

MC/19/1736

Date Received: 28 June 2019

Location: Land At White House Farm Stoke Road Hoo St Werburgh
Rochester

Proposal: Application for the approval of reserved matters being layout, appearance, scale and landscaping pursuant to planning permission MC/18/0247 - Outline planning application with some matters reserved (appearance, landscaping, layout, and scale) for demolition of all buildings and structures and development of previously developed land and undeveloped land for up to 65 dwellings and associated works and infrastructure

Applicant Jones Homes (Southern) Ltd,
Mr David Stewart

Ward: Peninsula Ward

Case Officer: Majid Harouni

Contact Number: 01634 331700

Recommendation of Officers to the Planning Committee, to be considered and determined by the Planning Committee at a meeting to be held on 4th March 2020.

Recommendation - Approval with Conditions

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
1005 Rev R, 1020 Rev C, 1021 Rev C, 1501 Rev 2, 1502 Rev 1, 3080 Rev C, 3075 Rev D, 3071 Rev B, 3070 Rev D, 3065 Rev C, 3060 Rev C, 3055 Rev C, 3056 Rev D, 3051 Rev D, 3050 Rev E, 3045 Rev E, 3041, Rev E, 3040 Rev D, 3037 Rev D, 3036 Rev D, 3035 Rev C, 3030 Rev D, 3026 Rev A, 3025 Rev E, 3021 Rev D, 3020 Rev D, 3016 Rev C, 3015 Rev E, 3014 Rev B, 3013 Rev D, 3011 Rev D, 3010 Rev E, 3006 Rev D, 3005 Rev E, 3001 Rev C, 3000 Rev D, 3201 Rev A, 3200 Rev A, LLD1643-LAN-DWG-100 Rev 7 received on 28/06/2019, 15/01/2020, 28/01/2020, 7/02/2020

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- 2 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any order amending, revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification) all dwelling houses herein approved shall remain in use as a dwelling house falling within Class C3 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) (or any order amending, revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification) and no change of use shall be carried out unless planning permission has been granted on an application relating thereto.

Reason: To enable the Local Planning Authority to control such development in the interests of amenity and overdevelopment of the site and in accordance with Policies BNE1 and BNE2 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

- 3 The first floor flank landing and bathroom windows of plots 5 and 43 shall be fitted with obscure glass and apart from any top-hung light, that has a sill height of not less than 1.7 metres above the internal finished floor level of the room or landing area it serves, shall be non-opening. This work shall be completed before the relevant dwelling or flat is first occupied and shall be retained thereafter.

Reason: To ensure the development does not prejudice conditions of amenity by reason of unneighbourly overlooking of adjoining property, in accordance with Policy BNE2 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

- 4 No development above slab level shall be carried out until details showing the obscure glazing and restrictors limiting the opening of the first floor windows on the north east side of the apartment block (marked as flat 25 and 26) (side elevation B on drawing number 2761 A 3065 PL D) hereby permitted have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the windows shall be installed in accordance with the approved details and thereafter maintained in place in accordance with the approved details. .

Reason: In the interests of protecting the amenity of adjoining properties and in compliance with Policy BNE2 of the Local Plan.

- 5 The dwellings herein approved shall not be occupied until the area shown on the submitted layout as vehicle parking space and garaging on drawing 1020 Rev C has been provided, surfaced and drained. Thereafter it shall be kept available for such use and no permanent development, whether or not permitted by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (or any order amending, revoking or re-enacting that Order) shall be carried out on the land so shown or in such a position as to preclude vehicular access to this reserved parking space and garaging.

Reason: Development without provision of adequate accommodation for the parking or garaging of vehicles is likely to lead to hazardous on-street parking and in accordance with Policies T1 and T13 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

For the reasons for this recommendation for approval please see Planning Appraisal Section and Conclusions at the end of this report.

Proposal

This is an application for the approval of reserved matters relating to the appearance, layout, landscaping and scale of development for the erection of 65 dwellings including open space infrastructure landscaping and associated works pursuant to Outline planning permission MC/18/0247.

It is proposed to construct 65 dwellings on this site, with a landscape set back from Stoke road, a pedestrian and cycle link through to the adjacent development by Esquire Homes and the retention of a large Walnut tree close to the eastern boundary. A children's play area is also proposed. The development will have one vehicular point of entry to Stoke Road.

