accurate enough to inform the Plan's policies. Existing evidence base: • Sevenoaks Town Portrait • Sevenoaks Transport Strategy • Sevenoaks Cultural Strategy • Sevenoaks Town Sports Strategy • Northern Sevenoaks Masterplan	The function of the Appendices are to “inform the policies within the Plan”, and on this basis the Independent Examiner confirmed that he was satisfied for the appendices to be retained. He noted however that evidence may change over the life of the STNP, and advised therefore that it be reviewed. The evidence base documents relevant to Theme Five are: • Sevenoaks Town Portrait • Sevenoaks Transport Strategy • Sevenoaks Cultural Strategy • Sevenoaks Town Sports Strategy	Examination Process – Independent Examiner	STC

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
		Whether update of the Northern Sevenoaks Masterplan is necessary and to be pursued in the future is to be confirmed .		

* Action 0.1 applies to all Work Streams, with different evidence base documents feeding into each Theme. Comments under each Work Stream for Action 0.1 will be collated once available, in order to have a final list of which evidence base documents should be prioritised for updating.

Theme Six: Sports and Recreation – Pending approval of M&I Group

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
6.1	The Town Council will continue to investigate and support promotion of potential sites for sports that are not well provided for in the town including basketball, netball, archery, hockey and badminton. The Town Council will continue to update the Sports Strategy document over the life of this Plan to reflect changing circumstances	This is currently in progress via the production of a second Sevenoaks Town Sports Strategy, being pursued by STC with collaboration from local sports providers and groups. It is being progressed via a Working Group.	STNP Supporting text of Policy S1	Collaboration with: Local Sporting groups / organisations, as per first Sports Strategy
0.1 *	Review and potential updating of existing evidence base to ensure that the information is satisfactorily accurate enough to inform the Plan's policies. Existing evidence base: - Sevenoaks Town Portrait - Sevenoaks Transport Strategy - Sevenoaks Cultural Strategy - Sevenoaks Town Sports Strategy - Northern Sevenoaks Masterplan	The function of the Appendices are to “inform the policies within the Plan”, and on this basis the Independent Examiner confirmed that he was satisfied for the appendices to be retained. He noted however that evidence may change over the life of the STNP, and advised therefore that it be reviewed. The evidence base documents relevant to Theme Five are: Sevenoaks Town Sports Strategy Whether update of the Northern Sevenoaks Masterplan is necessary and to be pursued in the future is to be confirmed.	Examination Process – Independent Examiner	STC

Theme Seven: Development and Housing – Pending approval of M&I Group

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
7.1	To introduce a policy which gives Sevenoaks Town Council “first refusal” of any public land that becomes available during the development process.	Proposed for 5 year REVIEW stage	STC Officers	
7.2	To provide solar panels advice – especially within Conservation Areas where their installation (as well as double glazing) are severely limited.	Proposed for 5 year REVIEW stage, as additional design advice under Policy D6 (Retrofitting) Officer note: Whether or not solar panels should be allowed in Conservation Areas has been heavily debated by the Planning Committee multiple times. If an evidence base or design guidance document could be prepared for this and to respond to the increasing demand for solar panels, this could help to clarify for homeowners and the Planning Committee. This is also in line with Aim C3 – whereby the Town Council will prepare guidance on the treatment of locally listed buildings and any other buildings with heritage value.	STC Officers	
7.3	Addition of design quantum to Policy D1, including recommended/acceptable population numbers, housing densities, and storey heights. This would require detailed site appraisals as an evidence base.	Proposed for 5 year REVIEW stage, as additional design advice under Policies D1: Officer note: Design quantum, including acceptable housing numbers and densities for the 13 potential development sites identified in Policies D1 and D1, were removed during the STNP’s later draft stage. This was due to Historic England considering that the design quantum constituted allocations, and	STC Officers	

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
		therefore the numbers required more robust evidencing to justify their calculation. The decision not to pursue the additional evidencing required was chosen due to the age of some of the STNP's evidence bases (produced 2015), and the subsequent risk that they may be considered outdated if the process were delayed. This would require further study to demonstrate that the design quantum and densities are appropriate for the site. Note: The site identified in D2 (Sevenoaks Quarry) is proposed for allocation within the emerging draft Local Plan for 800 dwellings and 150 special care units, which is supported by a grant for Outline planning permission. Only the sites within Policy D1 therefore are recommended for further study, as the principle density of 950 units has been established.		
	To create a Development Strategy that includes requirement for a Whole Life Carbon Assessment, in collaboration with SDC. Relevant STNP Theme: Theme Seven – Development and Housing	Proposed for 5 year REVIEW stage Officer note: This was proposed by STC to be part of its 5 year action plan, in its answer to the Independent Examiner's Question 35 on how Policy D6 (retrofitting) could be implemented. SDC confirmed that they would be happy to work on this with STC. The Independent Examiner refers to it also in his report in item 4.54.	STC Officers	
0.1*	Review and potential updating of existing evidence base to ensure that the information is satisfactorily accurate enough to inform the Plan's policies.	The function of the Appendices are to "inform the policies within the Plan", and on this basis the	Examination Process –	STC

