



February 2016

Proposed Residential Development at Bentletts Scrap Yard Claygate Road, Collier Street, Maidstone

ME18 6BB

Design &
Access
Statement

CLAGUE ARCHITECTS

Prepared by Clague Architects LLP on behalf of Wealden Homes

WEALDEN
HOMES

reference	:	22504A Wealden Homes ME186BB Reports and Minutes Design & Access Statement	
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Unless otherwise noted.

INTRODUCTION 01

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Introduction

This Design & Access Statement is written in support of a Detailed Planning Application for 25 Dwellings and associated infrastructure and landscaping on land at Bentletts Scrap Yard, Claygate Road, Collier Street, ME18 6BB

The purpose of this document is to explain the background, site analysis and the design process which has led to the current proposals to enable statutory consultees and members of the public to gain a quick understanding of what is proposed.

This planning application is submitted in detailed form; the application being fully supported by a substantial amount of information. This data covers the topic headings listed below and provides much detail to enable the Borough Council, the Collier Street Parish Council, statutory consultees, and local residents to make an informed opinion of the scheme as set out on the layout.

The details clearly illustrate the scale, amount and character of the intended scheme which is a well-designed and thought out solution following extensive discussions with Maidstone Borough Council Planning Department. In summary, a high quality scheme of Kentish Style houses is proposed which is far more attractive than the existing scrap yard use, which is an eyesore in the context of its rural setting.



This Planning Application consists of the following documentation;

- Planning Application Forms (completed & signed)
- Planning Fee
- Site Location Plans
- Site Layout Plans
- Architectural Drawings
- This Design & Access Statement

In addition the Planning Application is supported by a series of supporting documents prepared by specialist consultants as follows;

- Planning Statement
- Topographical Survey
- Tree Survey & Arboricultural Report
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Transport Report
- Ecological Survey
- Geotechnical Reports

1.2 APPLICANT & DESIGN TEAM

The Applicants

Wealden Homes

Wealden Homes are a Maidstone based house-builder who operate from headquarters in Teston village and have completed many successful and popular housing developments particularly within Maidstone District.

Masterplanners & Architects

Clague Architects LLP

Clague are a multi-disciplinary practice of architects, masterplanners and conservation architects based in Canterbury, London & Harpenden. The practice has extensive experience of delivering high quality and well received residential developments particularly in Kent where the practice has secured many Kent Design Awards for its work and seen its exemplar schemes featured in the Kent Design Guide and other design guidance.

Full Project Design Team

Wealden Homes	Planning Consultants & Applicant
Clague LLP	Master planners & Architects
Geoff Heard	Highways & Connectivity
RCD Consultants Ltd	Flood Risk
Greenspace	Ecology
RL Surveys Ltd	Topographical Survey
LA Dell Wood	Tree Survey
Ron Carr Geotechnical	Geotechnical



- 12345678910

1 - 2 Previous Developments by Wealden Homes
3 - 6 Kings Hill; Clague
7 Baldwin's Place; Clague
8 Conyer Quay, Teynham; Clague
9 Horsebridge Centre, Whitstable; Clague
10 Headcorn; Clague

1.3 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Detailed Planning Application

25 Dwellings

2.5 Hectare Site

Brownfield Site

Site is fully licensed for ongoing activities associated with lorry dismantling

Enables improvements to listed building ('Pest House')

Financially Deliverable Scheme

Existing trees and hedgerows retained

Generous Plots

Strong visual enclosure due to perimeter trees and hedgerows

Extensive consultation with local authority, parish etc

Low-Medium Density Character (approx 10 dph)

Characterful Layout

Local Materials

Active Streets

Attractive Architecture & Detailing

Existing Access Enhanced

Extensive New Tree Planting

Mix of Family Housing

Sustainable drainage linked to existing ponds & ditches

Comprehensive clean-up of site

Ecological enhancements to ponds and surrounding environment to compliment new housing

Lorries removed from adjacent country lanes

SITE & SURROUNDING CONTEXT 02

2.1 APPLICATION SITE



Aerial **Site Location** image

The site is situated in a rural setting which is typically a patchwork of traditional field patterns with occasional small clusters of dwellings or isolated houses and farmsteads. The Scrap Yard site has been present on the site for some decades and has grown in that period to its current form.

