

MC/23/0187

Date Received: 25 January 2023
Location: Land at East Hill, Chatham, Kent
Proposal: Reserved matters application for Phase 1 (for the construction of 91 residential units including affordable housing together with associated access, parking, landscaping, open space, equipped play, infrastructure and earthworks) pursuant to Outline application MC/19/0765 (APP/A2280/W/21/3280915) - Outline application (with all matters reserved except access) for the erection of up to 800 dwellings with a primary school, supporting retail space of up to 150sqm and a community or nursery facility with an associated road link between North Dane Way and Pear Tree Lane and other road infrastructure, open space and landscaping.

Applicant: FD Attwood & Partners.
Agent: DHA Planning
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Ward: Lordswood and Walderslade
Case Officer: Hannah Gunner
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 8th May 2024.

Recommendation - Approval with Conditions

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Drawing numbers;

Received 27 January 2023

P22-0701_DE_07_A_01 - EMA22 Floor Plans & Elevations

P22-0701_DE_07_A_02 - EMA33/EMT31 Elevations

P22-0701_DE_07_A_03 - EMA33/EMT31 Floor Plans

P22-0701_DE_07_B_04 - EMA34 Floor Plans & Elevations

P22-0701_DE_07_A_05 - EMT31 Floor Plans & Elevations

P22-0701_DE_07_A_06 - EMB31 Floor Plans & Elevations

P22-0701_DE_07_A_07 - NB41 Floor Plans & Elevations

P22-0701_DE_07_A_08 - EMA43 Floor Plans & Elevations

P22-0701_DE_07_A_09 - EMT41 Floor Plans & Elevations

P22-0701_DE_07_A_13 - EMB51 Elevations

P22-0701_DE_07_A_14 - EMB51 Floor Plans

P22-0701_DE_07_A_16 - EMAP22 Floor Plans & Elevations

P22-0701_DE_07_A_17 - EMAP32 Floor Plans & Elevations
P22-0701_DE_07_A_18 - EMAP41 Floor Plans & Elevations
P22-0701_DE_07_A_19 - Garage 1 / Shed Floor Plans & Elevations
P22-0701_DE_07_A_20 - Garage 2 Floor Plans & Elevations
P22-0701_DE_07_A_21 - Garage 2a Floor Plans & Elevations
P22-0701_DE_07_A_23 - Sales Garage 2a Floor Plans & Elevations
P22-0701_DE_07_A_22 - Sub-station Floor Plans & Elevations

Received 6 and 19 March 2024

P22-0701_DE_04_K_01 - Site Layout Plan
P22-0701_DE_04_A_02 - Site Location Plan
P22-0701_DE_04_B_06 - Building Heights Plan
P22-0701_DE_04_B_07 - Tenure Plan
P22-0701_DE_04_B_08 - Parking Strategy Plan
P22-0701_DE_04_B_09 - Refuse Strategy Plan
P22-0701_DE_04_B_10 - Materials Plan
P22-0701_DE_008_C_02 - Street Scenes
P22-0701_DE_07_B_10 - EMT42 Floor Plans & Elevations
P22-0701_DE_07_B_11 - EMA46 Floor Plans & Elevations
P22-0701_DE_07_B_12 - EMA48 Floor Plans & Elevations
3057-APA-ZZ-00-SK-L-0013 - Tree Strategy Plan
3057-APA-ZZ-XX-DT-L-4001 Rev P.01.01 - Tree Pit Detail
3057-APA-ZZ-XX-DT-L-4002 -Rev P.01.01 - Tree Pit Detail in Slope
3057-APA-ZZ-XX-DT-L-4003 -Rev P.01.01 - Pot Sizes and Soil Profiles
3057-APA-ZZ-XX-DT-L-4004 - Open Space Footpath Profile
3057-APA-ZZ-XX-DT-L-4005 -Rev P.01.01 - Interface Front Garden & Public Realm
3057-APA-ZZ-XX-DT-L-4006 -Rev P.01.01 - Interface Front Garden & Swale
3057-APA-ZZ-XX-DT-L-4007 -Rev P.01.01 - Boundary Treatment
3057-APA-ZZ-XX-DT-L-4008 -Rev P.01.01 - Section Through Seating and Informal Play Space
3057-APA-ZZ-XX-MP-L-4300 P01 March 2024 - Landscape Management Plan
K2275-CIV-0101 Rev P08 - Surface Water and Foul Drainage Layout Sheet 1 of 4
K2275-CIV-0102 Rev P08 - Surface Water and Foul Drainage Layout Sheet 2 of 4
K2275-CIV-0103 Rev P04- Surface Water and Foul Drainage Layout Sheet 3 of 4
K2275-CIV-0104 Rev P05 - Surface Water and Foul Drainage Layout Sheet 4 of 4
K2275-CIV-0201 Rev P06 - Engineering Layout Sheet 1 of 4
K2275-CIV-0202 Rev P06- Engineering Layout Sheet 2 of 4
K2275-CIV-0203 Rev P04 - Engineering Layout Sheet 3 of 4
K2275-CIV-0204 Rev P04 - Engineering Layout Sheet 4 of 4
K2275-CIV-0105 Rev P03 - Impermeable Areas Plan Sheet 1 of 3
K2275-CIV-0106 Rev P03 - Impermeable Areas Plan Sheet 2 of 3
K2275-CIV-0107 P03 - Impermeable Areas Plan Sheet 3 of 3

