

Design and Access Statement

November 2016



Proposed Residential Development

The Slips, Scocles Road, Minster-on-Sea, Isle of Sheppey, Kent, ME12 3SN



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01 Introduction

1.1 : Introduction

This Statement has been prepared by BDB Design LLP in support of an outline planning application for a residential development consisting of 62 houses and areas of open space.

The application is submitted in outline with all matters reserved for future consideration, except means of access, which is to be considered at this stage.

It describes the site and surrounding area, planning policy context and the proposed development.

It describes the design ethos underpinning the proposals, considering issues of use, amount, appearance, scale, landscape, access and sustainability.

The Design and Access Statement draws on a number of technical documents including a preliminary ecological survey and phase 1 habitat survey. It should be read in conjunction with these documents, which inform, shape and support the final design, together with the architect's plans and drawings.

The Design and Access Statement has been prepared in accordance with National Planning Policy Guidance and demonstrates the commitment of the developers and designers to achieving Good Design and meeting the requirements of planning policy and legislation.

Pre-application discussions have been undertaken with the local planning authority (reference 15/509577/PAPL) and adjustments made to address the constructive comments.

02 Assessment of Local Context

2.1 : Physical Nature and Character of Area

The application site comprises a 2.778 ha parcel of grazing land located on the eastern side of Scocles Road, at its junction with Elm Lane, which forms the southern boundary. The site is located at the southern edge of Minster-on-Sea

To the north is ribbon development in Drakes Avenue, comprising primarily detached bungalows/chalet bungalows, with some two-storey houses.

To the west, on the opposite side of Scocles Road is a continuous line of detached bungalows and houses, beyond which is land under development.

The site is divided into smaller fields, stitched together with fences and boundary planting. There is a strong hedgerow growing along the southern boundary and along a good portion of Scocles Road. The site is relatively level.

The built context is illustrated in the following aerial photographs:



Aerial view of the site, courtesy of Google Maps



Location plan of site



Aerial view of the site, courtesy of Google Maps

2.2 : Site Photographs



Existing footpath on site



Entrance to existing footpath from Drakes Avenue



View along Scocles Road (northwards)



