

Last week TMBC launched a public consultation on their document “Local Plan – The Way Forward”. This is the start of the process of the local authority setting out how it identifies the future needs of the local area, including new homes, jobs and facilities, and how it intends to meet them. It really is a crucial document for the local area which will shape how our community will develop in the years to come.

I know from my own post-bag that issues around planning and development are a major concern for local residents. These concerns range from: What do these extra houses mean for school places? Will there be added pressure at my local GP surgery? What improvements will be made to local roads to cope with the increase in traffic? These are all valid concerns and ones I have complete sympathy with – we need development that is sustainable. Only a few weeks ago I mentioned in this column my own concerns about traffic issues on Hermitage Lane, which is in no small part caused by development in the local area without the infrastructure to cope with it.

TMBC have already carried out an assessment of land across the borough that they feel could be used to meet housing need in the future. This is a key part of the consultation document which essentially highlights areas which may form part of the future development strategy. I would urge all local residents to take the time to have a look at these proposals and make their views known through TMBC’s consultation, which is available on their website and remains open for comments until Friday 25 November: [www.tmbc.gov.uk/localplanconsult](http://www.tmbc.gov.uk/localplanconsult).

This is real opportunity for local residents to help shape how their community develops, not just in the near future, but also in years to come and one that I am sure many will be eager to take full advantage of.