



**Great Grovehurst Farm,
Sittingbourne,**

**Outline Planning
Application: for housing
development and prior
brickearth extraction**

Design and Access
Statement

April 2018

G H DEAN & CO LTD



Tibbalds

planning and urban design

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1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This document is a Design and Access Statement (DAS) intended to support a hybrid Planning Application for residential development and brickearth extraction at Great Grovehurst Farm (GGF), Sittingbourne.

1.1.2 This design and access statement is one of a suite of documents that accompany the Planning Application. These documents include:

- Design & Access Statement (this document);
- Planning Statement;
- Land at North West, Sittingbourne Development Framework (prepare in conjunction with other landowners and developers)
- Preliminary Ecological Assessment (Ecosulis), Update Ecological Site Walkover January 2018
- Habitat Regulations Screening Report Land at North West Sittingbourne (MU 1), January 2018
- GCN Surveys (Ecosulis 2016)
- Bat activity Surveys / Bat Emergence/Swarming Survey (2015)
- Built Heritage Assessment December 2013, updated October 2017
- Archaeological Assessment (revised 2012) and Method Statement for an Archaeological Evaluation 2015, updated October 2017
- Arboricultural Report (2016)
- Environmental Noise and Vibration assessment January 2018

- Mineral Report (final 2015) and Brickearth Extraction Drawings
- Ground Investigation Report (2013)
- Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy
- Transport Impact Assessment
- Air Quality Assessment August 2017

1.1.3 The GGF site forms part of a larger allocation of land for mixed use development at North West, Sittingbourne contained in Policy MU1 of the Swale Borough Local Plan 2031.

1.1.4 Apart from the land occupied by the electricity substation, the site is owned by G H Dean & Co Ltd and extends to 4.86 ha.

1.1.5 The site is proposed for residential development for about 110 dwellings.

1.1.6 Brickearth located within the site is intended to be extracted prior to housing development in accordance with policies of the adopted Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

1.2 The Project Team

1.2.1 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of the owner of the site, GH Dean & Company Ltd and supported by a consultant team as follows:

- Paul Sharpe Associates LLP - Planning
- Tibbalds Planning & Urban Design Ltd - Master Planning
- PFA Consulting - Highways, Transportation & Infrastructure

The purpose of the Design and Access Statement

1.1.7 The purpose of this Design and Access Statement is to explain the design thinking behind the planning application for the Great Grovehurst Farm site. It sets out the design principles that have informed the proposal and how access issues have been dealt with.

1.1.8 The current planning application is founded on the site's allocation within the Land at North West Sittingbourne and on the draft Development Framework 2018.

- CGMS - Heritage
- Ecosulis - Ecology
- Sharps Redmore - Acoustics
- Aecom - Air Quality
- Lloydbore - Arboriculture
- RPC Land + New Homes - Viability

1.3 Structure of the document

1.3.1 The document is structured as follows:

- **Section 1 - Introduction:** Introduces the document and explains the purpose of the DAS.
- **Section 2 - Site analysis:** Describes the site and its context based on site visits, findings from specialist reports and pre-application discussions with Officers at Swale BC, Kent Highway Authority and Kent Mineral Authority.
- **Section 3 - Planning policy context:** Sets out the relevant planning policy context.
- **Section 4 - Development Framework:** Explains the overall concept of the North West Sittingbourne allocation and sets out the masterplan and principles that underpin the design of the development proposed for the site.
- **Section 5 - Site specific design principles:** Explains the design approach for the site based on good urban design guidance, and demonstrates the principles that underpin the layout and proposals.



Figure 1.1: View from the site looking north onto Swale Way

N.B. Photographs showing the former agricultural buildings on the site have been used as they provide an indicator against which to visualise new housing development.



Figure 1.2: View from the site onto tree hedge along Grovehurst Road



Figure 1.3: View into the site looking west

2 Site Analysis

2.1 Wider context

2.1.1 The GGF site is located on the northern edge of Sittingbourne in close proximity to the A249.

2.1.2 The site forms part of the Land at North West Sittingbourne allocation in the Swale Borough Local Plan 2031.

2.1.3 It forms the edge of Sittingbourne’s residential development within the suburb of Grovehurst and is 10/12minutes away by bus and car from Sittingbourne town centre and its railway station, and within easy walking distance of Kemsley rail halt.

2.1.4 Around the site:

- To the west across Grovehurst Road is agricultural land part of the NW Sittingbourne allocation assigned for informal open space uses. Further south within the NW Sittingbourne allocation is the proposed housing area with space reserved for a new primary and a new secondary school.
- To the north across Swale Way is undeveloped land reserved for improvements to the Grovehurst junction of Swale Way, Grovehurst Road and the A249. Further north is Nicholls Transport, a commercial transport and logistics yard.
- To the east across the Sittingbourne - Sheerness railway lies the residential area of Kemsley with a community centre, primary school and few small corner shops .
- To the south lies Godwin Close/Danes Mead residential estate on the edge of the Grovehurst neighbourhood with some shops at the Bramblefield Lane cross roads and further south a health centre and Kemsley rail halt.