2.3 : Local Context



Typical mix of 1, 1.5 and 2 – storey housing nearby



2.4 : Planning Policy

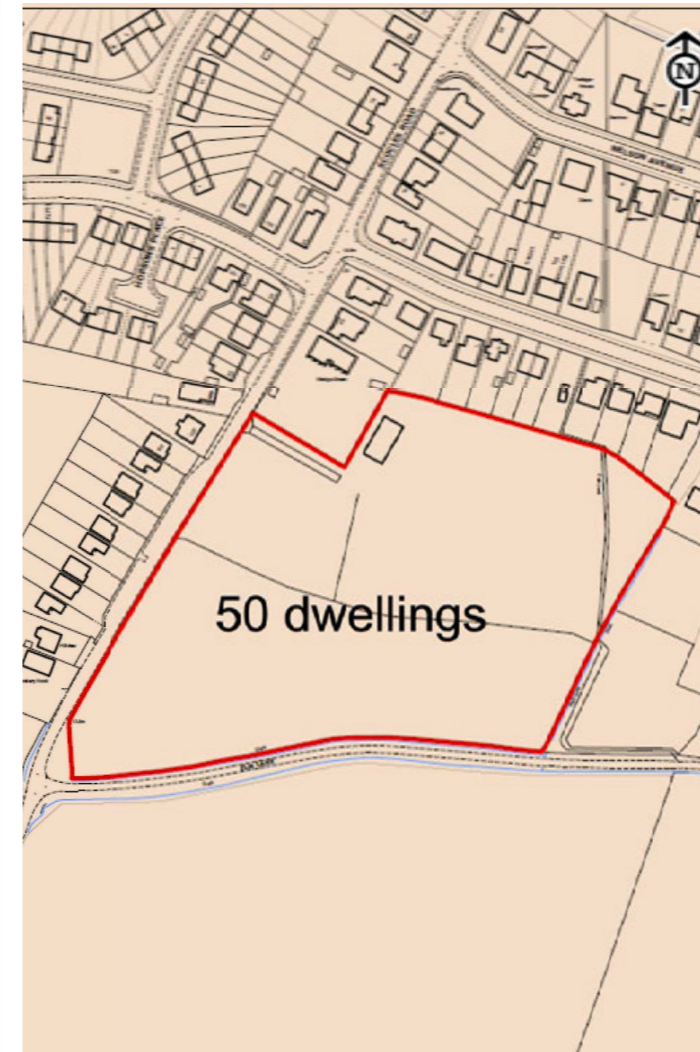
Main Modification 167

Policy A 14
Smaller allocations as extensions to settlements

Planning permission will be granted for residential development at the following locations listed below and as shown on the [Proposals Map](#):

Location of allocation		Site area (ha)	Minimum no. of dwellings
Sittingbourne	1. Land North of Key Street	1.6	30
	2. Manor Farm	2.3	20 30
Minster and Halfway	3. Junction of Scocles Road and Elm Lane	2.8	50
	4. Land at Chequers Road	0.4	10
	5. Minster Academy	1.2	20
Queenborough and Rushenden	6. Nil Desperandum, Alsager Avenue	0.8	22
Faversham	7. Land at Ham Road	1.1	35
	8. West of Brogdale Road	3.6	66

Extracts from the Local Plan's 'Main Modifications'



Government Policy

Government Policy contained in the NPPF is a material planning consideration to be afforded significant weight in the determination of the planning application.

National Policy requires Councils to maintain a 5-year supply of housing land which is deliverable with an additional buffer of 5% (moved forward from later in the plan period) to ensure choice and competition in the market for land (Para 47).

Swale Council does not currently have a 5-year supply and further information will be provided in the accompanying Planning Statement.

In order to help meet its 5-year housing supply deficit, allocations in the draft Local plan, including Main Modifications, should be approved in accordance with the NPPF's presumption-in-favour principle without delay, as outlined above. This site is identified as a development allocation in the Main Modifications and these application proposals meet all the objectives set out in these policies.

The following guidance is relevant:

[Paragraphs 2, 11 & 196](#) (planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise)

[Paragraphs 7, 14, 49 & 197](#) (presumption in favour of sustainable development)

[Paragraph 17](#) (Core Planning Principles)

[Paragraph 47](#) (boost significantly the supply of housing)

[Paragraph 50](#) (mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community e.g. but not limited to, families with children, older people, people with disabilities, service families and people wishing to building their own homes)

[Paragraph 56](#) (Good design)

[Paragraph 57](#) (planning positively for achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development)

[Paragraph 59](#) (design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription or detail and concentrate on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access of new development in relation to neighbouring building and local area)

[Paragraph 60](#) (planning policies and decision should not impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles; proper to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness)

[Paragraph 131](#) (desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness)

The proposal has been formulated with regard to the following Supplementary Planning Documents and good practice guidance:

Kent Design

By Design (CABE/DETR 2001)

By Design Better Places to live (DTLR 2001)

Places, Streets and Movement (DETR 2001)

Protecting Design Quality in Planning (CABE)

