

13/03/2017

Planning for the Water Tower site on Bedfordwell Road

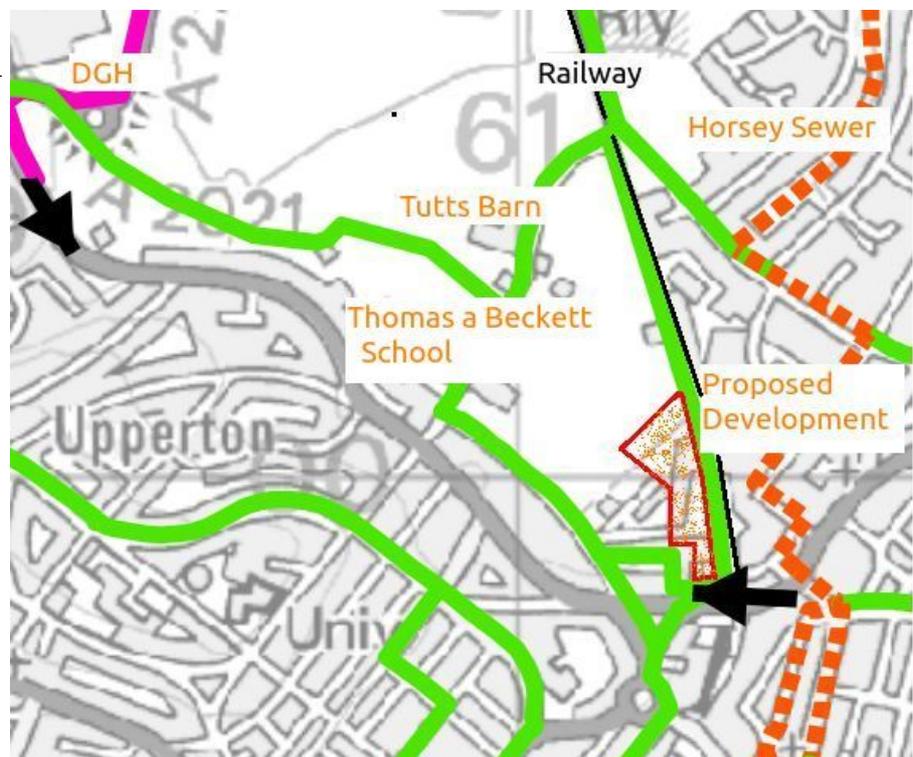
Dear Councillor Murray

Bespoke are aware, following the recent statement from Councillor Tutt, that Eastbourne Borough Council (EBC) have bought the “Water Tower” site, on Bedfordwell Road, for development. This site includes one of the “Priority cycle routes”, within the Eastbourne Cycle Strategy, and it is hoped that this will be considered in the planning process.

Bespoke would like to bring to your attention, that many local groups and MPs, have a desire to ensure that new housing developments should provide healthy and environmental solutions for the community including direct “active travel” / cycle routes. This “Water Tower” site being key to a number of such routes. This would be along the railway line and provide access from the town to Thomas a Beckett School, DGH and to Hampden Park. This could then link onward to the Cuckoo Trail, providing a safe route to Hailsham.

Proposed Housing Development at Bedfordwell Road superimposed on the Eastbourne Cycle Strategy map

- Green – Proposed cycle routes
- Amber – Horsey route
- Pink – Existing off road route



In a wider context

- The Department for Transport (DfT) annual statistics show a continuing drop in cycling numbers in Eastbourne, against the national target of doubling the numbers in the next 10 years.
- The DfT/ Road Safety Analysis shows that Eastbourne is amongst the worst 5% of Local Authorities, in the country, for cycle accidents. The evidence being that as cyclists are discouraged it becomes more dangerous for those who remain.
- Both the current cycle strategy for EBC and East Sussex County Council (ESCC) along with early conversations with ESCC, in terms of the new one, are still based around infrastructure for “utility” cyclists and not for children and the less confident. This site on Bedfordwell Road would be good for all types of cyclists.
- Pollution, traffic congestion and a lack of safe “active travel routes” to school, college and work are major contributors to ill-health and local authority spending. Being aware of this the EBC environment strategy is committed to reducing pollution, including carbon emissions from transport by 35% by 2020.
- There are no current direct “traffic free” routes into the town, from the north, but this Bedfordwell Road site is absolutely key to allowing the closest access
- The EBC corporate plan 2016 includes: “a low carbon town, a range of transport opportunities, thriving communities, improved health and well-being, resilient and engaged communities, sustainability and making the best use of our assets”

Specific guidance as to “advice for developers” can be found at

<https://healthyhousingwealdeneastbourne.files.wordpress.com/2016/11/guidance1.pdf>

More general information and references for the above data can be found at

<https://healthyhousingwealdeneastbourne.wordpress.com>

Bespoke hope that the Council will consider this proposal and would be wish to be involved.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Humphreys
Bespoke and Cycle East Sussex

cc Councillor Tutt
Leigh Palmer (Sen Advisor Planning)