KEY

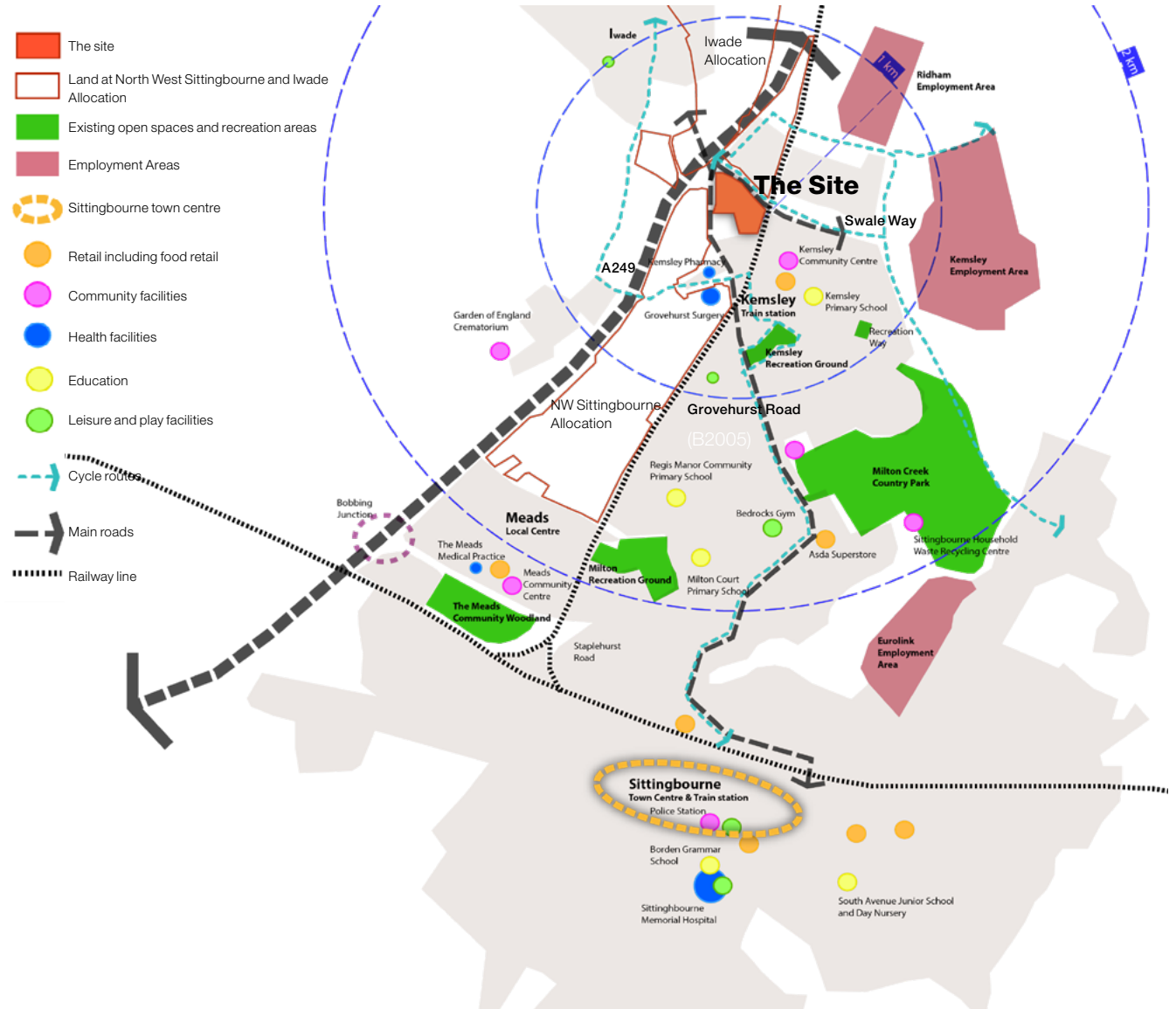


Figure 2.1: Site location plan

2.2 Development Framework

2.2.1 Policy MU1 of the Swale Borough Local Plan 2031 allocates an area to the north west of Sittingbourne for the delivery of mixed-uses, about 1,500 new houses, primary and secondary schools and open spaces with a local countryside gap between Sittingbourne and Iwade.

2.2.2 Land owners and developers involved in the delivery of the Land at North West Sittingbourne, have commissioned a Development Framework which is currently in draft stage and being prepared in consultation with Swale Borough Council, consultees and the local community. This document however, is intended as an informal document that will guide planning applications but will not be formally adopted by the Council as a Supplementary Planning Document.

2.2.3 The purpose of the Development Framework is to provide a strategic overview of the component sites and to set overarching design principles.

2.2.4 The Draft Development Framework has been used as the foundation for the development of this Design and Access Statement and for the preparation of the Planning Application for residential development at the GGF site.

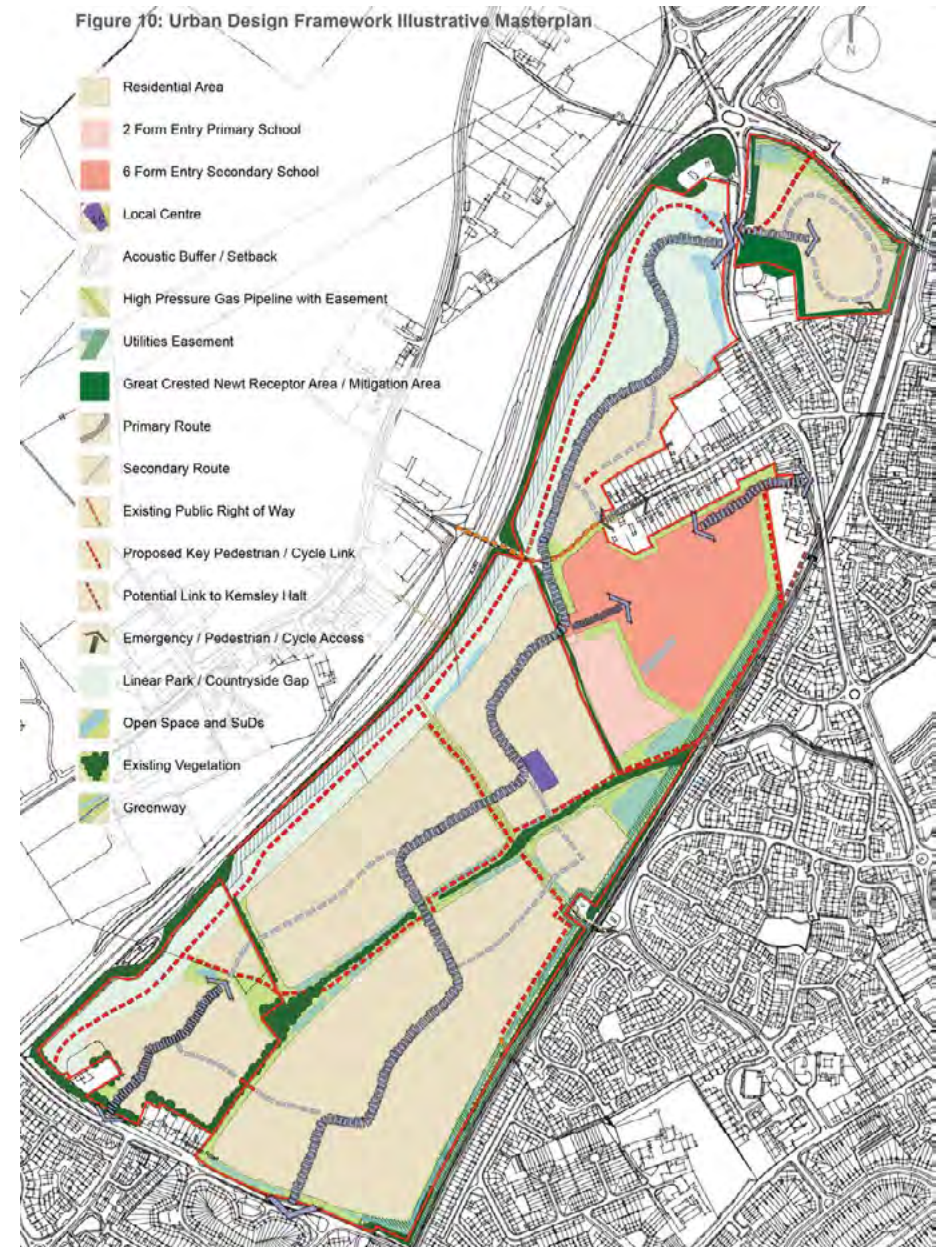


Figure 2.2 Extract from Draft Development Framework - UD Framework

N.B. Photographs showing the former agricultural buildings on the site have been used as they provide an indicator against which to visualise new housing development.

2.3 The site

2.3.1 The GGF site is enclosed by Swale Way to the north; Grovehurst Road (B2005) to the west; the Sittingbourne-Sheerness railway line to the east and the Godwin Close/ Danes Mead estate to the south.

2.3.2 Great Grovehurst Farmhouse is a listed building adjoining the site to the south from which the site is separated by a circa 2.5/2.8m high boundary wall (garden wall).

2.3.3 There are two existing points of vehicular access to the site from Grovehurst Road, ie to the former farmyard and a field access located between the latter and the Grovehurst Junction. Another means of access is potentially available via Godwin Close.

2.3.4 Generally, the site is down to arable use, the former farmyard buildings fronting Grovehurst Road and the single dwelling (all shown in photos) having been demolished recently.