Site Area/Density

Site Area: 2.79hectares (6.89 acres)

Site Density: 24dph (11dpa)

Relevant Planning History

MC/18/0247 Outline planning application with some matters reserved (appearance, landscaping, layout, and scale) for the demolition of all buildings and structures and development of previously developed land and undeveloped land for up to 65 dwellings and associated works and infrastructure
Approved 06.07.2018

Neighbouring site

MC/18/1795 Approval of reserved matters relating to the appearance, layout, landscaping and scale of development for the erection of 50 dwellings including open space infrastructure landscaping and associated works (Outline planning permission MC/15/0098).
Approved 27/09/2018

MC/15/0098 Outline application with all matters reserved for the redevelopment of former farm site to provide a residential development of up to 50 dwellings (Use Class C3), open space, infrastructure, landscaping and associated works.
Approved 10/11/2016

Representations

The application has been advertised on-site and in the press and by individual neighbour notification to the owners and occupiers of neighbouring properties.

Seven letters of representation have been received expressing concern about the following issues:

- The infrastructure i.e. Doctors, schools, plus drainage is a problem as well, to support more housing.
- The proposal will result in the destruction of wildlife habitats and the loss of rural areas
- Only one road on and off the peninsula. More housing will add to the congestion
- More impact on Air quality/pollution
- Refurbish existing empty properties instead of building more home in the countryside.
- Loss of privacy due to overlooking from the first-floor landing window on the house on the south side of plot 11. This should be frosted glass.
- The southern half of the western edge of the site should be designed side to side with the development at the Street Farm in order to give far more cohesion between the two housing developments.

Southern Water has carried out an investigation under our new modelling criteria which has indicated that foul sewage disposal can be accommodated in order to service the proposed development. Southern Water requires a formal application for a connection to the public sewer to be made by the applicant or developer.

Southern Gas Network comment that although-Pressure Gas main runs along the site road frontage. There is no objection to the proposals.

Natural England does not have any further comments to make with regard to the layout, appearance, scale and landscaping. It is pleasing to see confirmation that the payment will be made to the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS) in the S106 agreement, which will mitigate against adverse impacts of recreational pressure on the designated sites.

UK Power Network Has no objection

KCC Ecology has no objection provided:

- The reptiles on the application site north of Stock Road are translocated on to the land to the south side of Stoke Road where surface water from the application site will be managed.
- Satisfactory ecological enhancements involving bird and boxes together with log piles are provided as part of condition 26 of the outline planning permission.

Development Plan

The Development Plan for the area comprises the Medway Local Plan 2003 (the Local Plan). The policies referred to within this document and used in the processing of this application have been assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 and are considered to conform.

Planning Appraisal

Background

Outline planning permission for the residential development on this site was granted under ref MC/18/0247 with all matters reserved except for the means of access. Whilst the “reserved matters” are for approval as part of this application, the principle of the development of the land for residential purposes has therefore already been established by the outline permission.

The outline permission defined the upper limits of the number of dwellings on this site to 65 dwellings which include 25% affordable dwellings.

An existing boundary hedge separates the site from the Esquire development to the west.

The application site slopes down from north to south. The site has been cleared of all the buildings associated with the previous use of the land and the land is fenced off.

The existing properties fronting Stoke Road are primarily two-storey houses with varying garden depth. There are also a small group of ex- agricultural buildings along the western side of the White House Farm dwelling.

Adjoining the eastern boundary of the application site is a large telecommunication mast with associated structures.

Appearance, Layout and Scale

The NPPF in paragraphs 124, 128 and 130 sets out the importance of design in the consideration of planning applications and in particular, paragraph 124 states that “Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and make the development acceptable to communities...”.

The local plan, Policies S4 and BNE1 of the Medway Local Plan 2003 emphasise the importance of achieving a high-quality design that results in safe and attractive environments.

The proposed layout plan is different from the indicative layout drawing submitted at the outline stage. That is not unusual as the outline was submitted by a land promoter and

any developer would want to re-look at layout and reflect their own ideas reflecting their own thoughts about an appropriate layout and development for the site.

The development comprises a mix of two-storey dwellings houses and a two-storey flat block that reflect the scale, height and rhythm of the nearby houses. The proposed development is considered to be in keeping and complimentary with the area and wider development in Stock Road.