Received 8 April 2024

3057-APA-ZZ-00-PP-L-2000 Rev P.01.07 - Detailed Planting Plan

3057-APA-ZZ-00-PP-L-2001 Rev P.01.06 - Detailed Planting Plan
3057-APA-ZZ-00-PP-L-2002 Rev P.01.07 - Detailed Planting Plan
3057-APA-ZZ-00-PP-L-2003 Rev P.01.05 - Detailed Planting Plan
3057-APA-ZZ-00-PP-L-2004 Rev P.01.05 - Detailed Planting Plan
3057-APA-ZZ-00-PP-L-2005 Rev P.01.05 - Detailed Planting Plan
3057-APA-ZZ-00-PP-L-2006 Rev P.01.05 - Detailed Planting Plan
3057-APA-ZZ-00-LA-L-1001 Rev P.01.06 - General Arrangement Plans
3057-APA-ZZ-00-LA-L-1002 Rev P.01.07 - General Arrangement Plans
3057-APA-ZZ-00-LA-L-1003 Rev P.01.05 - General Arrangement Plans
3057-APA-ZZ-00-LA-L-1004 Rev P.01.05 - General Arrangement Plans
3057-APA-ZZ-00-LA-L-1005 Rev P.01.05 - General Arrangement Plans
3057-APA-ZZ-00-LA-L-1006 Rev P.01.05 - General Arrangement Plans
3057-APA-ZZ-00-LA-L-1007 Rev P.01.05 - Illustrative Landscape Masterplan

Received 22 April 2024

P22-0701_DE_07_A_15 - EMA51 Floor Plans & Elevations

Received 26 April

P22-0701_007_DE_E-01 - Housetype Pack

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

- 2 The development shall be implemented in accordance with the measures to address energy efficiency and climate change set out within Section 7 of the Design and Access Statement. Prior to first occupation of the development a verification report prepared by a suitably qualified professional shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority confirming that all the agreed measures have been undertaken and will thereafter be maintained on site.

Reason: In the interests of sustainability and to positively address concerns regarding Climate Change in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

- 3 The residential units herein approved shall not be occupied until the area shown on the submitted layout as vehicle parking/garaging 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.

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.

- 4 The proposed residential units shall not be occupied, until details of the provision of the electric vehicle charging points have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details shall include the location, charging type (power output and charging speed), associated

infrastructure and timetable for installation. The development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and shall thereafter be maintained.

Reason: In the interests of sustainability in accordance with paragraph 110E of National Planning Policy Framework 2019.

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

Proposal

This proposal follows approval of an Outline Permission for the erection of up to 800 dwellings with a primary school, supporting retail space of up to 150sqm and a community or nursery facility. This is Phase 1 of the scheme, which will consist of 4 phases and a separate school phase.

The scheme the subject of this application is Phase 1 which consists of 91 residential units, comprising detached, semi-detached and terrace properties along with parking landscaping and an equipped play area. There are no flats proposed within this scheme. Phase 1 is situated in the Whites Wood Character Area. This area is secluded from the remainder of the site and can therefore be treated with its own unique characteristics.

The site is to be accessed off North Dane Way via a new roundabout approved under the outline application. Once in the site the proposal will then have two main streets within it (the upper and lower lanes).

Smaller semi-detached and terraced dwellings are proposed on the upper lane (western edge of the site) where the site's topography is less steep, meanwhile larger, detached plots are utilised on the steepest parts of the site on the lower lane (to the east). The proposed development is predominantly two storeys in height which is in-keeping with the surrounding districts. Occasional 2.5 storey dwellings add variation to the roofscape and take advantage of views of the wider landscape.

Swales have been incorporated into the lower street to create a unique feature on lower parts of the site. This will provide opportunities for wide landscape verges and tree planting.