2.3.5 The site is not the subject of any statutory designation for its landscape or wildlife qualities.

2.3.6 Ground conditions indicate that ground water percolation is poor; that there are a small number of localized areas of ground contamination and that the site is overlain with brickearth deposits.



Figure 2.3: The site - plan

2.4 Archaeology and Heritage

2.4.1 CGMS Ltd have advised on both archaeology and heritage issues. For archaeology, a desk based assessment was prepared followed by field evaluation (in liaison with the County Archaeologist) involving 17 trial trenches across the site.

2.4.2 The evaluation identified a low level of archaeology, predominantly of the Prehistoric period and mainly focussed in the SE corner of the site. Several ditches were identified in this area, some Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age but the majority can only be described as Prehistoric because of limited and damaged artefacts. Ploughing has damaged these shallow remains.

2.4.3 The system of ditches in the far eastern part of the site indicates a re-establishment of a boundary in the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age but the lack of domestic artefacts on the rest of the site suggests that any Prehistoric settlement lies outside the site.

2.4.4 Further archaeological investigation may be required.

2.4.5 Great Grovehurst Farmhouse is a Grade II listed building located south west of the site. The building provides architectural significance associated with the Georgian period and its walled garden with substantial trees create a green setting for the buildings and year round screening from the GGF site.

2.4.6 CGMS have undertaken a Heritage Impact Assessment examining, in particular, the potential impact of development on the setting of this heritage asset. In their view, "...whilst the development is capable of affecting Great

Grovehurst Farmhouse's setting or the appreciation of its significance this can be considered to be negligible in the spectrum of less than substantial harm."

2.4.7 A general reduction in ground level of about 600mm following brickearth extraction would further mitigate the potential impact of new development on the listed building and its setting.

2.4.8 The GGF site and Great Grovehurst Farmhouse are separated by a 2.5-2.8 metre red brick wall to the north and east which provides lower level screening to the building. The inappropriate leylandii on the southern and western boundaries of the GGF site are likely to be replaced by indigenous species providing a more diverse habitat as well as visual screening.



Figure 2.4: Great Grovehurst Farmhouse listed building and its setting



Figure 2.5: Great Grovehurst Farmhouse with its garden wall



Figure 2.6: Garden wall with tree screening

2.5 Ecology

2.5.1 Ecology surveys carried out by Ecosulis have highlighted the presence of Great Crested Newts (GCN) on the site. These amphibians are likely to originate and come to the site from nearby ponds.

2.5.2 Initial assessment of the impact of brickearth extraction and housing development on GCN identifies the need to provide about 1.3 ha of terrestrial habitat in mitigation of that impact as well as an appropriate short term receptor area within or near the site.

2.5.3 The receptor area will be required to accommodate GCN during the brickearth extraction/housing construction process and Ecosulis advise that part of the compensatory habitat could fulfil this role.

2.5.4 Care will be needed to integrate the GCN removal/GCN mitigation habitat creation/brickearth extraction/house building, and an appropriate licence will be required from Natural England.

2.5.5 Figure 2.12: Constraints plan takes account of these proposals for GCN translocation / reception and terrestrial habitat mitigation all of which will need to be kept in place throughout the extraction/house building process.

2.6 Arboricultural

2.6.1 Lloydbore's arboricultural report categorised all trees on site as C grade trees of low quality and value (particularly leylandii) which should not pose a constraint to development.

2.6.2 Off site trees and vegetation are identified as providing visual and acoustic screening from roads and

nearby properties and Lloydbore's recommendation is that this screening could – subject to ecological constraints – be supplemented with additional on-site planting.

2.7 Utilities

2.7.1 There are a number of utility structures located within the site, these include:

- 132KV overhead cables running along the northern part of the site. These will require an easement area of 20/25 metres to each side.
- Gas pipes and easement areas located along the east boundary and north east corner of the site. Maintenance access to this infrastructure will be required.
- An electricity sub station north of the existing access into the redundant farmyard. The electricity substation would most likely be re-located to a more suitable position within the new housing area. Alternatively, it would require access and an easement area of approximate 6 meters to each side.

2.7.2 Neither easement is considered to overly constrain brickearth extraction or potential housing development.

2.8 Noise and vibration

2.8.1 Sharps Redmore Partnership have undertaken an environmental noise assessment of the site and have developed a design approach to be used as a guide for achieving acceptable levels of noise within the development.

2.8.2 The following mitigation measures will be incorporated into the scheme:

- The use of a landscaped buffer zone on the northern part of the site to maximise the distance of the proposed residential properties from Swale Way.
- Using the built form of the development to provide acoustic screening to the site and garden areas.
- Use of an acoustic fence along the rear gardens of the properties closest to the rail line.

2.8.3 The above measures will ensure the number of properties where windows have to be closed to achieve acceptable internal noise levels are kept to a minimum. Where it is necessary for windows to be closed to achieve attenuation an alternative means of ventilation will be provided.

2.9 Brickearth

2.9.1 The Kent Minerals & Waste Local Plan has introduced the blanket safeguarding of brickearth requiring its extraction before non mineral development (eg housing) can take place.

2.9.2 Wienerberger, the only brick manufacturer in the area, operates the Smeed Dean brickworks located only 3 km from the site along Swale Way. Wienerberger has agreed to remove the brickearth from the GGF site prior to housing development. Officers of Swale BC and KCC have agreed that a single planning application for housing development could be conditioned to require the prior extraction of the brickearth.

2.9.3 Brickearth cannot be worked in wet conditions and therefore it is normally extracted over a limited period during July/August each year. At GGF, Wienerberger has agreed to extract the brickearth in one season thereby limiting the environmental impact of the works on the local neighbourhood. However, a contingency plan may be required in the event of bad weather.

2.9.4 Vehicular access for the brickearth extraction would utilize the existing farmyard access off Grovehurst Road (there would be no extraction access via Godwin Close or Danes Mead). Generally, extraction would take place in an anti clockwise direction, beginning at the south east corner of the site.

2.9.5 The period between brickearth removal and housing development would be minimized thus avoiding the need for the interim restoration of the site, for example, for agriculture.

2.9.6 A GCN habitat mitigation strategy would be put in place from “before” the commencement of brickearth extraction to “after” the completion of the housing development, all in accordance with a licence from Natural England. It is anticipated that, in the short term, part of the long term habitat mitigation area can also function as a receptor area for GCN’s moved from the brickearth extraction/ housing area at the outset of the process.

2.9.7 The sequence of working could be as follows:

- Create GCN receptor area north of Great Grovehurst Farmhouse and eastward to railway including landscaping of this area if appropriate. Corridor to be 10m wide. This receptor area will become part of the long term GCN mitigation habitat of 1.3 ha. In setting this up as a receptor site minor areas of contamination can be removed under supervision by an ecologist. The area would be enclosed by exclusion fencing. Note – brickearth removal in this area is not possible.
- Remove GCN from site to receptor area through pitfall trapping under the Natural England licence method statement.
- Enclose brickearth/housing area (including any stored topsoil or demolition rubble) with exclusion fencing to prevent entry/re-entry by GCN. Note – fencing will be retained throughout construction works, i.e. until housing is complete.
- Strip topsoil from part of site and store in temporary bund to Danes Mead/ Godwin Close boundary (north of GCN corridor) to act as a temporary acoustic bund.