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
	Existing evidence base: • Sevenoaks Town Portrait • Sevenoaks Transport Strategy • Sevenoaks Cultural Strategy • Sevenoaks Town Sports Strategy • Northern Sevenoaks Masterplan	Independent Examiner confirmed that he was satisfied for the appendices to be retained. He noted however that evidence may change over the life of the STNP, and advised therefore that it be reviewed. The evidence base documents relevant to Theme Five are: • Sevenoaks Town Portrait • Sevenoaks Cultural Strategy • Northern Sevenoaks Masterplan Whether update of the Northern Sevenoaks Masterplan is necessary and to be pursued in the future is to be confirmed.	Independent Examiner	

* Action 0.1 applies to all Work Streams, with different evidence base documents feeding into each Theme. Comments under each Work Stream for Action 0.1 will be collated once available, in order to have a final list of which evidence base documents should be prioritised for updating.

Evidence Base Review Recommendations – Themes One to Three pending update for Themes Four to Seven

Review and potential updating of existing evidence base to ensure that the information is satisfactorily accurate enough to inform the Plan's policies.

Evidence Base document:	Theme it supports:	Notes
Sevenoaks Town Portrait	Themes One to Three.	
Sevenoaks Transport Strategy		
Sevenoaks Cultural Strategy	Theme One.	
Sevenoaks Town Sports Strategy		Second Strategy currently being pursued via a Sevenoaks Town Sports Strategy Working Group – created 4th October 2023. Membership is open to any sports group or organisation within Sevenoaks Town.
Northern Sevenoaks Masterplan	Themes One to Three.	Whether update of the Northern Sevenoaks Masterplan is necessary and to be pursued in the future is to be confirmed . Work undertaken on the Masterplan was incorporated into the STNP. Two further Masterplans are currently being pursued by STC – one for Sevenoaks Town Centre, and one for St Johns area. These will build upon the aspirations set out in the STNP and by the same consultant used for the Northern Sevenoaks Masterplan to ensure continuity and that the two Masterplans are created with the Northern Masterplan in mind.

5 Year Review Recommendations – Themes One to Three, pending update for Themes Four to Seven

	Proposed Project/Action	Notes	Identified by:	For actioning of:
5YR1	Elevate Aim C2 to Policy status – requiring additional study and evidence base to identify exact locations Current Aim: Aim C2: The Town Council will work with the District Council and landowners to encourage development of vacant and under-used sites particularly where they have a negative impact on the townscape in Sevenoaks.	Agreement from Group members of desire for this to be elevated to Policy status, without requiring detail on specific sites, in order for it to remain relevant to any additional sites that may come up. Recommended by Sevenoaks Society in its response on the public consultation on the Referendum Draft of the STNP. The Independent Examiner flagged this in his Report, but noted that he “would expect more detail or precisely which vacant and under-used sites the policy would apply to” in order for it to gain policy status.	Examination Process – Regulation 16 Consultation Response	STC
5YR2	Preparation of policy guidance on planning applications for private water supply via boreholes	A recent planning application for a borehole to supply private water to a golf course highlighted the potential future need for planning considerations on this as the effects of climate change and droughts worsen. STC Action: To keep this item under review and conduct further research: - STC to investigate viability of a policy on this via the STNP. - STC to contact the Environment Agency to enquire as to the implication of private supply boreholes, as well as the current state of the water table.	Town Clerk/Town Council Officers	STC
5YR3	Separation of Policy L1 (Biodiversity Net Gain, see below full policy) from advice on ecological networks via new Policy.	Policy L1 so far has been especially unsuccessful. It has been recommended a number of times by the Planning Committee on planning applications that propose new fencing, and rejected in the Case Officer’s report.	Town Clerk/Town Council Officers	STC Separation of Policy L1 into two separate policies