The application site itself occupies 2.5 hectares with 1.9 ha of this being the existing scrap yard site, with the additional 0.6ha being the existing farmland to the north of the scrap yard which is being brought into the current application as a new nature conservation amenity area to be free of development but complimentary to the proposed housing.



Kent and Maidstone District



Surrounding Area

2.2 SITE CONTEXT



2.3 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND CHRONOLOGY

Maidstone Borough Council's existing Local Plan is the Maidstone Boroughwide Local Plan of 2000 and is out of date. The Council are attempting to produce a new Local Plan but as yet this new policy document has yet to get beyond its preliminary draft stage. This Plan needs to find new housing sites up to the period 2031 and land for approximately 18,000 new homes are required to be found.

Given the environmental and infrastructure constraints applicable to the Borough the quest for new sustainable housing sites is very difficult and the Council cannot easily allocate sites which are not subject to objection from statutory consultees and local communities. Further, the Council currently does not have a 5 year land supply as set out by national planning policy of 2012 (National Planning Policy Framework). Hence, the Council has an urgent need to replenish its short term and long term housing supply.

The Applicant has had a pre application meeting with Maidstone Borough Council planning department and it is accepted that the concept of redeveloping this existing scrap yard is in compliance with policy DM1 of the Maidstone Local Plan Consultation 2014. In this instance Maidstone Borough Council planning department accept that redevelopment would achieve the following objectives:

1. To remove from the countryside the current non-conforming commercial vehicle scrap yard use of the land to overcome harm to the character of the countryside.
2. To remove a use that currently is generating substantial movement of large commercial vehicles in the surrounding country lanes detrimental to the highway safety and amenities of the other users of the roads.
3. To improve the amenities of the surrounding residential properties by removing the source of harm from noise, smell, general disturbance and poor outlook.
4. To restore the existing Grade II listed building on site.
5. To remove contamination from the land and bring about a general environmental improvement and enhancement of the wider countryside/ landscape.

This current planning application was preceded by an earlier application for 31 dwelling which in turn was preceded by various discussions with the planning department. This planning history has been critical in influencing the current design and proposals. It should be noted that the emerging Regulation 19 Maidstone Local plan allocates the scrap yard site for residential development but with an indicative density of only 10 dwellings. This level of housing is too low because it is unviable and uneconomic to build at such a low density as the cost of removing contamination is in the region of £1million. Hence, a density of 25 houses is necessary in the form proposed is the lowest density that can enable the site to be redeveloped. This position will be validated by a further submission of a viability report.

2.4 LOCAL BUILT CONTEXT



The surrounding area has a broad mix of both traditional and vernacular architecture but also much post-war architecture and dwellings, particularly to the immediate east of the application site.