- Remove brickearth, working anti clockwise from SE corner to NW boundary of site.
- Periodically check that exclusion fencing is in good order.
- Construct detention basin in north west corner of site and complete the set up of the GCN mitigation habitat to the north and east boundaries including landscaping if appropriate. Note: the whole of the 1.3 ha of GCN mitigation habitat is to be put in place before commencement of house building proper.
- If necessary, relocate GCN exclusion fencing on north and east boundaries from outside to inside of the mitigation habitat areas on these two boundaries.
- Construct housing development using stored topsoil for gardens and amenity areas.
- Retain and maintain exclusion fencing throughout brickearth extraction/ house construction processes.
- Following completion of dwellings remove all exclusion fencing and monitor mitigation habitat for 2/3 years.

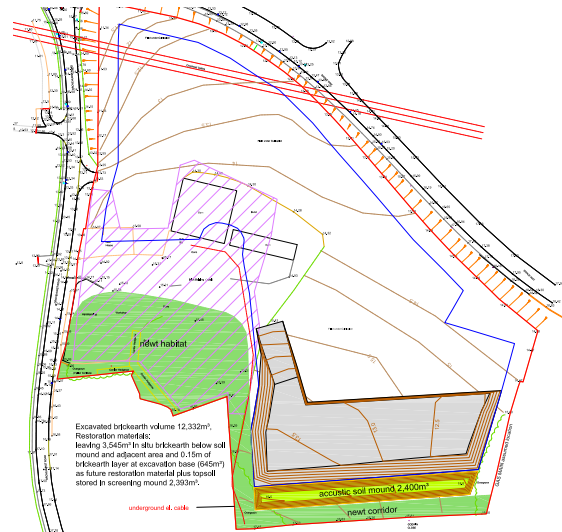
2.9.8 It is anticipated that the whole process from the commencement of initial topsoil stripping to the final extraction of brickearth (in the sequence above), will take place during a single summer season i.e. 10-12 weeks.

2.9.9 Hours of working will probably be limited by condition.

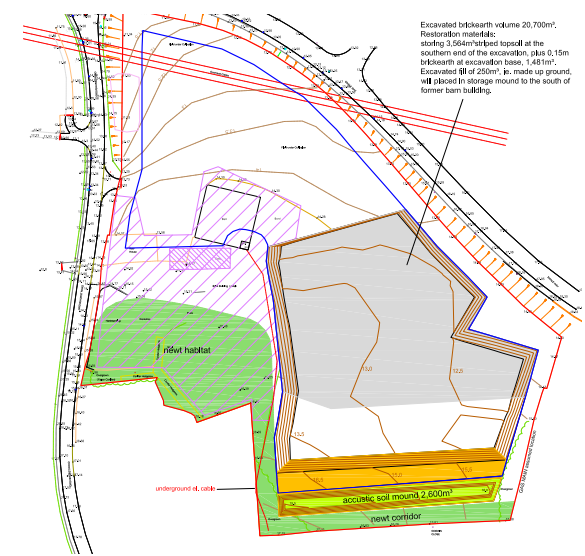
2.9.10 Measures will be required to suppress dust and to prevent mud being carried onto Grovehurst Road itself. It is anticipated that lorries will use Grovehurst Road and Swale Way to gain access to and from the brickworks.

2.9.11 Final site levels after brick earth extraction can be assumed to be approximately 600mm lower than existing site levels.

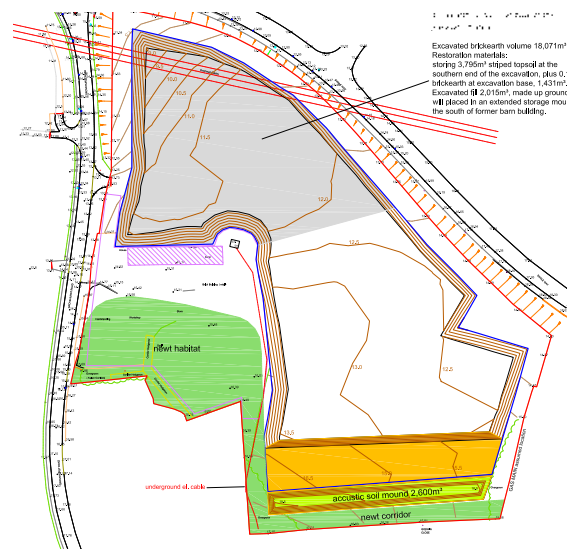
Phase 1



Phase 2



Phase 3



KEY

- Extraction limit
- Excavation area
- Soil storage screening mound
- Made ground
- Restoration soils storage area

Figure 2.7: Phases of brickearth excavation -Wienerberger

N.B. Photographs showing the former agricultural buildings on the site have been used as they provide an indicator against which to visualise new housing development.

2.10 Views

2.10.1 Tibbalds have undertaken an analysis of local views from the Govehurst junction and Grovehurst Road to establish to what extent the GGF site and the proposed development will be visible from this entry point into Sittingbourne. In understanding these views, it must be noted that:

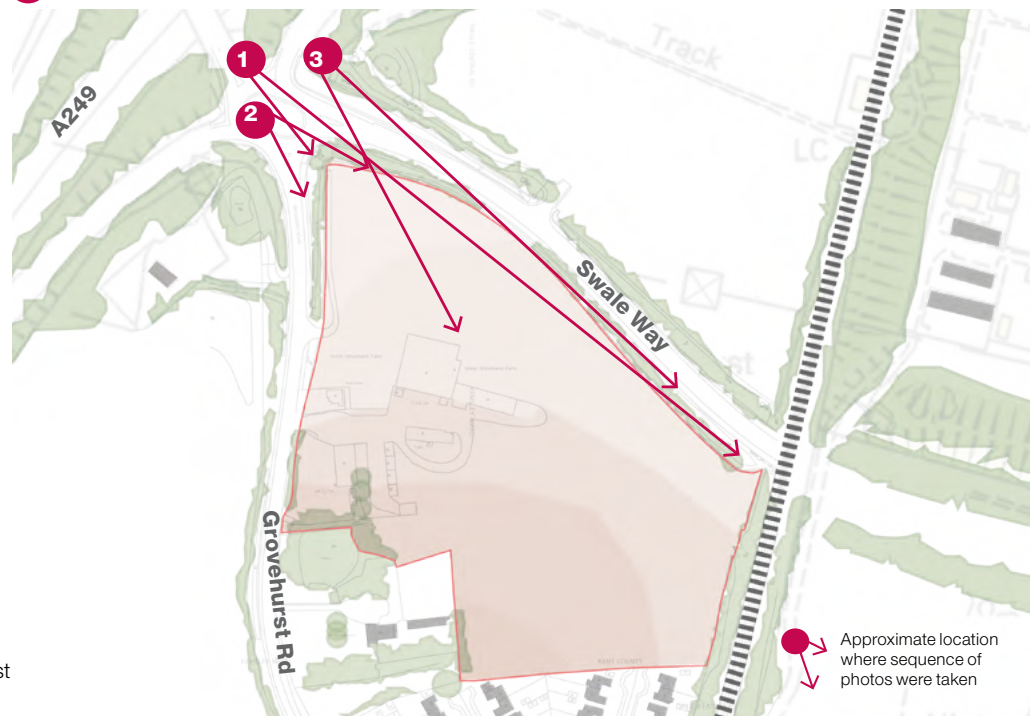
- GGF site slopes down to the north west and in this area the site sits at approximate 5 metres below the level of the Grovehurst junction
- Towards the south along Grovehurst Road, this difference in levels reduces and after 80/90 metres from the western corner, the site sits at the same level as the road.
- Towards the north east following Swale Way, the 5 metres difference in level reduces and after 90/100 metres the site reaches the same level as Swale Way. However, this difference in levels increases again after approximately 60 metres and further east the site sits at about 4 metres below Swale Way.