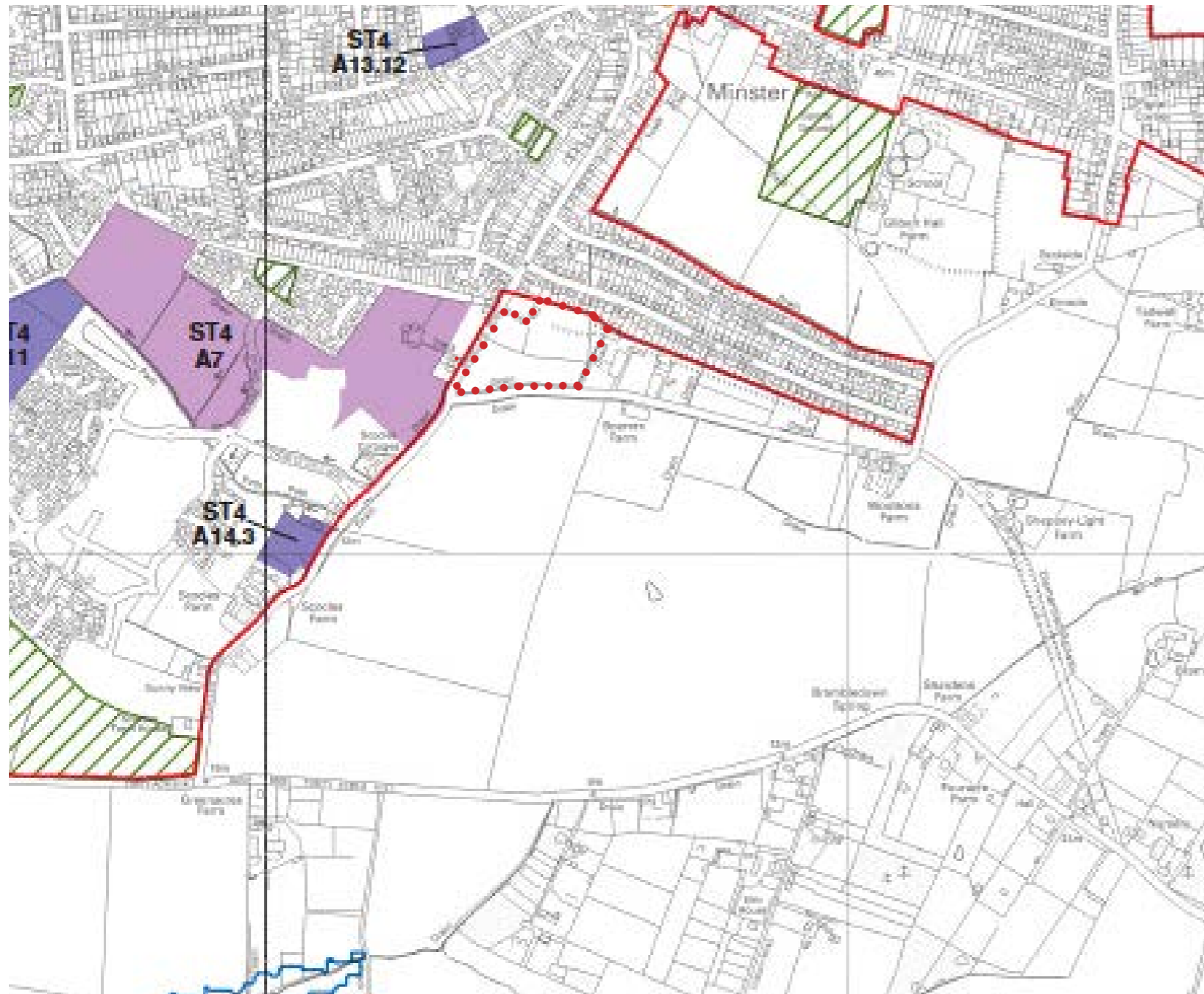
Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention (Home Office/ODPM)

An assessment of the proposed development against the above planning policy framework will be provided in the Planning Statement.