The proposed layout position the houses back from the frontage with Stock Road and behind a substantial landscaped area about 18m to 20m deep. In addition, the retention of the existing walnut tree close to the eastern boundary together with the creation of about 1600m² (2/5 of an acre) of children play area and amenity land would substantially soften and enhance the proposed layout. As such the proposed development would not give a hard urbanised street frontage to this section of Stock Road and help to present a green rural look to the eastern and frontage boundaries of the development.

The proposed layout comprises single primary vehicular access road from Stoke Road in the southeast corner with a number of minor secondary cul-de-sac roads branching off from it.

As required by Planning Committee of both the development of this site and the adjacent site, the proposal also provides a pedestrian and cycle access link pathway to the adjoining development to the west in order to facilitate better connectivity to the services in the centre of the village and the existing footpath/bridleway to the west.

To ensure that the proposed link access way integrates well with the development to the west and to provide an active, inviting and safe environment for the future residents of the link access way, the houses on plot 35 and 36 have been designed to front this access linkway.

The development for adjacent site is currently under construction. Of the 7 houses approved along the shared boundary with the application site, 3 would be perpendicular to the proposed houses on the western boundary of the application site and 4 houses would back on to houses along the western boundary of the application site. The proposed development has been designed to reflect the fact that the developer is different from the adjacent site but at the same time be sympathetic to and link to that development.

The street pattern includes residential cul-de-sacs representing elements of place-making and the creation of attractive places with character areas defined by house types/design, external finished materials, window type, landscaping and street lighting.

The layout divides the whole site into three distinct character areas and this is achieved through the use of different approaches to landscaping, hard surfacing, building forms, (like gateway buildings) and mark buildings, arrival spaces, views/vistas, materials and elevational treatment.

The proposed buildings facing onto the proposed road network, the green amenity area and play area along the eastern part of the site would encourage natural surveillance.

The proposed houses would have a minimum of 10 deep back gardens. This is in compliance with Medway design standards.

The only flat block and associated car parking in this development would be located toward south-west part of the site and adjacent to a substantial landscaped area, associated with an existing surface water stream and surface water pond which would provide an attractive surrounding for the future residents of the flats.

The dwellings would include a mixture of 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom units and incorporate a range of dwelling designs throughout the scheme. This would help in providing variety to the street scenes.

The application site is relatively small and the affordable units are spread along the southwest corner of the site.

Both market and affordable units would incorporate a range of dwelling designs and types. The table below shows the mix of both market and affordable dwelling units across the whole site.

Market housing (75%)		Affordable housing (25%) no dwellings	
1 bed flat	0	4	4
2 bed flat	0	4	4
2bed house	0	1	1
3 bed	33	7	40
4 bed	15	1	16
Total	48	17	65

A mixture of single and double garages would be provided on-site to serve some of the proposed dwellings. The proposed garage buildings would be proportionate in scale to the dwellings they serve.

The buildings have been designed to incorporate a variety of finishes, detailing and articulated elements including bay windows, front canopies, front gables, variety of roof-scapes and this will help to provide a visual relief and ensure that attractive elevational treatments are achieved.

Boundary treatment will be 1.8m high brick wall where they meet the street frontage and 1.8m close boarded fence elsewhere including back gardens. The southern and northern boundary of houses on plots 35 and 36 will also be of brick construction where they front the access link path.

It is considered that in terms of the layout, scale and appearance, the development offers architectural character, adding quality and aesthetic enhancement to the immediate vicinity, whilst not adversely impacting on the wider environment.

Consequently, the development would conform well into its local context and re-enforce the local characteristics of the area in accordance with Policy BNE1 and the NPPF.

Amenity

Policy BNE2 states that all development should secure the amenities of the future occupiers and protect those amenities enjoyed by nearby and adjoining properties. The design of development should have regard to privacy, daylight and sunlight.

The proposed dwellings in terms of their floor sizes and habitable areas, satisfy the Nationally Described Space Standards and provide for a good habitable environment standard with respect to natural light, outlook, privacy and private amenity spaces proportionate to that prevalent in the immediate area.

However, representation has been received from the occupiers of the property to the south (Ferndale) expressing concern that his garden and habitable rooms will be overlooked from the first-floor bedroom window of dwelling on plot 11.

It is relevant to point out that the two-storey house on plot 11 will have a back garden of about 15m deep and there will be a back to back distance of 30m between Ferndale and the dwelling on plot 11. It is considered that the resulting gap between these two properties would be much greater than the usual 20- 22m distance considered acceptable. As such the proposal in this regard is considered acceptable.