2.10.2 This level difference at the north west corner of the site and the off-site vegetation along the site boundary create a discontinuous visual and acoustic screen to the site from Grovehurst junction, Grovehurst Road and Swale Way.

2.10.3 The photographs and photo-montages show that the north eastern corner is the most visible part of the



Figure 2.8: Views from Grovehurst junction



site, particularly when approaching Swale Way from the Grovehurst junction. This visibility is possible because of the gaps in off-site vegetation along Swale Way.

2.10.4 From Grovehurst junction and the north of Grovehurst Road, it is only possible to get some glimpses of the site and the top of the existing farm buildings.

2.10.5 Further south along Grovehurst Road it is possible to see a wider area of the site at the location of the existing access. This is due to the gap in the vegetation and the site being at a similar level to the road.

2.10.6 This analysis concentrates on local views as no views of the site were identified from the nearby areas of Iwade and Kemsley. The likely general reduction in site levels of about 600mm will tend to reinforce the visually discrete nature of the site.

2.10.7 Preliminary assessment of the impact of additional traffic from local plan allocations, carried out as part of the EIP process indicates that an Interim Improvement Scheme for the Grovehurst Junction will be required before the end of the Plan period and a more comprehensive remodelling of the junction thereafter.

2.10.8 It is likely therefore that views approaching the site from the strategic highway network will change. However, although the comprehensive remodelling of the junction is likely to take place on safeguarded land on the north side of Swale Way and approach viewpoints are likely to move further from the side, nevertheless the sequence of views 1-3 is likely to remain representative.

N.B. Photographs showing the former agricultural buildings on the site have been used as they provide an indicator against which to visualise new housing development.

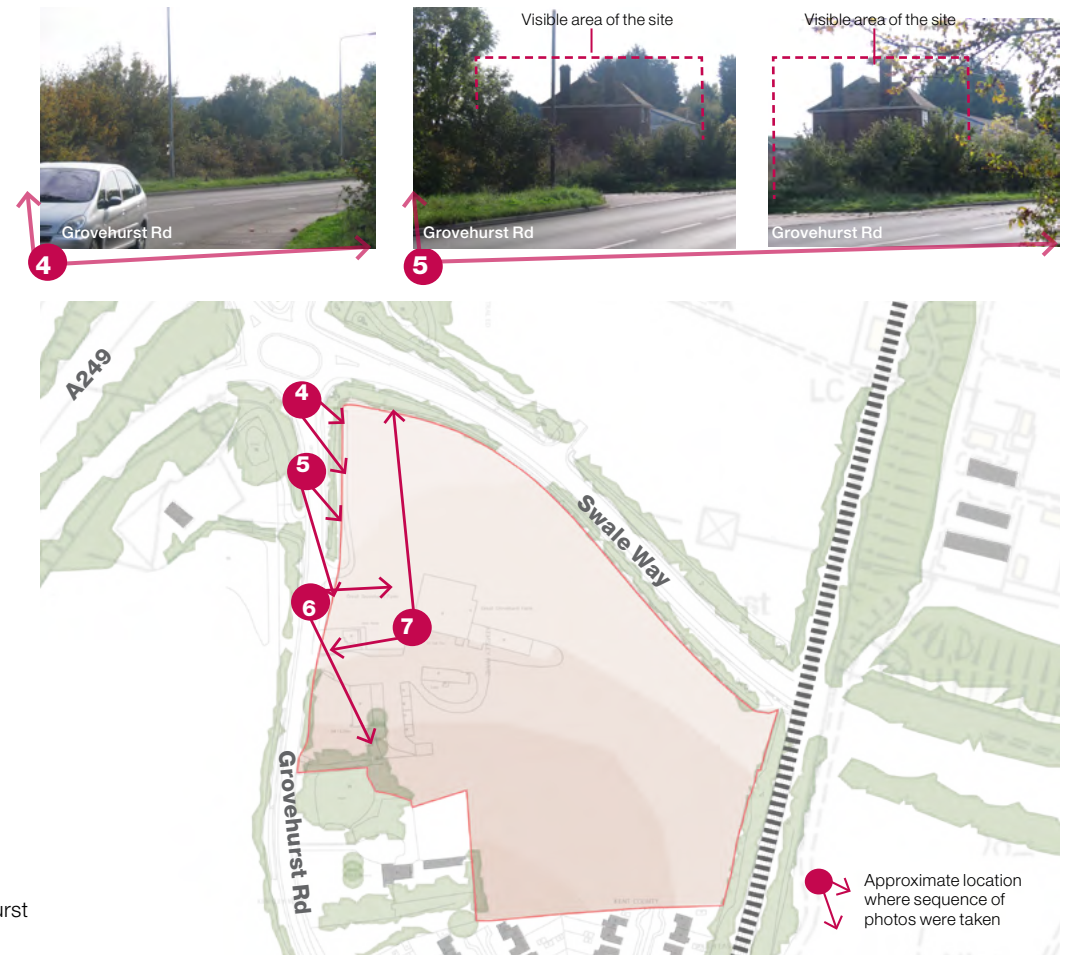
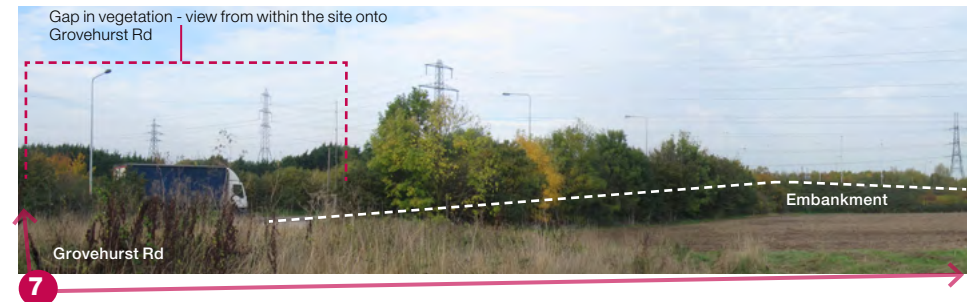


Figure 2.9: Views from Grovehurst Road



2.11 Character influences

2.11.1 An assessment of some of the larger new residential developments on the former edges of Sittingbourne provide some positive examples of good design that could be used with benefit at GGF.

They provide simple clear “rules” that set out a logical structure and hierarchy of spaces and routes.