03 Evaluation

3.1 : Evaluation

Constraints and Opportunities



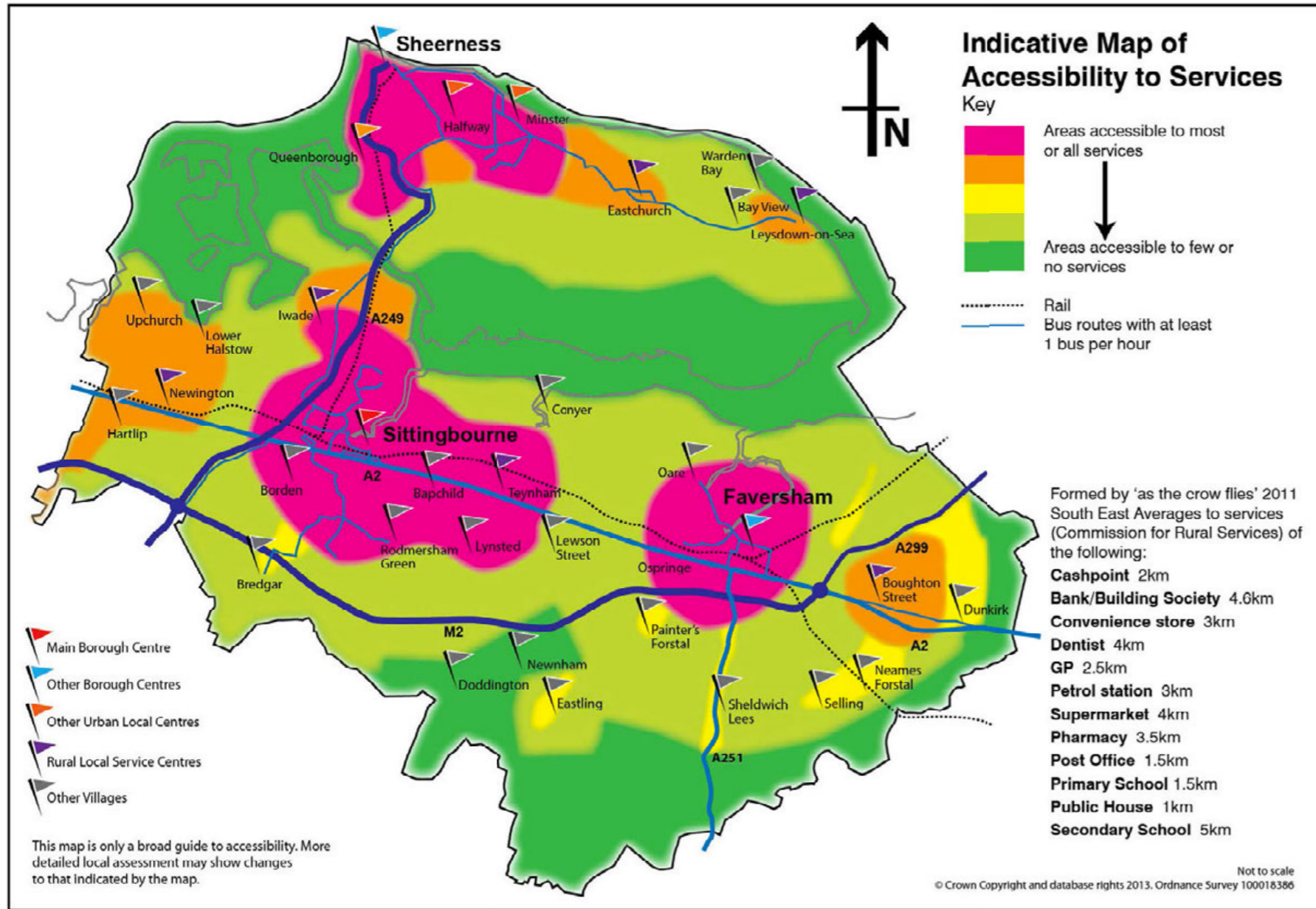
Constraints Plan taken from the Swale Council interactive mapping tool

Swale’s adopted Local Plan predates the NPPF and many of its policies particularly those related to housing, are out of date and carry little or no weight. The replacement plan has been found unsound in its present form on a number of grounds, including not meeting its objectively assessed housing needs as required by the NPPF.

The application site presents a windfall greenfield site, which adjoins the existing settlement boundary of Minster-on-Sea (Proposals Map to the adopted Local Plan 2008 refers) in an area which is not constrained by any national or local landscape designations.

The site is available and capable of making a useful contribution to the 5-year housing land supply and the deficiency in the emerging Local Plan, whilst at the same time widening the choice of high quality housing in the Borough.

The application site is in a sustainable location and will not give rise to any adverse impacts which would preclude its development.



On Picture 4.3.2 Indicative Map showing broad accessibility to local services from Policy ST3 Settlements (para 4.3.10) in the Bearing Fruits Submission Draft Local Plan 2014, the whole of Minster-on-Sea and wider adjoining area are located within an area which is considered to be accessible to most or all services ie the highest level of accessibility across the District. Minster-on-Sea is designated an Urban Local Centre in the stated settlement hierarchy.