2.5 SITE PHOTOGRAPHS



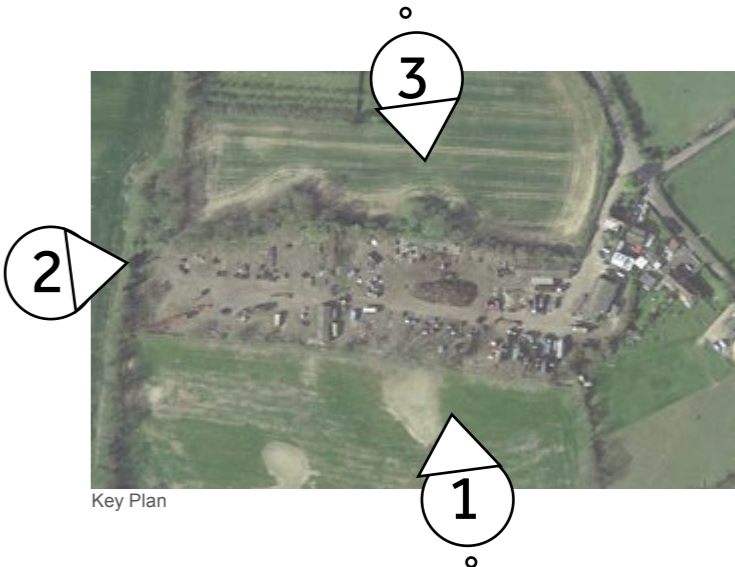
01 View of site southern boundary



02 View of site western boundary showing very strong tree screen



03 View of site northern boundary with very strong tree screen and ponds



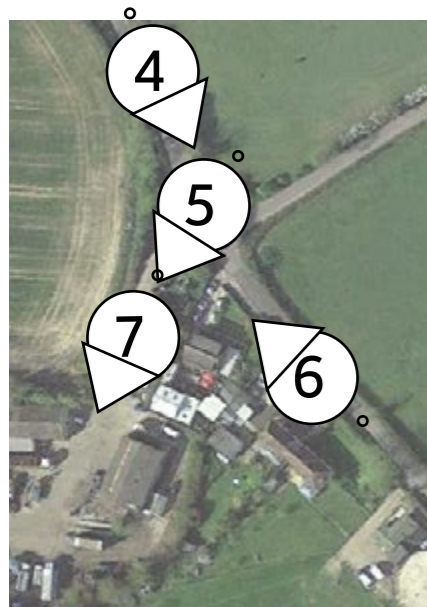
2.5 SITE PHOTOGRAPHS



04 View from Claygate Road looking south-east at site entrance



05 View from Claygate Road looking southwest into the site



Key Plan



06 View from Claygate Road looking south-west at site entrance



07 View from site entrance looking south-west into site

2.5 SITE PHOTOGRAPHS - EXISTING COMMERCIAL USE



08 View looking west on site



09 View looking east on site



10 View looking south-west on site



11 View looking east on site



Key Plan



Local train stations

2.6 CONNECTIVITY AND PATTERN OF DEVELOPMENT

Whilst quite rural in nature, good levels of public transport are available with a local bus service being provided six days a week other than Sunday. This is a similar level to that of Yalding which has been selected for localised housing growth in the Regulation 19 Maidstone Local Plan.



Areas of existing listed buildings marked in blue
Development marked showing a typical pattern of dispersed properties, houses and farmsteads in a countryside setting

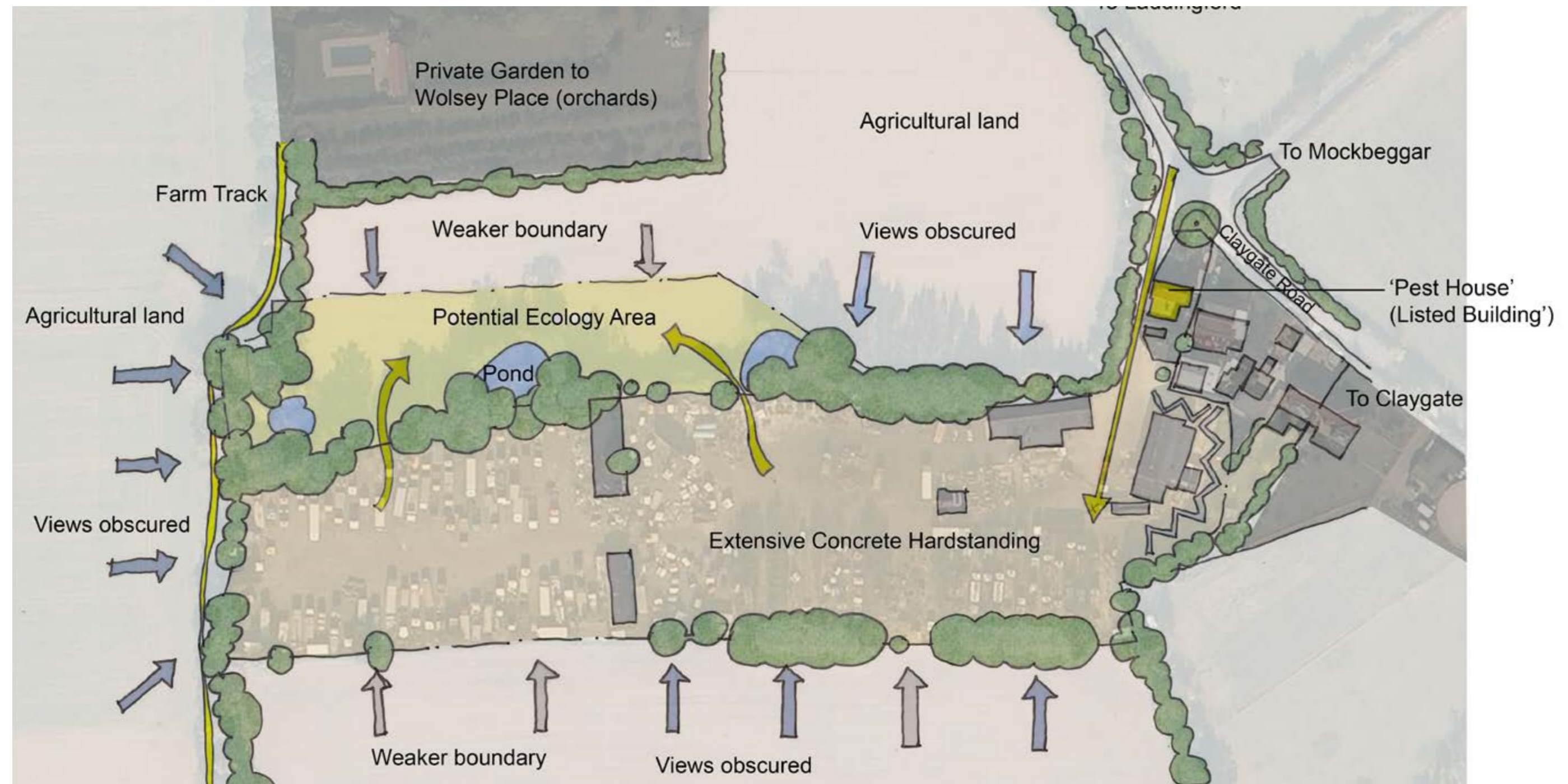
2.7 OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