- Defining the entrance into developments with:
 - buildings of larger mass/height than the rest of the development emphasising the access
 - landscape structures carefully designed with different layers of planting providing variations in height and width
 - a combination of both built form and landscape structures

- Providing a variety of streets and built form that respond to different areas of the development
 - traditional type of streets are found at the entrance of developments, enclosed by more continuous frontages of taller (3+ storey) buildings.
 - streets become more informal and frontages more fragmented as the development abuts open land or the countryside

- Creating a green network of open spaces with:
 - open spaces overlooked by development
 - trees and planting as important and constant features of both open spaces and the overall development
 - subtle boundary treatments adding to the soft green character of the development



Roofs change direction when addressing a corner / space



Green character



Entrance defined by larger buildings



2 storey buildings with dormer windows



Soft boundary treatments



Entrance defined by landscape structures



Soft boundary treatments



Shared surface streets with soft boundary treatments



Entrance defined by a combination of buildings and landscape structures



Frontages have larger gaps as they adjoin open land and the countryside



Figure 2.10: Images of local edge of town developments and gateways

2.12 Site constraints

2.12.1 Development constraints identified at the GGF site include:

- Noise - a stand off/buffer would be needed along both Swale Way and Great Grovehurst Road to meet acceptable levels of noise.
- Utilities - easement areas would be required for access and maintenance purpose for the utility structures located on site: overhead cables, gas pipe and electricity substation.
- Brickearth - brickearth on site would need to be removed prior to housebuilding. This is likely to result in site level changes between areas of brickearth extraction and areas left untouched. It is assumed that final site levels after brick earth extraction will be approximately 600mm lower than existing site levels.
- Newts - Great Crested Newt (GCN) are present on site, and 1.3ha of newt habitat would be needed to mitigate the impact of the development (and the brickearth extraction) on their terrestrial habitat.
- Heritage - improved natural screening would be required to the north and east of Great Grovehurst Farmhouse following the removal of the existing incongruous leylandii to mitigate the impact of new development on the setting of the listed building.
- Topography - the site slopes down to the north-west corner below the level of adjacent roads. This is the only possible location for a sustainable surface water drainage facility and the overhead electricity cables preclude development. This makes the creation of a positive first impression by built development more challenging due to the limited potential for development in this corner of the site.

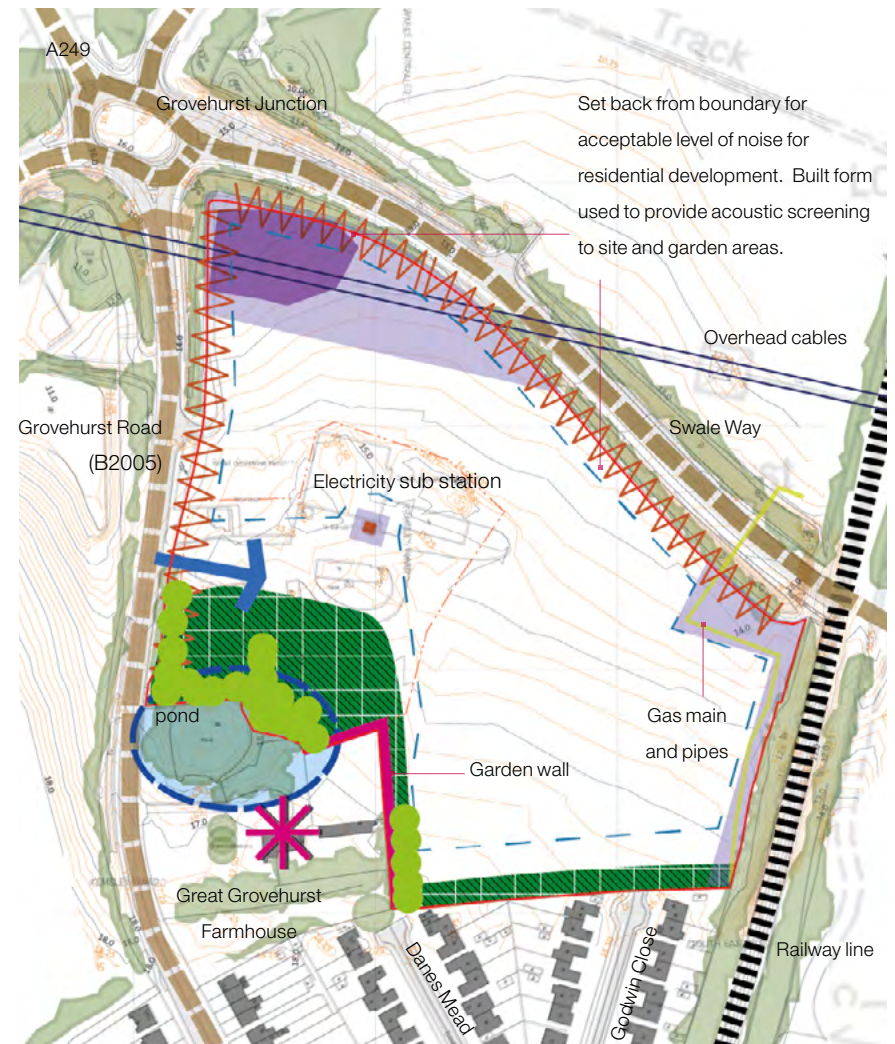
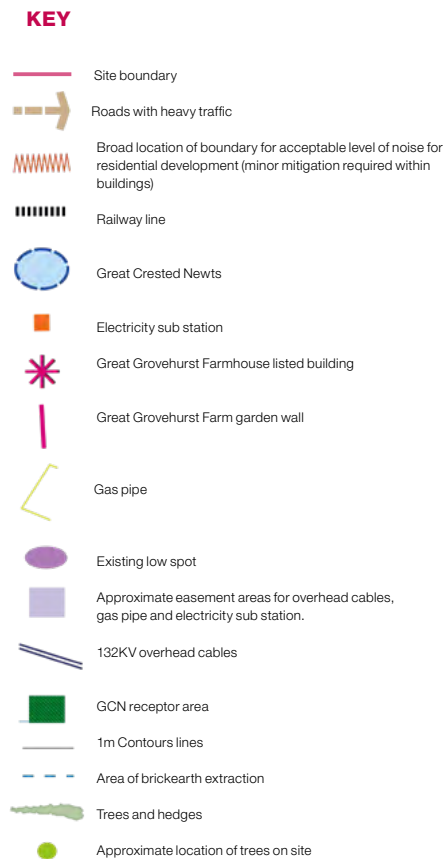


Figure 2.11: Constraints Plan



Figure 2.12: Heavy traffic along SNRR Swale Way



Figure 2.13: 132KV overhead cables cross the north-west corner of the site

2.13 Site opportunities

2.13.1 Despite constraints, the site has the potential to deliver a positive development by:

- addressing (as much as possible) an important gateway into Sittingbourne - there is an opportunity to provide a gateway feature probably through landscape rather than buildings.
- creating a green envelop around development - multifunctional areas (open space, water attenuation, GCN mitigation, noise buffer, easement area etc.) that, while adding a “green” context to the development, will also provide habitat corridors, visual screening and a buffer from peripheral transport noise sources.
- providing new links - connecting the new NW Sittingbourne residential area with the developing Ridham/Kemsley employment area, and connecting with Godwin Close /Grovehurst area to the south.
- linking with the existing pedestrian / cycle network - there is the potential to create a new cycle route through the site to connect the rest of North West Sittingbourne with the Ridham/Kemsley employment area.
- creating a landmark frontage - there is the potential for a landmark frontage to Grovehurst Road to address the main entrance into the site.
- extending existing frontages - new development along the railway line has the potential to provide an extended frontage to Godwin Close and create a visual and physical link with development to the south of the site.