With respect to outdoor garden space, the nationally described standard does not provide any guidance. However, the Medway Housing Design Standards 2011 document does provide guidance in this regard and recommends a garden depth of 10m. Each of the dwelling houses proposed would have a rear private garden depth of 10m or more. With regard to the flatted developments communal garden /amenity spaces are provided.

The proposal also makes provision for refuse storage within the curtilage of each dwelling house to allow refuse bins to be stored in the rear garden area and brought forward for the collection day.

With regard to the flatted development, a refuse storage building next to the car park area associated with the flat block would be provided. This refuse storage arrangement is considered to be acceptable.

The lounge kitchen windows of the flat units 25 and 26 have the potential to overlook the dwellings to east and as a result these will be partially obscure.

The proposed development would not cause any adverse impact on the amenities of the occupiers of other dwellings within or adjacent to the site and no objection is raised in this regard and the proposal is considered acceptable and in compliance with Policy BNE2 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

Landscaping

The landscape proposals retain a large proportion of existing landscape features whilst also providing significant planting. This sees the planting of a substantial number of new trees within the site and the retention of an existing mature Walnut tree on site. The trees proposed will consist of both native and ornamental varieties, with native species being located primarily at the site edges, being representative of the wider landscape character.

The proposed landscaping will result in the creation of a soft edge to the development with green landscape pockets running through-out. The proposed landscape scheme seeks to integrate the existing surface water stream that runs north-south through the site, with a surface water swale into the scheme; accommodating surface water management requirements for the development. The planting of these elements has been designed to adapt to variable ground conditions from rainfall through the use of specific wildflower species and shrub mixes.

A children's play area is proposed within an area of amenity green open space to the eastern side of the development. The amenity space provides the opportunity for equipped play and activity across a range of age groups, as well as providing valuable recreation space to residents. In addition to tree planting, amenity spaces incorporate native and ornamental shrub planting of robust and hardy varieties that can be readily maintained.

Properties have been set back from Stoke Road, with a tree-lined area of amenity to the development entrance. The use of native tree and hedge planting provides a positive contribution to the setting of Stoke Road, which when matured will soften the visual appearance of properties.

The approach to planting would create areas of habitat and visual value that provide unique focal points within the development. The frontage of properties feature a range of treatments that include areas of lawn, shrubs and a mix of street trees or large shrubs. A high percentage of evergreen planting is proposed, as well as fruiting and flowering varieties. The scheme overall creates new habitats across the development, offering opportunities for increased biodiversity.

The landscape areas and play facilities will be managed and maintained by the applicant or their successor and funded by the future residents of the development.

The landscape part of the affordable housing section will be relatively small and these areas will be maintained by the social landlord.

Overall, it is considered that the landscaping proposed would meet the objectives of the local plan policies BNE6 and BNE34 by softening and minimising the impact of the development on the wider surroundings. This will result in the creation of an attractive high-quality amenity value that would enhance the visual appearance of the site to the benefit of the development and amenities of the future residents as well as the wider landscape in accordance with Policies S4 and BNE6 and BNE34 of the Medway Local Plan and NPPF 2019.

Highways and parking

The acceptability of the access arrangement for the site has been established by the outline permission and is one access point onto Stoke Road.

A total of 146 car parking spaces including 16 visitors are proposed to serve the entire development. This would represent 1.0 parking space for 1 and 2 bedroom flats, 2 parking spaces for 2 bedroom dwelling and 2.0 car parking spaces for 3 and 4-bed houses. This comprises both garage spaces and driveway parking.

In addition provision for cycle shelter/storage facility has been proposed adjacent to refuse building in the car parking area of the flat block for the residents of the flats and within the rear gardens of the individual houses.

To ensure that the proposed road layout would satisfactorily allow for refuse and fire engine manoeuvring a tracking audit has been undertaken.

It is considered that the development would be self-sufficient with regard to parking and cycle storage provision and there would not be any detrimental impact on highway safety and the development would be in accordance with Policies T3, T4 and T13 of the Medway Local Plan 2003 and the NPPF2019.

Drainage

Details of proposed site surface water management which comprise a pond/swale to the north of the flat block and porous surfacing of the roads, pavement and car park/ drive areas have been submitted and are considered to be satisfactory. No objection is raised to the surface water management and drainage scheme proposed for the development as a result.

In addition, any excess surface water will be diverted via a culvert under Stock Road to a large pond on the south side of Stock Road where a large wetland habitat will be created. This location will also be used for the translocation of reptiles from the northern section of the application site.