The proposal consists of the following housing mix:

Open Market Housing:

2 bed houses	4
3 bed houses	30
4 bed houses	25
5 bed houses	9
TOTAL	68

Affordable Rent:

2 bed houses	2
3 bed houses	12
TOTAL	14

Shared Ownership:

2 bed houses	3
3 bed houses	4
4 bed houses	2
TOTAL	9

To the north of the site is the proposed neighbourhood equipped area of play (NEAP) along with open space and attenuation pond.

Public Right of Way (PRoW) RC9 runs from east to west across the site. This footpath is an important link as it connects the existing residential area west of North Dane Way with the Capstone Country Park and wider landscape.

Relevant Planning History

MC/23/0033 Application for non-material amendment to planning permission MC/19/0765. Amendment to condition 8.

Decision Approved with conditions.

Date 07 February 2023

MC/22/2346 Application for non-material amendment to planning permission - Appeal ref APP/A2280/W/21/3280915 (MC/19/0765). Amendment to planning conditions.

Decision Approved with conditions.

Date 25 November 2022

MC/19/0765 Outline planning application with some matters reserved (appearance, layout, scale and landscaping) for construction of up to 800 dwellings, primary school, supporting retail space of up to 150sqm and GP surgery with associated road link between North Dane Way and Pear Tree Lane and other road infrastructure, open space and landscaping.

Decision Allowed at Appeal

Date 07 February 2022

It should be noted that there have been a number of Discharge of Conditions applications in relation to this site, however they are not considered relevant to this application so have not been included here.

Representations

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

The Environment Agency, Kent police, KCC Archaeology, KCC Biodiversity, SGN, UKPN and Sothern Water Services have also been consulted.

99 letters of representation have been received from neighbouring residents with the following concerns:

- Local infrastructure will not cope.
- Air pollution will increase.
- Cramped development.
- Too many pressures on local amenities.
- Will have an impact on doctors and hospital which are already at capacity.
- This phase is not sustainable and is not close to shops, services or buses.

The Environment Agency have stated that they do not object to the application, however, would like to reiterate that this is an extremely sensitive site with respect to controlled waters and the applicant must demonstrate that the risk to controlled waters is understood.

Kent Police have requested that the developers consult the Designing out Crime Officers to address CPTED and incorporate Secured by Design as appropriate. Site security is required for the construction phase. There is a duty for the principal contractor “to take reasonable steps to prevent access by unauthorised persons to the construction site” under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007. The site security should incorporate plant, machinery, supplies, tools and other vehicles and be site specific to geography and site requirements.

SGN have sent extracts demonstrating that the site is a no gas area. There is, therefore, no concern that works will affect SGN pipelines.

UKPN sent a copy of records that confirm no electrical lines or plant are currently on site. They have also stated that should excavation affect their Extra High Voltage equipment (6.6 KV, 22 KV, 33 KV or 132 KV), they would like to be contacted so the applicants are able to obtain a copy of the primary route drawings and associated cross sections.

Southern Water have no objections to the proposals. If the applicant proposes to offer a new on-site drainage and pumping station for adoption as part of the foul public sewerage system, this will have to be designed and constructed to the specification of Southern Water Services Ltd. A secure compound would be required, to which access for large vehicles would need to be possible at all times. The compound will be required to be 100 square metres in area, or of some such approved lesser area as would provide an operationally satisfactory layout. In order to protect the amenity of prospective residents, no habitable rooms shall be located within 15 metres to the boundary of the proposed adoptable pumping station, due to the potential odour,

vibration and noise generated by all types of pumping stations. The transfer of land ownership will be required at a later stage for adoption.

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 (December) 2023 (NPPF) and are considered to conform.

Planning Appraisal

Background

The outline application for the construction of up to 800 dwellings, primary school, supporting retail space of up to 150sqm and GP surgery with associated road link between North Dane Way and Pear Tree Lane and other road infrastructure, open space and landscaping was originally refused by Medway Council in March 2021 on the following grounds:

- 1) The proposal constitutes a large-scale urban development within the countryside and located on greenfield land, which is not allocated for the proposed use. The application site is located within the rural area but does not essentially require a rural location. The proposal would result in an inappropriate form of development within a locally valued landscape that would harm the character, function and appearance of the countryside, Area of Local Landscape Importance, setting of Capstone Farm Country Park and the rural footpath network. The proposal would result in irreversible loss of important and valued open and green space within this part of Medway. The proposal is contrary to Policies S1, S2, BNE1, BNE2, BNE25, BNE34, L9 and L10 of the Medway Local Plan 2003 and paragraph 127 and 170 of the NPPF.
- 2) The proposed quantum of development is considered to be inappropriate for this rural location. The overall scale and layout is an overdevelopment of the site that would result in an intrusive and dominant form of development and visual erosion of this important landscape character setting and countryside location, giving rise to substantial harm to the much valued landscape character of the countryside, Area of Local Landscape Importance, setting of Capstone Farm Country Park and public rights of way. The density and building heights of over 2 storeys set out in the parameter plans would be considered incongruous and out of keeping with the countryside setting. The proposal is contrary to Policies S1, S2, BNE1, BNE2, BNE25, BNE34, L9 and L10 of the Medway Local Plan 2003 and paragraph 127 and 170 of the NPPF.
- 3) The proposal would result in a significant impact on residential amenity of properties adjacent to the site, particularly to the occupants of Carlton Crescent. Due to the topography of the land rising sharply from Carlton Crescent to the site any development in this part of the site has the potential to have a significant impact on these residents. The proposal is contrary to Policies S1,

S2, BNE1 and BNE2 of the Medway Local Plan 2003 and paragraph 127 and 170 of the NPPF.

This decision was then appealed through the Public Inquiry process and was overturned and approved in February 2022 on the following grounds:

- the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a deliverable five-year supply of housing sites in the area.
- the proposal would not conflict with policy BNE34 relating to the ALLI, I also find that the proposal would not therefore conflict with Policy S2 of the LP. In addition, I have found that the proposal would not conflict with policy L10 of the LP.
- the site is in a sustainable location.
- landscape harm would diminish over time such that after 15 years, and when the landscaping reached a more mature stage, the level of landscape and visual harm would be minor.
- in principle the proposal would result in the provision of sustainable form of development. Furthermore, access details are acceptable subject to the imposition of conditions and no unacceptable harm would be caused to matters of highway safety and the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would not be severe.

Site description and surrounding area

Phase 1 is located to the southernmost part of this site with access taken from a new roundabout off North Dane Way. The southern boundary is defined by North Dane Wood, an area of ancient woodland. The eastern and western boundary comprises existing vegetation with North Dane Way running North to South along the western boundary. The northern boundary connects to the wider site via a large area of public open space, beyond that is a site for a proposed primary school and allotments, with further residential land beyond.

The topography of Phase 1 follows a similar pattern to the wider site, with land sloping from a high point to the west of the scheme and dropping down into a valley to the east.

A Public Right of Way (RC9) is located within Phase 1 and the proposals demonstrate how this PRow is to be retained within the development and provide connections to the wider context.

Existing housing to the west of North Dane Way and the closest area of residential housing to Phase 1, generally consists of post war housing and more recent housing development. Houses are arranged along quiet cul-de-sacs and streets often well set back to allow for frontage parking or landscaping.

Principle

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 provides that all planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan

consists of the relevant saved policies of the Medway Local Plan 2003. The scheme should also be assessed against the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework), and The Government's National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), both of which are important material considerations.

The principle of this application was considered in full at the outline application stage at Public Inquiry and it was concluded that this application was acceptable.

Overall, it was considered that the development of the site is in principle acceptable in sustainability terms given the definition in the NPPF, the lack of a 5 year housing land supply and the balance of the relevant issues taking into account recent appeal decisions in Medway and the location of this site in this urban area.

It was also considered that the development can be accommodated within the local landscape with limited adverse impact upon the wider landscape character and visual resources.

In relation to the objections raised by neighbouring residents, it should be noted that the issues relating to the impact to the area, loss of open space and pressures on infrastructure were all considered at this outline stage and were felt to be acceptable subject to the agreed S106 and conditions.

This application for reserved matters for Phase 1 only and deals with the design, scale, landscaping and layout. These are dealt with accordingly below.

Design

Local Plan Policy BNE1 'General Principles for Built Development' requires the design of development to be appropriate in relation to the character, appearance and functioning of the built and natural environment. The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Paragraph 135 is key to the achieving well designed places.

The proposed scheme, as set out above, consists of a mix of 2, 3, 4 and 5 bed terrace, semi-detached and detached homes. This variety of provision means that the design and layout of the scheme is varied also. The whole scheme consists of 2 and 2.5 storey pitched roof housing.

In the outline application, Phase 1 was shown to be the White Woods Character Area, secluded from the rest of the site, meaning it can be treated with its own unique characteristics.

The layout of the site has had to be designed around the contours of the site with the streets generally located along the contours. The main street splits into upper and lower-level streets with green spaces at either end and pedestrian and cycle connectivity.

Smaller semi-detached and terraced dwellings are proposed on the western edge of the site where the site's topography is less steep, meanwhile larger, detached plots are utilised on the steepest parts of the site to the east. The proposed development is

predominantly two storeys in height which is in-keeping with the surrounding districts. Occasional 2.5 storey dwellings add variation to the roofscape and take advantage of views of the wider landscape.