KEY

	Site levels
	Potential for main entrance to be in broadly same location as existing access to farmyard
	Existing cycle routes
	Potential for new pedestrian and cycle links
	Potential for a green buffer around development
	Opportunity for gateway entrance into development
	Potential for landmark frontage at entrance to development and potential for extending Godwin Close frontage
	Views
	Potential for a well connected network of streets

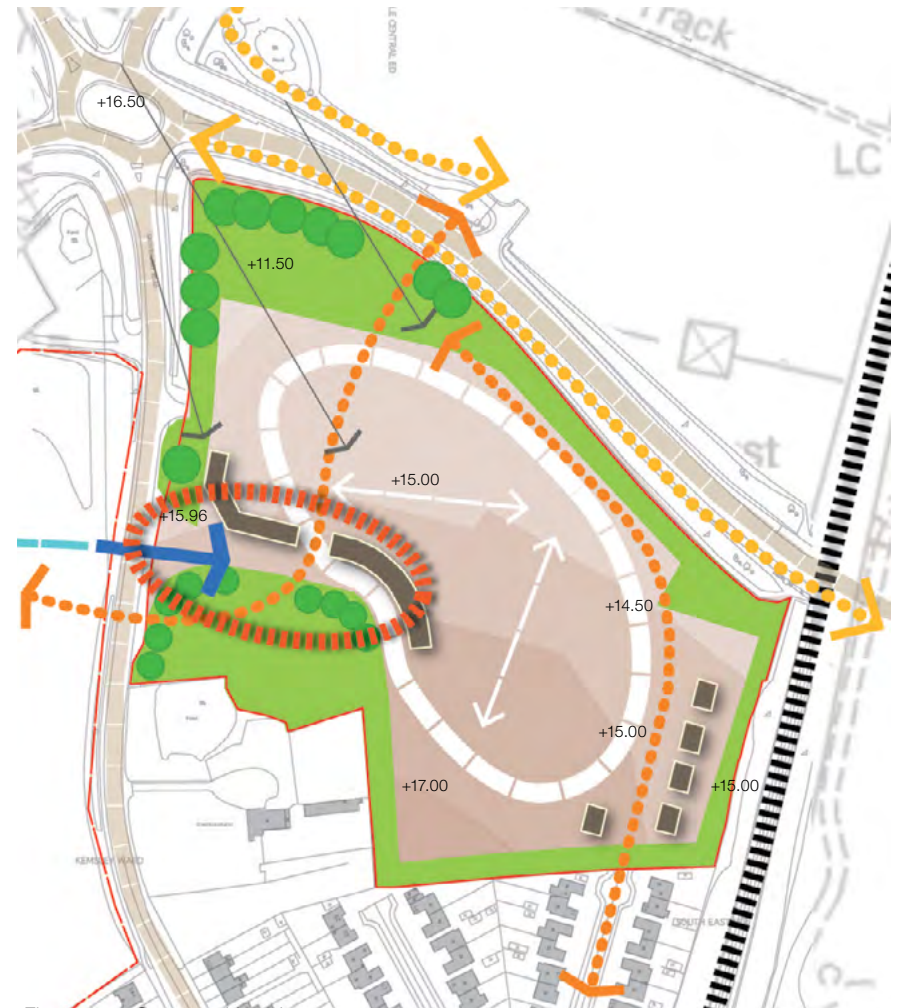


Figure 2.14: Opportunities plan



Figure 2.15: Opportunity for a landmark frontage addressing the entrance into the development

3 Planning policy context

3.1 Planning policy context

3.1.1 Land at Great Grovehurst Farm to the north of Swale Way has already been developed by Nicholls Transport for employment use as a logistics hub. This Design and Access Statement is part of the process of bringing forward the remainder of the GGF site (south of Swale Way) for housing.

3.1.2 Policy MU1 states as follows:-

Policy MU1

Land at north-west Sittingbourne

Planning permission will be granted for mixed uses on land at North West Sittingbourne, as shown on the Proposals Map and will comprise a minimum of 1,500 dwellings, community facilities and structural landscaping and open space adjacent the A249. Development proposals will:

- 1. Be in accordance with a Masterplan/Development brief prepared by the landowners/developers involved in the delivery of the allocation, in consultation with the Borough Council and which reflects the requirements of this policy;*
- 2. Be in accordance with Policy CP4 and in particular, achieve an integrated landscape strategy to provide a minimum of 22 ha natural and semi-natural greenspace and other open space as a continuous buffer along the A249 that will form part of the important local countryside gap between Sittingbourne and Bobbing/Iwade in accordance with Policy DM25 and Policy New A17 for Iwade, as well as contributing toward an appropriate link between the two via Bramblefield Lane/old Sheppey Way. This area will link to a network of green spaces*

and corridors throughout the allocation to achieve open space provision;

- 3. Ensure that, through both on and off site measures, any significant adverse impacts on European sites through recreational pressure will be mitigated in accordance with Policies CP7 and DM28, including a financial contribution towards the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy;*
- 4. Provide on-site flood mitigation measures;*
- 5. Integrate heritage assets, having regard to their setting;*
- 6. Be accompanied by a Health Impact Assessment in accordance with Policy CP5;*
- 7. Be supported by a transport assessment and access strategy in the Masterplan /development brief to determine the need and timing for improvements to the transport network and phasing of development and address the following:
 - a. The scale, nature and timing of interim improvements at Grovehurst Road/A249 junction and if necessary at the Bobbing/A249 junction;*
 - b. Identification of vehicular access points from Quinton Road and Grovehurst Road and mitigation of traffic impacts on the local road network and existing neighbourhoods by defining an appropriate quantum of development relative to these access points;*
 - c. The timing of any necessary off site highway improvements relative to the phasing of development;**

d. Identification of improvements to the public transport network between the site and Sittingbourne;

e. Encouragement of increased rail use from Kemsley Halt through enhancement of the facilities there and public pedestrian and cycle links;

f. Secure safe and attractive pedestrian and cycle links within the development and to the adjacent network including links to Iwade over the A249;

g. Have regard to the availability of land to the north of Swale Way already safeguarded for the remodelling of the A249/Grovehurst Road junction and should the mitigation design require it, within any other relevant allocation.

- 8. Achieve a mix of housing in accordance with Policy CP3, including provision for affordable housing in accordance with Policy DM8;*
- 9. Achieve suitable means of sustainable energy production and carbon reduction measures compliant with Policy DM20;*
- 10. Secure new primary and secondary schools on site, with dual public/school use facilities (including a land reservation for its provision), to include land for artificial playing pitches; and*
- 11. Provide appropriate community facilities and other infrastructure within the site to meet the needs of future residents, including those within the Local Plan Implementation and Delivery Schedule, in particular*

those arising from primary health care, libraries and community, learning and skills services.

3.1.3 Clearly the criteria of Policy MU1 do not apply equally to each component part of the NW Sittingbourne allocation, for example the Council did not require the Nicholls depot to be the subject of a Development Framework nor a Health Impact Assessment or to satisfy other Policy criteria.

3.1.4 Most of the above policy criteria are aimed at the main body of the allocation to the west of Grovehurst Road, encompassing the two sites described as “land north of Quinton Road” and “land at Pheasant Farm, Grovehurst Road/Bramblefield Lane”.