	Policy L1: Proposals for new development should whenever possible deliver a 10% net gain in biodiversity retaining natural features that support wildlife, establishing ecological networks and including new habitats that respond to the local context and the character of the site. [...]	SDC Development Manager, Aaron Hill has noted that the wording of Policy L1 does not require features such as ecological networks, rather, provides examples of how 10% BNG can be achieved with hedgehog holes as one of these examples. Separating it into a new policy and strengthening it by requiring any new fencing to be permeable to wildlife could help to achieve the intention with which the policy was set in the first place. BNG is also not applicable to Householder applications, as they are exempt under Biodiversity Net gain legislation and national guidance, so separating the two could allow for policy requirement of biodiversity-friendly features, without requiring net gain.		approved by STNP M&I Group 22-01-2024. Pending ratification by Planning Committee.
5YR4	Amend Aim L7 (below) to include additional sites, or add an additional Policy to include support for improvement or restoration proposals to Millpond, as well as Bradbourne Lakes. Current Aim: Aim L7: The Town Council will support improvement and restoration proposals for Bradbourne Lakes developed in consultation with the local community.	The Independent Examiner in his procedural matters letter, drew attention to a local resident's concerns with whether Millpond was adequately protected. At the time of its response, STC was satisfied that Millpond, as a public open space, was adequately protected, however since then the status and health of the pond has deteriorated. STC was unable to amend its aims or policies to include Millpond explicitly, as the Independent Examiner did not recommend it, however did amend Objective 4, which previously only related to protecting and enhancing green infrastructure, to protecting green and blue infrastructure. This was considered minor enough to be permissible.	Town Clerk/Town Council Officers	STC Addition of Millpond approved by STNP M&I Group 22-01-2024. Pending ratification by Planning Committee.

		Protection of Millpond and similar sites could be added either via a new aim/policy, or by amending Aim L7 which currently only supports improvement and restoration proposals at Bradbourne Lakes, to include other such sites.		
5YR5	Amend Policy M8 and/or M9 to include support of electric buses Current Policies: Policy M8: The Neighbourhood Plan supports enhancements to bus services and facilities to serve the town Policy M9: The Neighbourhood Plan supports measures that will encourage a shift towards the greener modes of transport by businesses and residents.	In line with STC's Green Community Investment Plan and STC's intention to invest in an electric No 8 bus. STC's previous bid for SDC CIL funding for this project was rejected, however SDC have said STC can re-apply in future.	Town Clerk/Town Council Officers	STC

8. Recommendations by the STNP M&I Group, approved by the Planning Committee:

Informed by its Monitoring practices, the STNP M&I Group have made the following recommendations to the Planning Committee with the intention of strengthening the delivery of the STNP's aims and objectives. These are split into two tables – Table One includes recommendations for immediate pursual, while Table Two compiles recommendations for the 5 year review stage. These are in addition to actions identified within the Monitoring & Implementation Plan as outlined above.

Table One:

Recommendation	Date Recommended by M&I Group	Date Approved by Planning Committee
To note Sevenoaks Residential Character Area Assessment locations where trees and hedgerows contribute significantly in the Planning Committee's responses to planning applications	22 nd January 2024	5 th February 2024 Minute Number 657.c.i
Liaise with Kent Wildlife Trust regarding STNP objectives	22 nd January 2024	5 th February 2024 Minute Number 657.c.ii
Community Asset nomination for the land proposed for future allotments to be prioritised.	22 nd January 2024	5 th February 2024 Minute Number 657.c.iii
To bring to SDC's attention to and seek clarification on why Policy L2 (drainage) appears to be inconsistently applied – using 9 Crownfields (23/02649/FUL and 23/03428/HOUSE) as a case study.	18 th February 2024	15 th April 2024 Minute Number 15b
To seek clarification on when Policy L2 can be applied with regards to smaller developments and Householder applications – e.g. extensions.	18 th February 2024	15 th April 2024 Minute Number 15b
To request similarly clarification on why Policy L1 is inconsistently applied, and enquire whether it will become stronger following April 2024 when smaller developments are required to deliver BNG.	18 th February 2024	15 th April 2024 Minute Number 15b

Table Two

Recommendation for 5 Year Review	Date Recommended by M&I Group	Date Approved by Planning Committee
Biodiversity policy L1 to be strengthened as indicated.	22 nd January 2024	5 th February 2024 Minute Number 657.c.iv
Policy L7 to include reference to Millpond	22 nd January 2024	5 th February 2024 Minute Number 657.c.v
For a case to be made to the Examiner at the 5 year review stage, for Policy L1 to be strengthened to eliminate potential for interpretation. To include in the Annual Report examples of when it has been unsuccessfully applied, or considered unnecessary by the Case Officer.	18 th February 2024	15 th April 2024 Minute Number 15b

9. Glossary:

There are a number of acronyms referred to within this document, all of which are provided with their full term on its first mention in the report. For ease of reference, these are summarised below – in alphabetical order as opposed to order of mention.

- BNG – Biodiversity Net Gain
- CIL – Community Infrastructure Levy
- LCWIP – Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan
- LPA – Local Planning Authority
- NDP – Neighbourhood Development Plan
- RCAA – Sevenoaks Residential Character Area Assessment
- MUGA – Multi-Use Games Area
- SCAN – Sevenoaks Climate Action Network
- SDC – Sevenoaks District Council
- STC – Sevenoaks Town Council
- STNP – Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan
- STNP M&I Group / M&I Group – Sevenoaks Town Neighbourhood Plan Monitoring & Implementation Working Group
- STSS Working Group – Sevenoaks Town Sports Strategy Working Group
- TRO – Traffic Regulation Order