Swales have been incorporated into the lower street to create a unique feature on lower parts of the site. This will provide opportunities for wide landscape verges and tree planting.

House frontages have been designed with generous windows from habitable rooms clearly defined and front doors and planting to act as buffer between the pavement and window.

Internal habitable rooms should have high levels of natural daylight and connect well to gardens and terraces.

Affordable housing will be well-integrated with a tenure blind approach so there is no discernible difference between private and affordable dwellings.

Each house has been considered and designed for the site with some alterations being made during the application process (mainly to roof configurations). The site includes over 17 variations of house elevations, which is considered to allow for a good variety throughout the site giving interest and breaking up the elevations within the street scenes.

The following key attributes have been included within the layout and design of this proposal:

- Buildings have been generally orientated back-to-back or back onto existing woodland to ensure rear gardens are enclosed and protected, providing private rear amenity space for all dwellings.
- Public open spaces are well overlooked by the surrounding built form.
- All routes are necessary and serve a specific function or destination.
- The ownerships and responsibilities for external spaces will be clearly identified and the proposals facilitate ease of maintenance and management.
- Natural surveillance is promoted wherever possible; and
- Architectural details which promote natural surveillance, and the active overlooking of spaces are included in the proposed dwellings, not only through window positioning, but also, through the size of windows in key locations, offering further angles of natural surveillance.

In general terms, the character areas proposed do not form harsh contrasts, instead focus more on density and blend from one to another so that the scheme reads as one comprehensive design. The aim is to achieve a development with a strong identity and distinct sense of place whilst at the same time integrating with the existing community.

Primary Street – The primary street has been designed with a wide landscaped verge providing space for large tree species. A series of play and kick abouts areas are linked via new pedestrian/cycle routes giving the community direct access to public open space and linking the development to the northern parcels, including direct pedestrian access to the potential new primary school. The use of black

weatherboarding and brown roof tile allows the built form to sensitively integrate into the woodland setting.

Key Design Principles:

- Larger detached dwellings set within the existing landscape.
- Mix of red and buff brick, with black weatherboarding and brown roof tiles to help sensitively integrate with the woodland setting.
- Lower density housing.
- Wide tree lined streets.
- On-plot parking generally located to the sides of dwellings or accessed off shared drives.

Upper Street - The Upper Street is situated on the higher-level ground to the west, backing onto North Dane way. The site is much flatter here, lending itself to higher density housing. Terraced and semi-detached dwellings are more common. Linear streets are shaped to the existing contour. The Upper Street area is designed around the existing central hedgerow providing a linear central green that also contains a swale running along the contours from north to south. Gable fronted dwellings add rhythm to the street scene and also ensure roofs are south facing for solar gain. A contemporary materials palette is used throughout the scheme to provide uniformity with a mix of red and buff bricks to provide a slight variation within this character area.

Key Design Principles:

- Higher density housing to support its location on the flatter part of the site.
- Runs of semi-detached dwellings with frontage parking.
- Gable fronted dwellings create rhythm and provide opportunities for solar gain.
- Mix of red and buff brick with red roof tile and occasional black weatherboarding.
- Frontage parking broken by street trees and focal spaces.

Lower Street - The Lower Street feeds the lower half of the site towards the east, this area has a medium to low density. Detached houses feature along sensitive green edges and semi-detached within the centre of the development. The Lower Street runs parallel to a main swale, this linear green creates a wide landscaped area with opportunities for tree planting. As per the Upper Street gable fronted dwellings are mixed within the street and add rhythm to the street scene and ensure some roofs are south facing for solar gain. A mix of red and buff brick provides variation within the character area.

Key Design Principles:

- Mix of detached and semi-detached dwellings.
- Street defined by a wide landscaped verge and swale.
- Mixed materials palette provides variety.
- Generally, 2 storeys with occasional 2.5 storey in key locations.
- Parking generally sited on plot to the side of dwellings to create larger front gardens.

In terms of the proposed materials, the two main facing bricks are buff and red brick along with two roof tiles; red and brown. Additional features to the house types include brick detailing and black stained weatherboarding. The red brick is the predominant brick and has been implemented across the site to help create a comprehensive approach. Black stained weatherboarding is used, predominantly on the first-floor level and has been provided at various places across the site to help provide variation.

Brick detailing has been implemented on key dwellings such as those terminating vistas or turning corners to provide interest and a richness to the street scenes.

Contemporary grey doors, windows and porches have all been used throughout the site to give the house types uniformity.