Photographs of the scrap yard are set out on page 16. This demonstrates the nature and character of this non-conforming land use which is a brownfield site.

A Grade II listed building, The Pest House, sits adjacent to the main access road and a separate application has been granted planning permission to Wealden so that it can be extended, enhanced and brought into habitable residential use. This application takes into account the setting of this building and new housing is set away from it. Further, a traffic calmed access road, set in block paving, improves its immediate setting and reduces the traffic impact.

It should be noted that the site is not within a flood plain. Surface water will be managed and controlled as set out by the details set out in the submitted Flood Risk Assessment.

It is critical to note that this redevelopment will provide a new and managed system whereby the requirements of the Environment Agency will be met and the run off will not be in excess of what is happening today. The impact on surface water/ flooding for the vicinity will be an overall improvement as porous paving and new gardens will store water on site rather than it running immediately away as it does today. Local drainage conditions will be significantly improved. The Environment Agency have confirmed this as set out in their response to the previously submitted 31 unit scheme.



THE PROPOSALS 03

3.1 SITE STRATEGIES - PLACEMAKING + CHARACTER

As the site is quite linear in shape, we feel it is particularly important to develop a sense of journey based on an interesting sequence of spaces through the site layout which will add a sense of variety and identity. This series of events forms the structure of the site layout and is illustrated on the diagram below. The character of each individual space forming a part of this 'journey' is described and illustrated and the following pages.



Spatial Sequence

- 1) Access lane
- 2) Entrance space
- 3 & 6) Rural streets
- 4) Central Green
- 5) Ecological / landscaped amenity area
- 7) Farm yard with shared surface
- 8) Western end

3.2 SITE STRATEGIES - VEHICULAR MOVEMENT

The site form is simple and linear in character and will be accessed using the existing site access point on Claygate Road leading into an internal spine road. This spine road is to be quite rural in character having a gently meandering alignment, formed of a shared surface route approx 4.5 m wide with grass verges to either side. Occasional narrowings on alternating sides will also be formed to manage vehicle speeds. Turning areas for service vehicles are provided in two locations, at the central green and also at the west end. The spine road will be surfaced in a grey block paving with bullnose kerbs having a small upstand to avoid an over-engineered character.

Off the spine road will be the various small private shared drives accessing each individual dwelling or pair of dwellings. These will be surfaced in a bound gravel material with rows of granite cubes forming the interface line between the two materials.