The opportunity exists therefore to create a modest amount of new housing development as an extension to the existing settlement, which itself is in a sustainable location and without harm to the surrounding landscape of which it forms a part.

Picture 4.3.2 – Indicative map of accessibility to services in the borough



Constraints and Opportunities Plan

04 Design Principles and Concept

4.1 : Use

The application seeks a change of use from agricultural and grazing land to residential (Use Class C3).

4.2 : Scale

Scale is a reserved matter.

Illustrative drawings are provided to show the design approach and likely scale of development.

A detailed analysis of the constraints to development has been undertaken, to examine the Council's estimate of a site capacity for 50 dwellings. These include: protecting ecological important habitat and species and enhancing biodiversity, managing surface-water run-off, maintaining and enhancing hedgerows with additional tree-planting, and particularly the Elm Lane boundary, providing adequate public Open Space and ensuring sufficient space is available for roads, parking and new footways. The result demonstrates the site's ability to cater for up to 62 homes as shown in the illustrative masterplan.

It is envisaged that the houses will be two-storey to complement the varied scale of existing houses in Minster-on-Sea.

4.3 : Landscaping

Landscaping is a reserved matter.

A Landscape and Visual Appraisal comprising a collection of viewpoint photographs looking into the site from the surrounding area has informed the design process.

The aim is to retain and reinforce all existing boundary vegetation around the site perimeters, and introduce boundary planting between gardens, as a way of drawing the countryside into the heart of the development and reflecting the existing field patterns.

Specimen tree planting will be a key feature of the development, along the new spine road and around the edges of the Central Green, a large open space at the heart of the development.

4.4 : Sustainability

The outline proposal seeks to secure the principle for a sustainable housing extension to Minster-on-Sea.

The Planning Statement will set out how the proposed development meets the three dimensions to Sustainable Development at Para 7 NPPF; economic, social and environmental.

The need to provide a high degree of sustainable construction and energy conservation will influence the form of the proposed dwellings and the final layout of the site. Houses will be energy efficient and in accordance with Building Regulations.



Proposed site plan

4.5 : Amount of Development

The development parcel is capable of accommodating up to 62 dwellings, which is a modest amount of new housing at a sustainable location.

13 of the 62 will be in the form of “buy-to-build” plots.

Site area is 2.778ha.

Overall density is 23 dwellings per hectare, with pockets of lower and higher densities reflecting the type of housing being illustrated.

There is no requirement for affordable housing on the Isle of Sheppey. And the intention therefore is to provide a market housing scheme, with a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced houses, together with an element of self-building plots. This mix of housing will ensure a range of accommodation to suit the elderly, single people and young families.



Housing Unit Mix

4.6 : Layout

Layout is a reserved matter.

No detailed design of the scheme has been prepared, with a number of principles to be refined at a future stage. However to demonstrate how the land can be developed, details of the access arrangements onto Scocles Road are not reserved and are included in the outline submission.

A set of indicative layout drawings are submitted with the application to show the potential siting of the individual houses, parking facilities, open spaces and landscape belts around the southern and eastern boundaries to the site. The layout shows the proposed new housing in context with existing buildings and local roads.

The indicative layout demonstrates the developability of the site for up to 62 dwellings.

The layout has evolved through a comprehensive design approach integrating transport, landscape and ecology of the site and informed by a number of subject reports which support the outline planning approval.

The Illustrative Layout Plan

The illustrative layout plan has been informed by the site constraints and characteristics, hedgerows and proximity to existing houses.

The layout plan contains the following key concepts:

- Looped grid of roads that define the street blocks, with home zones and private drives
- Two points of access onto Scocles Road, with pedestrian and cycle links and high permeability
- Houses fronting Scocles Road and internal highway network, with private gardens to the rear
- Active street frontages
- Legible and well-connected spaces within the development
- Clear distinction between public and private spaces; high levels of natural surveillance
- High standard of architectural quality
- Buy-to-build plots located in southern part of site
- Provision of good quality and useable amenity space with a communal ‘green’, open space and private gardens
- Landscaped front gardens
- Reinforcement of the existing landscaping along Elm Lane and eastern boundary
- Linking to existing footpaths and integrating the development with the existing settlement

4.7 : Appearance

The detailed house designs have not been fully settled and 'appearance' is a reserved matter.