Overall, it is considered that the design of the proposal in terms of the house styles and types themselves (including materials) has been well considered and is acceptable. Also, the design layout itself is considered to be appropriate.

This proposal is also considered to be compliant with Policy BNE1 and BNE2 of the Local Plan and Paragraphs 131 and 135 of the NPPF.

Landscaping

Landscaping was a significant consideration at the time the Outline Application was assessed at Public Inquiry. The Inspector's Appeal decision expressly noted that the proposals would lead to landscape harm, and it would not, therefore, be appropriate for MC to seek amendments at this stage with a view to removing any and all landscape harm. However, it would be reasonable to seek to minimise the harm where possible, and it should also be noted that the Inspector did place emphasis on the role of the landscape proposals in mitigating the harm over time, with repeated references (paragraphs 50 and 67) to the use of semi-mature trees.

Some degree of initial harm has therefore been judged to be acceptable, but that the landscape proposals should be designed to significantly mitigate that harm within 15 years, and that the use of semi-mature tree planting has been assumed.

That being said it is still of utmost importance to ensure that the landscaping associated with this development achieves what is envisaged for the wider views but also contributes toward creating an environment that will be enjoyed by the residents using the site.

Starting at the entrance to the site via North Dane Way, low level planting has been incorporated on the roundabout which is considered to not only soften the appearance of this new road feature but will help in acting as a speed deterrent as it restricts views across the roundabout. Along with additional planting at the entrance to the site it is considered that this opening into the site is acceptable and will enhance the entrance into the site.

Throughout the site revisions have been made which ensure that openness and larger landscape areas are maximised for the wider site benefit.

One of the key issues in terms of landscape harm is visibility from the far valley side, in the Country Park. The proposed woodland has been amended throughout the application process to address this matter. Some of that woodland planting has been repositioned to wrap around the development, extending the woodland screen of the shaw to the south and linking with the tree screen along North Dane Way. This is considered to have a real impact on the longer-term landscape impact and is a welcome alteration.

Real effort has also been taken to ensure that the landscaping on the upper and lower streets is carefully considered to create the character areas and allow for individuality within these spaces.

Primary Street:

This is the main entrance to the site and is lined with trees to the east side. This road provides access to the upper and lower streets. The feel at this part of the development is open and the trees and planting proposed as part of the open space and woodland to the north of the site will be part of the screening of the scheme in the wider context.

Upper Street:

The density of the upper street is higher than the rest of the site and as a result planting opportunities are less here. That being said, the street scene here still provides for tree and shrub planting between the parking spaces as well as having the physical break with the existing hedgerow that separates the upper and lower streets.

Lower Street:

This area will run parallel to a main swale, which is considered to create a wide green landscaped area with tree planting throughout. The lower density of these properties here and this wider green aspect result in a landscaped area that will appear open and spacious.

In terms of tree sizes, amendments have been made throughout the application process to increase the proportion of trees at 20-25cm that are now proposed and a minimum height of 4.5m has been stated. This will be important to the effectiveness of the mitigation over time. Given the importance attached to successful mitigation in this case it will also be important to ensure that the trees are carefully selected, planted to a high specification and properly maintained. Maintenance and survival are monitored, and any replacements properly carried out.

Open space and play provision.

In the northern part of the site is the area that is characterised as the Parkland. This area will provide a range of recreational opportunities including a NEAP and an informal kickabout space. The large open parkland will provide opportunities for circular walks through meadow and woodland areas and provide space for people to relax and appreciate the landscape or undertake other forms of outdoor activities. This area will serve not only the proposed housing within Phase 1 but will also link to the

proposed later phases as well as being accessible to existing neighbouring residents on the other side of North Dane Way.

The parkland will bring significant biodiversity benefits and encourage interaction with the landscape and education of local biodiversity with varied routes through the open spaces, informal seating and the use of interpretation boards.

The NEAP has been located to be easily accessible, set back from the main road access and residential buildings but still well overlooked at the entrance to the parkland and off the main shared pedestrian and cycle route.

An area of hard standing with an irregular half basketball court framed with a skate trail, offers play and exercise opportunities for older children and teenagers. A circular path around the play area provides level access for all. A dry 'riverbed' feature works its way through the play space, bringing definition and play opportunities to the space with the gravel bed, boulders, logs and ornamental grass planting to the verges. Located south of the riverbed, the play area transitions into a space more suited to toddler and smaller children, with play elements such as playable animals. The layout utilises the natural topography to add more challenging play equipment such as a zipline, slide and climbing net. Swings and climbing structures provided more traditional, but fun experiences.