3.3 SITE STRATEGIES - APPROACH TO LANDSCAPING

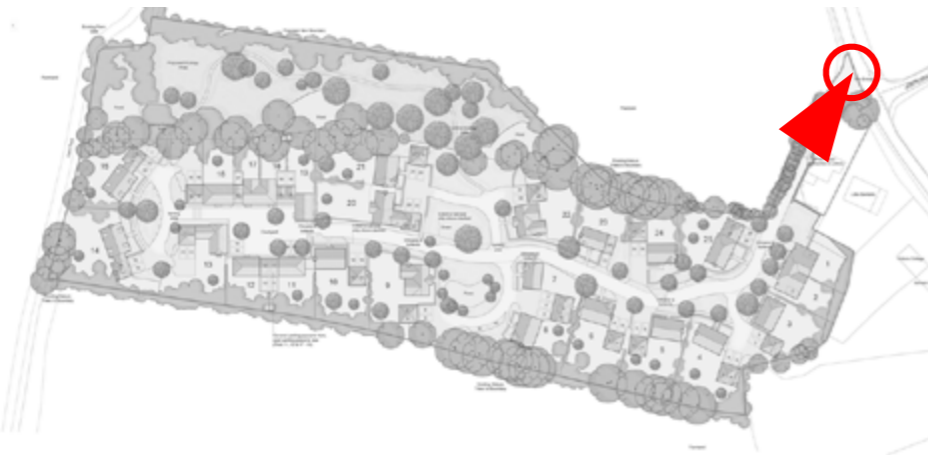


The site benefits from significant existing mature trees along the site boundaries which will help to screen the proposals in the wider landscape setting. In addition the weaker areas of site boundary will be strengthened where required. The housing layout is at a low to medium density to allow green gaps between the buildings as set out in the diagram here. The ecology area itself will form a green link between the two smaller green spaces with the housing area.

3.4 PLACEMAKING & CHARACTER AREAS

Site Entrance

The existing site access is to be upgraded and resurfaced. The hedgerow to the west will be maintained and repaired whilst the boundary treatment to the east will be replaced with a new traditional style timber picket fence. All this will tidy up and enhance the setting of the Pest House (listed building)





Artist's Impression of the site entrance

3.4 PLACEMAKING & CHARACTER AREAS

Entrance Space

The entrance lane is approx 70 meters long before it reaches an initial space overlooked by a cluster of 5 dwellings. These buildings around the space feature clay tile-hanging echoing the material on the adjacent Pest House. The spine road meanders through this space leading to the rest of the development to the west.

Wide grass verges create the space for new tree planting enhancing the feel of the space and softening the setting of the houses.



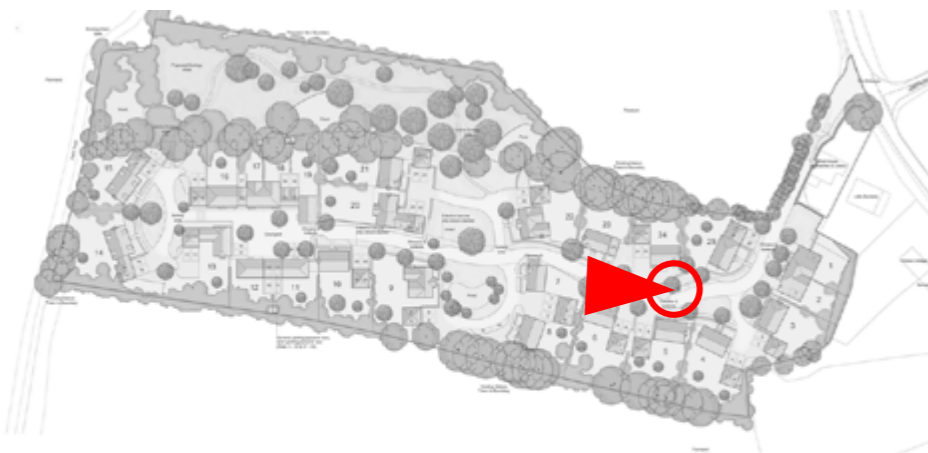


Artist's Impression of the entrance lane

3.4 PLACEMAKING & CHARACTER AREAS

Rural Lane

The winding geometry of the spine road helps to keep traffic speeds low whilst the design of the lane features a shared surface approx 5.0 meters wide with planted verges on either side which reinforce a landscaped rural feel. As part of the overall speed management, the lane features horizontal narrowings at regular intervals which alternate from one side to the other. These narrowings are marked by oak bollards. The boundary treatments to the houses fronting onto the rural lane will generally have a picket fence and hedge keeping the rural theme and be positioned with a strong and consistent line & setback.





