

# Planning Committee

Notice of a Meeting, to be held as a **Virtual Meeting** in accordance with Regulation 5 of The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020

**A meeting of the committee will be held on:**

**Date:** Wednesday, 11 November 2020

**Time:** 6.30pm

**Venue:** Virtual Meeting

**Membership:** Councillors Adeoye, Barrett, Bhutia, Bowler, Buckwell, Mrs Diane Chambers (Chairman), Curry, Etheridge, Sylvia Griffin, Hubbard, McDonald, Potter, Chrissy Stamp, Thorne and Tranter (Vice-Chairman)

## Agenda

- 16 Additional Information - Supplementary agenda advice sheet (Pages 3 - 8)**

For further information please contact Ellen Wright, Democratic Services Officer on Telephone: 01634 332012 or Email: [democratic.services@medway.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@medway.gov.uk)

Date: 11 November 2020

### Information about this virtual meeting

Please note that any member of the press and public may follow proceedings at this 'virtual' meeting via a weblink which will be publicised on the Council's website ahead of the meeting. Please refer to this meeting via the meeting calendar for further details:

<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/mgCalendarMonthView.aspx?GL=1&bcr=1>

Members of the press and public may tweet, blog etc. during the live broadcast as they would be able to during a regular Committee meeting.

**Medway Council****PLANNING COMMITTEE – 11 November 2020****Supplementary Agenda Advice****Page 10      Minute 340      24 Pier Road, Gillingham****With delegated authority, the Head of Planning agreed the final wording of the refusal reason with the Chairman to read as follows:**

- 1      The proposal will result in the loss of a property which is of a size still capable of being occupied as single family accommodation and by the virtue of the proposed number of residents and increase from a single family to a House in Multiple Occupancy will significantly increase activity and noise disturbance detrimental to the amenity of the occupiers of nearby family homes within Knight Avenue and Corporation Road which are predominantly in single occupation. Consequently the proposal is contrary to Policies H7 and BNE2 of the Medway Local Plan 2003 and paragraph 127 of the NPPF.

**Page 11      Minute 341      309 Lower Rainham Road, Rainham****With delegated authority, the Head of Planning agreed the final wording of the refusal reason with the Chairman to read as follows:**

- 1      The impact of the proposed dwellings would be harmful to the character of the area, which is considered a countryside location and consists of sporadic dwellings and open spaces. This would therefore result in the suburbanisation of an area within the countryside, contrary to Policies BNE25 and BNE34 of the Medway Local Plan 2003 and Paragraphs 70 and 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 and the advice in the Medway Landscape Character Assessment 2011 (Riverside Marshes).
- 2      By reason of the sites countryside location, the proposed dwellings are considered to be detached from local services and are not therefore in a sustainable location. The proposal therefore fails to meet the objectives of sustainable development and is contrary to Policy BNE25 of the Medway Local Plan 2003 and paragraph 8 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019.
- 3      The application fails to address the impact of the proposal on the Special Protection Areas of the Thames Estuary and Marshes and the Medway Estuary and Marshes through either the submission of details to allow the undertaking of an Appropriate Assessment or via a contribution towards

strategic mitigation measures. In the absence of such information or contribution, the proposal fails to comply with the requirement of the Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2010 and is contrary to paragraphs 175 and 176 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy BNE35 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

- 4 The application proposes three self-build dwellings and has failed to secure a commitment to make the development plots available only as self-build plots, by way of a Unilateral Undertaking.

**Page 12 Minute 342 Land off 143 Berengrave Lane, Rainham**

**With delegated authority, the Head of Planning agreed the final wording of the refusal reason with the Chairman to read as follows:**

- 1 The proposed development would result in intrusion of built form into the countryside and erosion of openness detrimental to the landscape value of the Area of Local Landscape Importance contrary to Policies BNE25 and BNE34 of the Medway Local Plan 2003 and paragraph 170 of the NPPF; in addition the proposal would lead to higher volume of vehicular movements and correspondingly increased level of noise and general disturbance to the detriment of the amenities of the occupiers of the properties along the northern and southern sides of the access drive contrary to Policy BNE2 of the Medway Local Plan 2003 and paragraph 127(f) of the NPPF; furthermore, increase in the volume of traffic at the junction of the access drive with Berengrave Lane would be likely to impact on the free flow of traffic and highway safety contrary to the Policies T1, T2 and T12 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

**Page 18 MC/20/1237 The Hollies, Sharnal Street, High Halstow**

**Representations**

A letter from the Applicant has been received and is attached in full to this agenda.

**Page 44 MC/20/0932 St Clements House, Corporation Street**

**Removed from main agenda**

**Correspondence from the Applicant** has been received asking for this item to be deferred due to the need to consider the implications of recent comments from statutory consultees and to allow for amendments to be made to the scheme accordingly.

**MC/20/1237 : THE HOLLIES, SHARNAL STREET, HIGH HALSTOW, ROCHESTER**  
**ESQUIRE DEVELOPMENTS**

Dear Members,

Firstly, we trust you are all well in light of the 2<sup>nd</sup> lockdown.

We have taken the difficult and unusual step to contact you ahead of the Planning Committee on Wednesday 11 November in respect of the above application. Following receipt of the Committee Report, we felt that there were some key areas that had not been fully reported and we would therefore like to take this opportunity to remind Members of our position as set out in our presentation to you on 12 October.