It is considered that these provisions are suitable for this area and are close enough to houses to be overlooked without being too close to be considered as disruptive.

Kickabout Area

An area of mown grass set within the meadow areas north of the NEAP provides an informal space for football or other all sports on grass.

Existing Public Right of Way

The route of the existing PRoW through the site (RC9) is maintained in its current location, but will be surfaced, improving its function and accessibility as a public route. Seating will be added at intervals set back from the main path and within pockets of planting and angled to allow views out through and over the landscape. There will also be opportunities for informal play at these locations.

Southern Pocket Park

This area of steeply sloping ground provides an additional pedestrian connection between the two main levels within the residential area. A sloped or ramped option was considered but would have resulted in a hard landscape area with limited planting opportunities.

There is level access where these two streets converge so as a compromise, the space has been designed to include a series of terraced steps that integrate benches with planting at intervals along the route. Tree planting is positioned to avoid a services easement and to create a view out over the landscape.

As can be seen from the above, there is a good amount of open space and play provision within this phase of the development. These aspects are all viewed to be

acceptable and therefore comply with Policy L4 of the Local Plan and paragraph 127 of the NPPF.

Amenity

Policy BNE2 relates to the protection of the amenities of future occupiers of the development and of neighbours in terms of privacy, daylight, sunlight, noise, vibration, heat, smell, airborne emissions. Paragraph 135 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires that development functions well over its lifetime and provides a high standard of amenity for neighbours.

The design scale and layout of this proposal allows us to assess the impact of this proposal on the existing neighbouring residents as well as the future occupants of the development.

Neighbouring residents

In terms of the proximity of this scheme to the existing neighbours in the surrounding area, it is acknowledged that this varies across the site. The closest properties to any of the development appears to be on the other side of North Dane Way (Poachers Close, Scarlett Close, Holder Close and Judkins Close), which will be approx.+50m to the nearest rear gardens of properties on the upper street of the development.

Due to the positioning of the houses, the proposed units do not directly face the existing houses and are on the opposite side of a main road. The result of this is that there is no direct overlooking or impact to existing properties and no loss of privacy to the occupants of the nearest homes.

Overall, given that the proposed units are some distance from the existing dwellings on the other side of North Dane Way it is considered that there will be no overlooking and no loss of light to the existing neighbours. The visual impact of these units is also negligible from these properties and is not considered to be of detrimental harm. The impact on neighbouring residents is therefore acceptable.

No objection is, therefore, raised in terms of neighbour amenity under Policy BNE2 of the Local Plan.

Future Residents

In terms of the amenity of future occupants the proposals meet the Nationally Described Space Standard for internal floorspace, and the garden depths meet the Medway Housing Design Standards (MHDS) where applicable. The proposal will provide internal and external amenity for its prospective residents.

The proposal is considered acceptable with regard to the residential development element of the proposal both in considering the impact on existing and future occupiers. The proposal is in accordance with Policy BNE2 of the Local Plan and paragraph 135 of the NPPF.

Highways and parking

Site access was considered in detail at the outline application stage. This being the case, the roundabout access being created on North Dane Way already has permission and access to the site is not a matter for consideration within this application.

The street layout and parking arrangements within the development scheme are therefore the main consideration here.

Due to the topography of the site the roads have been designed to align with the contours of the land and therefore run north to south. The roads are therefore considered to be appropriately placed and ensure that steepness is not an issue allowing for suitable accessibility for all abilities.

20 visitor spaces are proposed. Throughout the layout 46 dwellings benefit from the provision of M4(Cat 2) compliant parking spaces.

Allocated parking is predominantly provided on plot, within the curtilage, either to the front or side of dwellings, with individual bays and/or garages set back from the building line, to allow ease of access to dwellings. Where parking is provided on street (via parallel or perpendicular bays) it has been carefully designed to allow for areas of landscaping and planting between groups of spaces to break up the appearance.

All dwellings with private driveways will be provided with EV charging facilities. In addition to this 10% of visitor parking spaces will be provided with EV charging through a pillar fed system.

Garages - 47 allocated garages have been provided; these have been designed to be 6m in length x 3m wide. It is acknowledged that this does not meet with the 7m long requirement set by Medway Council, however, in these instances it is considered that 6m is long enough to be used for car parking and can still leave approx. 1m for additional storage of bikes if required.

As a result of a member presentation of the proposal during the application process bollards have been added around where the open space straddles the PRow as a way to ensure that on street parking cannot occur in these strategic places.

Cycle Parking – It is considered that cycle parking can be accommodated within the provided garages. Where garages are not provided for properties, sheds will be available within rear garden spaces, which are sufficient for cycle storage.