Artist's Impression of the rural lane

3.4 PLACEMAKING & CHARACTER AREAS

The Green

This is the dominant central space within the housing layout, featuring a green space to both north and south of the spine road. To the south a new pond is proposed, whilst to the north there will be a pedestrian link past the mature trees and existing ponds onwards into the ecology area. Six houses overlook this attractive space and the signature material is white weatherboarding with a low boundary wall of local ragstone fronting the plots surrounding the green. The character of the green is strongly influenced by the presence of mature trees to both the north and south which will help it to have a sheltered and mature character from an early stage.



PLACEMAKING & CHARACTER AREAS 3.4



Artist's Impression of the central green

3.4 PLACEMAKING & CHARACTER AREAS

Farmyard

A cluster of 7 houses are united with a common orientation to form an enclosed rectilinear spaced-surface courtyard space. The road alignment through this space is staggered so as to reduce vehicle speeds and contain vistas. The grouping is further reinforced and united with the use of a simple palette of black timber weatherboarding and slate roofs on these seven houses. In contrast with other parts of the layout the on plot parking here is set on the strong building line (rather than being set back) Front the centre of this space a small glimpse is possible to the mature trees in the distance on the western boundary.



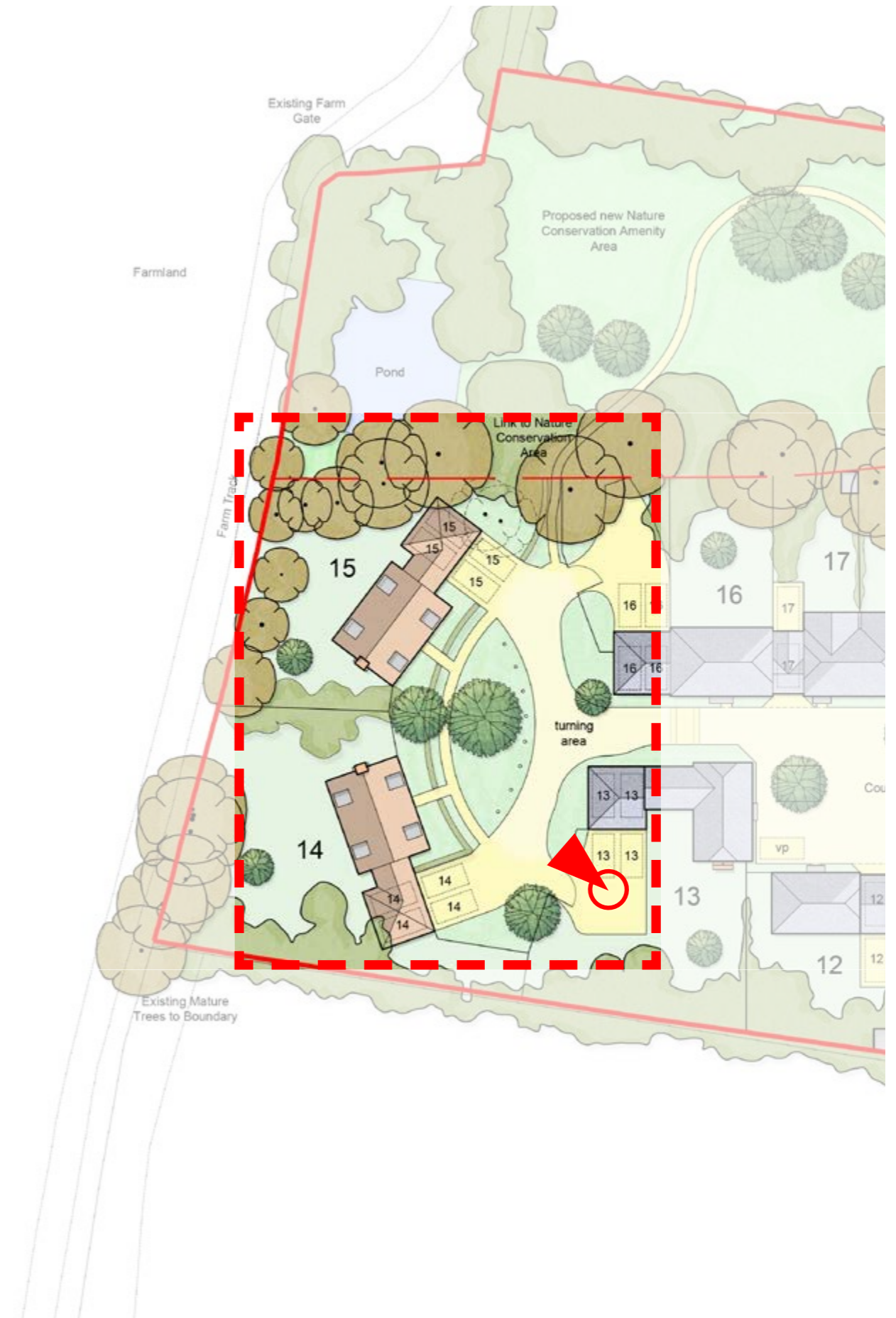
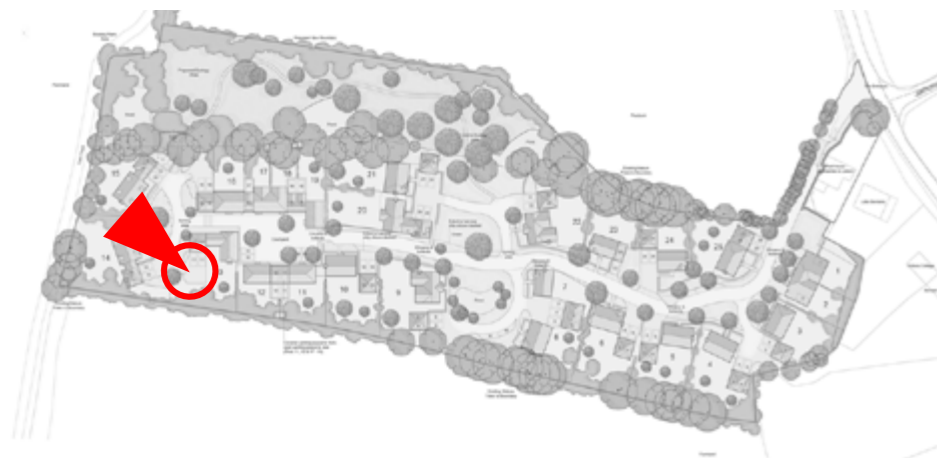


Artist's Impression of the farm yard

3.4 PLACEMAKING & CHARACTER AREAS

Western End

A pair of large detached family homes on generous plots form the termination of the site and its lowest density area. The gap between them allows important views through to the mature trees on the western site boundary. The houses are slightly more formal in character and overlook an attractive small green. The spine road splits into two drives at this point allowing for the turning of service vehicles.



PLACEMAKING & CHARACTER AREAS 3.4



Artist's Impression of the western end

3.4 PLACEMAKING & CHARACTER AREAS

Ecology Area

This area currently forms part of the arable field to the north but will be fenced off separately as part of these proposals and a scheme of landscaping and planting will be developed by the project ecologist which will be best suited to gradually returning it to a more natural character, supporting habitats of relevant species. The vision is for a low maintenance traditional meadow with some wetland plantings around the existing ponds and in the shade of the mature trees. The three ponds on the northern boundary of the scrap Yard site which will benefit from the creation of the ecology area forming a buffer around them. This part of the site will form a very attractive walk accessible from the housing area to the south.





