

Mr William Benson  
Chief Executive  
Town Hall  
Royal Tunbridge Wells  
Kent  
TN1 1RS

3 May, 2017

Dear Mr Benson

**Re: Petition calling for ill-considered planning and development to be stopped.**

Please find attached more than 1000 signatures demanding that Tunbridge Wells Borough Council stop the ongoing, ill-considered planning and development that is ruining Tunbridge Wells.

We are asking Tunbridge Wells Borough Council the following:

**Stop saying 'yes' to large, obtrusive, simply over-scaled developments.** The Planning Department need to find the will and skill to help shape developments with planning applicants. Risk appeal where necessary as a development will be evaluated on its merits.

**Listen to experts.** You have The Civic Society, external conservation experts, planning consultants and your own Transport Department. They are all telling you the same thing – developments are too big, over dominant and the town is struggling to function.

**Fix the infrastructure before putting extra pressure on it.** The infrastructure cannot cope. Large scale development is being permitted with very little consideration to the impact it will have on the infrastructure; roads, on street parking bays and car parks are at breaking point. Stop adding to the problem and fix it first.

**Ensure that any new development includes adequate parking.** The average household in Tunbridge Wells has 1.3 cars. And a 110 bedroom hotel being permitted with 20 car parking spaces, despite your own Transport Manager advising the towns parking could not cope with the surplus hotel guests cars, is simply appalling.

**Develop a strategy for quality development, architecture that is sympathetic to the town.** Although some developments are replacing bland 1960's architecture, TWBC planners and conservation officers are allowing poor architecture to replace it. Something that is 'better' than what is there now is not 'best'. Where has the pride in our town's architecture gone?

**Articulate what this town stands for and stand by defined brand values.** Our town is a brand. It needs a proposition and everything TWBC does should support that proposition. Slowly the town is loosing its soul – what has made it special up until now. Soon Tunbridge Wells will become unattractive to existing residents, and those that you aim to attract.

The attached list of e-signatures is from people who all live in the borough. There are more signatures but I have removed those that are from outside the borough. All signed the petition hosted on Change.org. Change.org is a global online e-petition platform recognized the world over. I have also enclosed for your reference some signatures collected in person. If you or Democratic Services need an electronic excel document then this can be supplied.

Please advise when this petition will be debated by the Full Council.

I am the organizer of the petition and my details are below.

As an aside an attempt was made to use the e-petition on the Tunbridge Wells BC website, but, like others have found with more recent petitions, the facility does not work.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Kent', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ms. Ellen Kent.

Copy also to:

Head of Policy and Governance, Democratic Services, Town Hall.