Refuse - A refuse storage strategy has been provided for this scheme. The majority of roads will be designed to an adoptable standard to allow refuse vehicles to access the vast majority of the site. Where dwellings are not accessible bin collection points are located in convenient locations within 25m of the adoptable extent.

Affordable Housing

It is proposed that 25% of the dwellings provided are to be affordable housing. The development proposes 23 dwellings as affordable, with 14 to be affordable rented and 9 to be shared ownership. All affordable houses within Phase 1 are designed to comply with M4(2) standards. No M4(3) compliant dwellings are provided within this phase due to the challenging levels.

The affordable housing proposed provides a mix of housing sizes and styles, providing 2, 3 and 4-bedroom properties, with a mix of houses to meet a range of housing needs and align with the previously agreed S106.

The affordable housing is dispersed in clusters within the site, to ensure they are appropriately placed and integrated into the overall site to achieve social integration and cohesion, with clusters further broken down by the tenure mix.

Climate Change

The NPPF identifies that good design “is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities” (paragraph 131). Paragraph 139 in particular refers to great weight being given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability.

In planning for climate change, plans should take a proactive approach to mitigate and adapt to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures; in line with the objectives of the Climate Change Act 2008. In order to support this, paragraph 154 of the Framework states that new development should be planned for in ways that:

- a) Avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change; and
- b) Can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design.

The Government are introducing significant changes to Building Regulations as part of its commitment to reducing the UK’s carbon consumption to net zero by 2050.

Carbon reduction in house building is to be achieved through a staged approach in order to allow the industry time to adapt to what are considerable changes and challenges. This will be achieved in two stages:

Parts L & F – This is an interim stage that will apply to all houses that commence after 15 June 2023, i.e., all 91 homes on Phase 1 and all homes across the wider East Hill site. These changes require a 31% reduction in CO2 beyond the 2013 Building Regulations.

The second stage is the introduction of Future Homes Standards (FHS), and this is going to apply to all homes commenced in January 2025 at the earliest.

All homes on Phase 1 will be designed to comply with parts L & F and include the following:

- Photovoltaic Panels (PV) to all roofs – quantum to vary per house type and orientation, however, these will reduce homeowners take from the grid with any surplus electricity either being stored or returned to the grid.
- Triple glazing to all windows and French doors.
- Hi-therm lintels (to replace steel lintels), which will deliver much improved thermal performance at the window and door heads.
- Wastewater Heat Recovery (WWHR) to recover heat from the warm shower wastewater before going into the drainage system.
- 100mm cavity between brick and blockwork filled with high quality blown fibre insulation. This maximises the fabric first approach, which provides a very comfortable living and working environment, significantly reduces fuel bills and does not require behavioural change of occupants.
- Low energy lighting used throughout.
- Installation of energy efficient appliances.
- Electric vehicle charging point to on curtilage parking – this is also a requirement of condition 16 of the Outline planning permission that also requires one EVCP per 10% parking spaces within communal areas.

In addition to the measures to secure compliance with L & F, the following measures will be accommodated once FHS is in place:

- Alternative heating system to gas – options include electric boilers or air source heat pumps. This will be determined by technology, cost, availability, reliability etc.
- Potential cavity width increases to further increase insulation.
- Underfloor heating.

Taylor Wimpey are currently aligning with the projections of the FHS trajectory, in that homes on Phase 1 are designed to parts L & F of the Building Regulations, as the agreed interim step towards the FHS. The actual requirements of the FHS, including its implementation, are not yet known. However, Taylor Wimpey will align with the FHS, and its implementation timescales once finalised and published.

Bird mitigation and S106

Both the bird mitigation and Section 106 payments in relation to this development were agreed within the outline application stage. These aspects do not therefore form part of the consideration at this stage.

Conclusions and Reasons for Approval

It is considered that the proposed Phase 1 reserved matters application forms the first part of a wider development that has a significant impact on the wider area of Medway. The proposed building of 91 homes with associated car parking, open space and landscaping and infrastructure within this phase will be a suitable development within

this area and will result in a development that will sit comfortably within the wider residential area and have an acceptable impact on landscape when looked at over a longer period. The provision of open space and play space is considered to be acceptable and will maximise the potential use of the proposed recreation area to the north, being available for use by a wider community.

The principle of the proposal has been considered against Policy and also in relation to impact on neighbours, landscape and access and the more general area and it is concluded that the provision of these residential units here and associated open space are acceptable in relation to Policies BNE1, BNE2, BNE6, BNE7, H1, H3, H4, H10, T1, T3 and T4 of the Medway Local Plan (2003) and relevant paragraphs of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023).

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/>