Artist's Impression of the ecology area

3.4 PLACEMAKING, CHARACTER AREAS & EXAMPLES OF HOUSE DESIGNS



ARCHITECTURE, MATERIALS & CHARACTER 3.5

As part of the consultation process with the Local Authority, the applicant has set out a vision for a high quality residential scheme with traditional building materials characteristic of this part of Kent. As part of this, the client has undertaken to provide building materials within the Upper Quartile value range.

Specific materials and products are set out here including brick, tile hanging, and weather boarding. We feel the placement of these building materials needs to have some logic in the layout and spaces and the diagram illustrated here sets out our intentions for where each materials will dominate individual areas and support the site layout concept.



3.6 SUSTAINABILITY

The current proposals make great use of a brownfield site, enabling its clean-up and removal of contamination. The key benefits of the proposals are as follows;

Brownfield site re-use

- Site Clean-up and removal of contamination
- Creation of a new ecology area from part of an arable field.
- Reduction in surface water run-off
- Enabling improvements to a Listed Building



ACCOMMODATION 04

4.1 ACCOMMODATION: SCALE | MIX | TENURE

Schedule of Accommodation

The Accommodation Schedule showing a full breakdown of the proposal is set out here. It shows a mix of family housing from 3 to 5 bedrooms with generous space standards.

Wealden Homes Proposed Residential Development Land at Bentletts Scrap yard, Claygate Road, Collier Street, Laddingford, Kent Schedule of Accommodation CLAGUE ARCHITECTS										
UNIT	House / FOG / Apartment	D / SD / T / A / FOG	Height	BEDS	SQ. FT.	SQ. M.	CAR PARKING REQUIREMENTS*	Car Parking Achieved		
								Surface	Garage	Barns
1	House	SD	2	3	1030	95.7	2	1	0	1
2	House	SD	2	3	1030	95.7	2	1	0	1
3	House	D	2	4	1600	148.6	4	2	0	2
4	House	D	2	4	1780	165.4	4	2	0	2
5	House	D	2	4	1600	148.6	4	2	0	2
6	House	D	2	4	1600	148.6	4	2	0	2
7	House	D	2	3	2115	196.5	2	1	0	1
8	House	D	2	4	1780	165.4	4	2	0	2
9	House	D	2	5	2160	200.7	4	2	0	2
10	House	D	2	4	1600	148.6	4	2	0	2
11	House	D	2	3	1200	111.5	2	1	0	1
12	House	D	2	3	1200	111.5	2	1	0	1
13	House	D	2	4	1770	164.4	4	2	0	2
14	House	D	2	5	2445	227.1	4	2	2	0
15	House	D	2	5	2445	227.1	4	2	2	0
16	House	D	2	4	1600	148.6	4	2	0	2
17	House	SD	2	3	1060	98.5	2	1	0	1
18	House	SD	2	3	1060	98.5	2	1	0	1
19	House	D	2	3	1200	111.5	2	1	0	1
20	House	D	2	5	2410	223.9	4	2	2	0
21	House	D	2	4	1780	165.4	4	2	0	2
22	House	D	2	5	2175	202.1	4	2	0	2
23	House	D	2	3	1215	112.9	2	1	0	1
24	House	D	2	4	1430	132.9	4	2	0	2
25	House	D	2	4	1600	148.6	4	2	0	2
25	TOTALS			96	40885	3798	82	41	6	35
Additional Visitor Parking (0.2 spaces per unit)							5			
Total Target number of Parking Spaces							87			

CONCLUSION 05

5.1 CONCLUSION

The Borough Council urgently needs new housing sites to boost a seriously diminished 5 year land supply and this non-conforming brownfield site will assist to this end. The removal of HGV's will bring about a massive environmental improvement to the site and the surrounding country lanes which will result in a betterment of the quality of life for local residents.

It is clear that a well-designed residential scheme as proposed is far more attractive than a scrap yard and that the quality of the environment will be enhanced. The scheme is well set out in terms of its layout and details with a traditional Kentish architectural language which will help the proposals fit comfortably into this rural setting.

Much consultation has taken place with the parish and local authority, particularly with regards to quantum and design, to ensure the current proposals strike an appropriate balance between the efficient re-use of this brownfield site whilst remaining appropriate to the rural context.

We trust this consultation has been worthwhile and that officers will support this high quality residential scheme as a sensible re-use of this site.

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