The application includes elevation and street context drawings for illustrative purposes only.

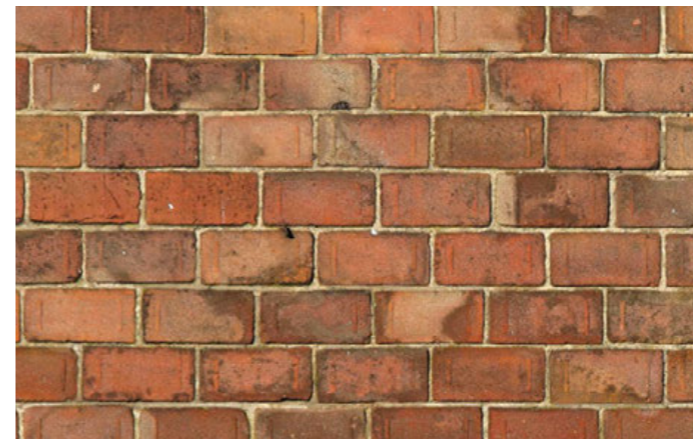
The intention is to provide a mix of high quality housing, designed to be locally distinctive, traditional or modern.

The core brand values of individual character and lasting quality, with a strong emphasis on light, flexibility and space within the home will be key ingredients in the design, facilitating adaptability and evolution as life changes.

4.8 : Materials

The final palette of materials will be a matter for consideration at the detailed planning stage and subject of a planning condition. However it is envisaged that wherever possible the new houses will be constructed from materials that will have a reduced impact on the environment, drawn from a mixed palette of traditional materials.

The texture, colour, pattern and durability of materials will have synergy with the individual designs and contribute to quality of the appearance of the development and its distinctive character.



Example brick



Example brick



Example roof tile



Example roof tile

05 Access

5.1 : Access

Access is not a reserved matter and is to be determined at the outline stage.

The development is proposed to be served by two points of access onto Scocles Road and these are shown on the illustrative site layout drawings.

The access points have been designed to current highway standards and positioned to achieve maximum visibility in both directions. A new footway will be provided running along the length of the site's frontage to Scocles Road.

A hierarchy of streets will be created within the development, with a main looped access road at its core and home zones and private drives springing from this to feed intimate groups of houses.

A footpath link will be created through the site, linking with an existing network to the south-east corner of the site and the residential streets to the north.