**1. Sustainability**

We have undertaken a significant amount of work to explore what Sustainability means in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. This includes behavioural changes such as online shopping, working from home, electric vehicles etc. Whilst these trends are useful for context, crucially, the greatest impacts on sustainability can be seen in ensuring new dwellings are Carbon efficient.

As an SME Housebuilder, we fully recognise our role in addressing Climate Change and are already seeking to deliver carbon efficient homes that exceed current and future Building Regulations.

In this respect, the submitted Sustainability report demonstrated that by implementing specific carbon reduction techniques (within the fabric of a property), the net effect is that we can reduce our carbon footprint on an individual property by at least 40% and in some cases higher.

Crucially, this Carbon reduction results in an offset of vehicle emissions which are generated from the Development of a semi-rural site. When taken as a whole, the ‘reliance on a private vehicle’ does not mean that more emissions are created due to increased reliance on a private vehicle as shown in the graphic below:

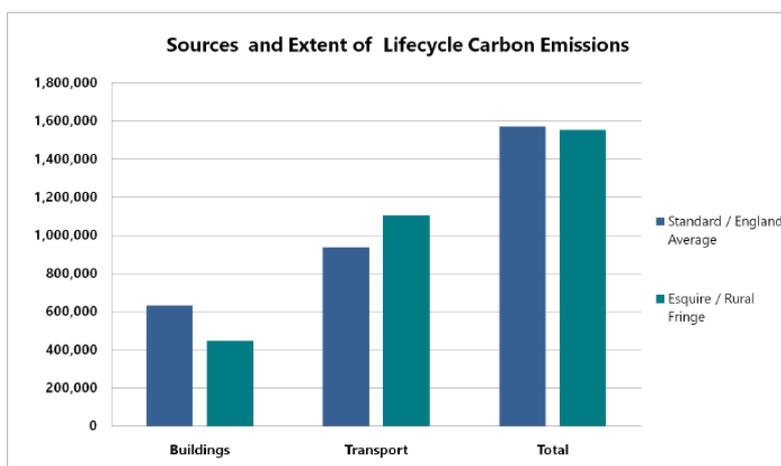


Figure 6: Combined emissions figures across buildings and transport (30 year analysis)

To confirm our commitment to this, and post the publication of the Committee Report, we have agreed to a Condition that ensures at least a 40% Carbon Reduction is achieved across the development which is a new material consideration since the Officers report was prepared.

Therefore whilst there maybe some reliance on private vehicles, Members can be confident that this does not mean more emissions are derived from this Site.

We kindly remind Members that future residents can access a bus service by a lit footpath and will also easily access the proposed new railway station once complete. A small convenience store at the garage can be also be accessed by lit footpath and the report acknowledges the good cycle routes. Whilst not a 'direct' route, High Halstow can be accessed by existing PRow's that avoid the need to travel along Brittainia Road and Christmas Lane. There are therefore alternative options available to future residents to access services by other means of transport other than the private car if desired.

## **2. Highways**

In respect of Highways, we have submitted 2No. Independent Road Safety Audit Reports from two separate Road Safety Audit companies. The Audits are completely independent and we (as the applicant) can not influence in any way the results of these Audits. Both conclude that the Access is safe. Both reports assessed the characteristics of Sharnal Street and both reports concluded that the Manual for Streets Guidance is applicable. This position has been endorsed by the Council's adoption team but not the planning highways team. As an applicant, we feel we have (as required) demonstrated on 2 independent occasions that the access is safe.

We further note that the Planning White Paper heavily references Manual For Streets Guidance and confirms that *'As national guidance, we will expect the National Design Guide, National Model Design Code and the revised Manual for Streets to have a direct bearing on the design of new communities'*.

We therefore consider that the Manual for Streets Guidance is correct and trust that Members can take comfort in the 2 Road Safety Audit Reports that confirm this is the case.

## **3. SME Network**

Members will be aware of the SME Network that seeks to encourage more SMEs to build in Medway. As an SME ourselves, we recognise that Medway is a fantastic place to be building and the support the Network has received to date from the Council has been welcomed.

However, to achieve success of the Network and in order to achieve the goal of the Council and ourselves (that is to get more SMEs building in Medway) it is vital that SME sites are supported. The Network must be more than a simple 'talk shop' and the planning committee plays a critical role in this respect.

This application is the first site the Network has brought to Medway, with Esquire Developments mentoring Fernfield Homes. Fernfield Homes are based in the Medway City Estate, have been operational for 5 years and have never had the opportunity to build in Medway. It is recognised by many that this needs to change.

This site presents a superb opportunity to both Medway and Fernfield as it will mean that a new, locally based SME will be building on their own doorstep in Medway. In return, Fernfield will naturally be employing local people and have a local supply chain (who in turn support local jobs) and the end result will be a superb high quality development.

In the current economic climate, the Government has shown how important the construction industry is. Construction is one of the few industries which is tasked with carrying on as normal during Lockdown. This means jobs are maintained and hopefully, through new permissions, new jobs are created – a vital benefit to local people and to SMEs themselves.

As with any site, there is a planning balance to be found - and this site is no different. The Network has presented to Members about the typical site typology that become available to SMEs. This site is a prime example of that site typology.

We hope that Members recognise the high quality nature of the proposals and that this site will bring a local SME forward to build in Medway. Whilst the site has some challenges, we have worked extremely hard to demonstrate that the perceived impacts are not as set out in the report and that the benefits arising from this site are not outweighed by the perceived harms.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and look forward to seeing you soon at a future presentation.

**Esquire Developments**



CGI View of proposed development

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