3.1.5 The supporting text referring specifically to the GGF site identifies the following:

- Access to the site from Grovehurst Road will need to integrate with the access to land north of Quinton Road, taken through the Pheasant Farm site with a junction located on the latter site.
- Have regard to the design of and mitigation for the remodelling of the A249 / Grovehurst Road junction.
- A secondary means of access could be provided via the existing residential development to the south (Godwin Close).

3.1.6 A wide range of policies in the Local Plan are of relevance and have been given due weight.

3.1.7 At 4.86 ha, the GGF site is by far the smallest of the four component parts of the NW Sittingbourne allocation.

3.1.8 Also, with established transport infrastructure on three sides and existing residential development on the other, as the Council state in paragraph 6.6.27 of the Plan, these features act to enclose the site and detach it from the wider area.

3.1.9 Public consultation on the Development Framework in September 2016 identified relatively few local issues; an objection to emergency access via Godwin Close being the main concern.

3.1.10 The **Kent Minerals & Waste Local Plan** was adopted in July 2016. For the first time, the Plan imposes a blanket safeguarding of brickearth in Swale, located generally between Newington and Faversham. The effect of safeguarding is the requirement to extract the brickearth prior to non-mineral development which would otherwise sterilize the mineral.

3.1.11 At NW Sittingbourne, the land north of Quinton Road and land at GGF contain brickearth and the proposals for the latter site contained in this Design and Access Statement will address proposals for the prior extraction of brickearth as well as housing development.

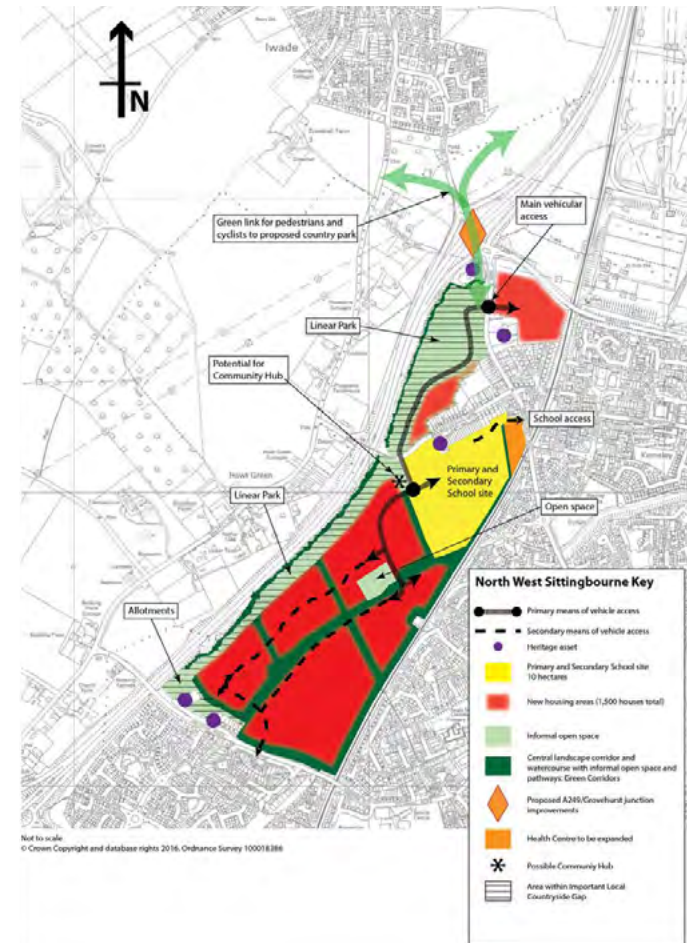


Figure 3.1: Extract from Bearing Fruits 2031: The Swale Borough Local Plan 2031 - Map 6.6.1 Development concepts at NW Sittingbourne

3.2 Consultation

Public Consultation Events

3.2.1 Public consultation events seeking the views of neighbouring residents and local Members on a Development Framework for the overall NW Sittingbourne allocation were held on 29th and 30th September 2016 at Kemsley Concert Hall and The Meads Community Centre, respectively.

3.2.2 A conceptual illustrative site plan depicted the proposals for the Great Grovehurst Farm site. The Kemsley venue was nearest to the GGF site and was well attended by c150 people including local Councillors.

3.2.3 Comments were received orally on the day, by questionnaire and later by email. General comments questioned the need for more housing in Sittingbourne; highlighted potential adverse traffic impact and stressed the need for community facilities and infrastructure generally.

3.2.4 For the GGF site, local residents from the Godwin Close/Danes Mead Estate highlighted the general character of this neighbourhood as one of bungalows for retirement and a preference for bungalows rather than town houses or flats on the adjacent GGF site. They were unhappy at the prospect of Godwin Close being opened up for pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and emergency vehicles. Likewise, they expressed concerns should Godwin Close be used by construction vehicles.

3.2.5 The GGF site is well contained by highway infrastructure and to its south by the Godwin Close/Danes Mead Estate. There will be a c10m separation distance (habitat corridor for GCN) between the existing bungalows and the new development. In addition, rear gardens of

new dwellings would be arranged (where possible) to back onto bungalows so that the separation distance between buildings would be c20m.

3.2.6 In addition, engineering advice suggests that the level of the GGF site following the extraction of brickearth will be c600mm below that existing and this will tend to further dilute the effect of new development on the Godwin Close/Danes Mead area.

3.2.7 Vehicular access to the GGF site will be taken from Grovehurst Road broadly at the point of the existing access to the former farmyard. This access will also serve the brickearth extraction process and the house building process and there would be no vehicular access to Godwin Close for either activity (land ownership precludes any access via Danes Mead). For the housing development when complete, access via Godwin Close would be limited to pedestrians, cyclists and possibly emergency vehicles but use for the latter is to be reassessed. Motorcycle access via Godwin Close will be physically precluded.

3.2.8 Overall, while the concerns of neighbouring residents can be said to be limited in number and scope, nevertheless, this DAS attempts to positively address and take appropriate account of those concerns in setting the design parameters for the proposed development.

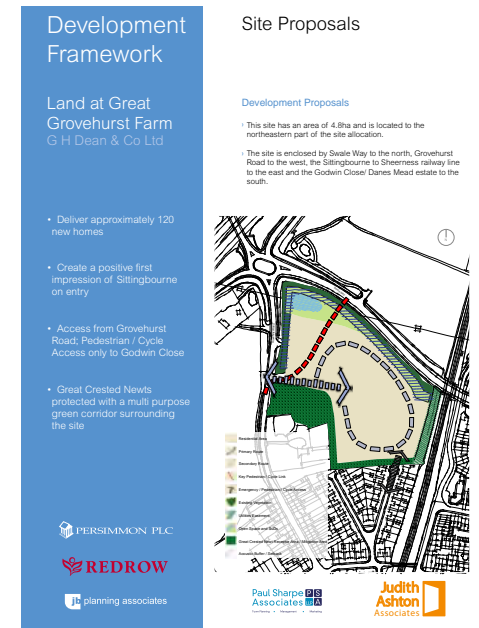


Figure 3.2: Sample of material presented at public consultation events



Figure 3.2: Photos of public consultation events on 29th and 30th of September 2016