Proposed location of 30mph speed-control Gateway



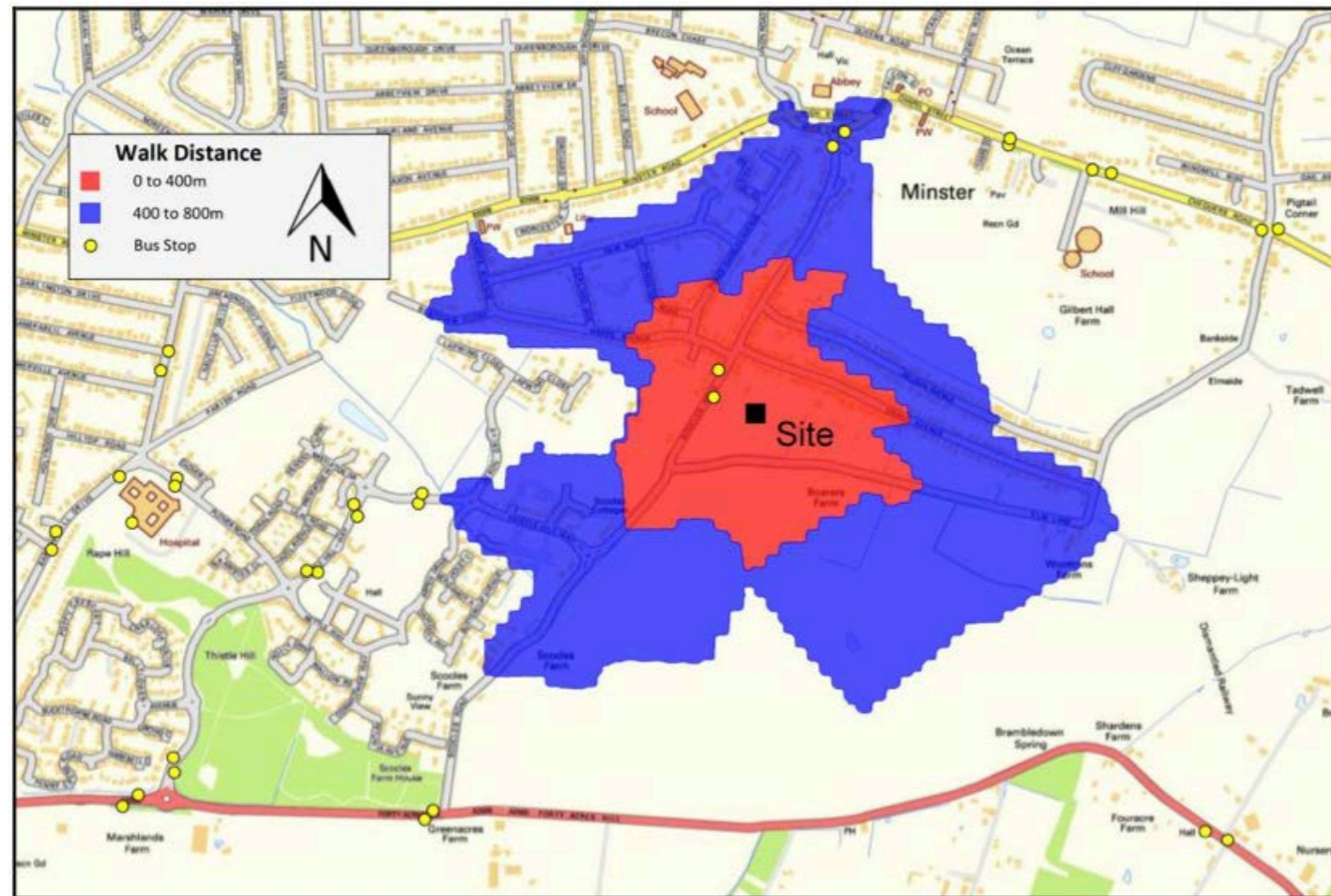
Existing traffic speed management North of site



Photo of similar speed-control gateway, courtesy of Google Maps

5.2 : Transport Links and Services

TRACC, a leading multi-modal transport accessibility tool, has been used to identify the areas that are within 400 to 800m walk distance using roads and public footpaths. Two bus stops are within 400m of the site, local services within Minster on Sea are just over 800m walk distance from the centre of the site, as shown in the map below.



Kent County Council has published 'Guidance for Planning Officers on Transport Assessment and Travel Plans' (October 2008) and this advises that the need for a residential travel plan will be individually assessed for any proposal over 100 units.

Whilst a Travel Plan is not required under those criteria the following initiatives could be implemented as part of any development to limit the use of cars and promote more sustainable travel options;

- secure cycle storage can be provided for all dwellings;
- information on cycle routes, public footpaths, and local bus and rail services can form part of any home buyer's welcome pack;
- broadband internet connections can facilitate home working; and
- pedestrian links can be provided within the development to existing footways and footpaths.

06 Conclusion

6.1 : Conclusions

This Design and Access Statement accompanies an outline planning application for a residential development consisting of up to 62 houses on a parcel of greenfield land at the southern edge of Minster-on-Sea.

The outline proposals and indicative layout have been informed by a series of technical reports, which are submitted with the application.

The proposals provide for high quality housing with a mix to meet local needs, in a sustainable location and will significantly contribute to the housing supply in the local area.

This Design and Access Statement concludes that the proposals are fully acceptable in design and access terms.