With regard to the sewerage issue, Southern Water has stated that foul sewage disposal can be provided for the proposed development. Southern Water requires a formal application for a connection to the public sewer and the applicant has been advised.

As such the proposal would be satisfactory and in compliance with Paragraph 165 of NPPF.

Ecology

The proposal would involve the translocation of reptiles on the northern part of the application site to the southern side of Stoke Road where the larger surface water pond will be located. In addition, the proposal would include the creation of wildlife habitat on-site as part of the proposed landscaping. This also includes bird and bat boxes and appropriate planting to encourage wildlife. The landscaping and boundary treatment also includes gaps in the gravel boards in the boundary fence to allow hedgehogs to pass. Appropriate measures to mitigate harm to bat habitats have also been submitted. KCC ecology has considered the proposal to be satisfactory and acceptable with respect to this development.

Climate Change and energy efficiency

In response to the Planning Committee desire to have information on all residential new build applications on matters of climate change and energy efficiency, the applicants have made the following submissions:

“All dwellings will be designed in accordance with the latest standards within Part L1a of the Building Regulations (2016) will be achieved using energy-efficient design and measures alone. Where necessary, renewable energy systems may then be introduced to reduce carbon emissions to the level that satisfies the regulations.

The layout has been designed to give south-facing orientation and aspect to as many dwellings as possible to enhance sunlight to houses. Linked to the issue of orientation is that of daylight. The ability to capture natural daylight reduces energy use but creates a healthier, more pleasant environment. Capturing sufficient daylight is linked to good design and the principles outlined above concerning orientation. Larger areas of glazing on the southern face of a building, with smaller areas on the northern side, have the combined effect of maximising light gain and minimising heat loss.

It is proposed that eco-sanitary ware and restricted flow rates will be introduced into the design of each development to obtain the appropriate level of water efficiency.

Additional energy savings can be made by maximising the efficiency of appliances, lighting, low energy bulbs, fixtures and fittings. It is the intention that all fixed electric lighting will be energy efficient. All appliances where installed will be at least A-rated further minimising the use of both electricity and hot water. Other fixtures and fittings will be specified that reduce hot water consumption with low and/or aerated flows.”

In addition to the above as part of the landscaping of the site, the applicant will be planting in excess of 116 new trees on site which will make a long term contribution toward carbon

capture and the use of the balancing pond on the application site for surface water storage will also create habitat areas and encourage ecology.

Local Finance Considerations

None relevant

Conclusions and Reasons for Approval

The details submitted in respect of this Reserved Matters submission largely has a fairly simple, traditional design with some modern additions that is sympathetic to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and is appropriate in terms of layout, scale and appearance. The design is well considered and the proposal would result in an attractive housing development having regard to the context of the site, and would result in an efficient, effective and sustainable development of the site.

The design of the dwellings reflects the design and character of the locality, whilst the landscaping proposed will enhance the existing features of the site and retain the existing tree and hedges on-site. By planting additional trees and shrubs within the site's watercourse, open space amenity and play area the scheme will provide special landscape features and complement the site. The pedestrian/cycle access link along the western boundary provides walkway link through the site to the adjoining PROWs and bridleway to the west and an improved pedestrian link towards the village centre.

The proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of the occupiers of the current neighbouring properties or future occupiers in terms of impact on daylight, sunlight, outlook and privacy. The proposed development would also not have a detrimental impact on flood risk and surface water management, crime prevention, waste and refuse, biodiversity, air quality, noise or highways safety.

The details submitted with this reserved matters application in relation to layout, scale, appearance and landscaping pursuant to the outline planning permission MC/18/0247 are in accordance with Policies S4, BNE1, BNE2, BNE3, BNE6, BNE8, BNE24, BNE34, H3, H10, T1, T2, T3, T4 and T13 of the Medway Local Plan 2003 and the NPPF 2019 and are acceptable and is recommended for approval subject to the conditions.

The application would normally be determined under delegated powers but is being referred for Committee determination due to the number of representations received expressing a view contrary to the officer's recommendation.

Background Papers

The relevant background papers relating to the individual applications comprise: the applications and all supporting documentation submitted therewith; and items identified in any Relevant History and Representations section within the report.

Any information referred to is available for inspection in the Planning Offices of Medway Council at Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham ME4 4TR and here <http://publicaccess1.medway.gov.uk/online-applications/>