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Planning Statement

Land at Blowers Wood, Hempstead, Kent

February 2023

DCH/JP/AD/16849

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this Statement

1.1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by DHA Planning to support a detailed planning application submitted on behalf of our client 'Redrow Homes South East' ("the Applicant").

1.1.2 The description of the proposed development is as follows:

"Construction of 88 dwellings (including 25% affordable) together with associated parking, access, open space, landscaping and SuDS"

1.1.3 This statement provides an overview of the site, its context, and the relevant planning history. It then assesses the proposal against relevant development plan policies and other material considerations.

1.1.1 This document concludes that the proposal is appropriate in planning terms and accordingly requests that full planning permission be granted.

1.2 Supporting Documents

1.2.1 This statement should be read in conjunction with a suite of planning documents and drawings which are submitted as part of this full application. These are referenced below:

Documents

Reference:	Document:	Author:
DCH/JP/AD/16849	Planning Statement	DHA Planning
	Application Form	DHA Planning
	Design and Access Statement	FPCR
608767	Utility Assessment	Premier Energy
P4266J2508/SC	Ground Investigation Report	JOMAS
11977	Transport Assessment	GTA Civils and Transport Limited
ECO-6514	Ecological Appraisal	Aspect Ecology
ECO-6514	Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment	Aspect Ecology
11423_AIA.001	Arboricultural Impact Assessment	Aspect Arboriculture
	Climate Change and Energy Efficiency Statement	Iceni Projects Limited
	Sustainability Benefits of Development	Iceni Projects Limited
11977	Flood Risk Assessment	GTA Civils and Transport Limited
70104884 AQ1	Air Quality Assessment	WSP
70094117	Noise Assessment	WSP

Table 1.1: Application Documents

Plans

Reference:	Document:	Author:
10745-FPCR-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0001 P22	Site Layout	FPCR
10745-FPCR-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0002 P09	Net Developable Area Plan	FPCR
10745-FPCR-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0003 P04	Storey Heights Plan	FPCR
10745-FPCR-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0004 P04	Tenure Plan	FPCR
10745-FPCR-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0005 P04	Parking Plan	FPCR
10745-FPCR-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0006 P04	Materials Plan	FPCR
10745-FPCR-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0007 P03	Surface & Boundary Treatment Plan	FPCR
10745-FPCR-ZZ-XX-DR-A-0008 P02	Electric Vehicle Charging Plan	FPCR
10745-FPCR-ZZ-XX-DR-L-0003 P03	Detailed Planting Plan General Arrangement	FPCR
10745-FPCR-ZZ-XX-DR-L-0004 P03	Detailed Planting Plan POS	FPCR
10745-FPCR-ZZ-XX-DR-L-0005 P03	Detailed Planting Plan On Plot Sheet 1 of 4	FPCR
10745-FPCR-ZZ-XX-DR-L-0006 P03	Detailed Planting Plan On Plot Sheet 2 of 4	FPCR
10745-FPCR-ZZ-XX-DR-L-0007 P03	Detailed Planting Plan On Plot Sheet 3 of 4	FPCR
10745-FPCR-ZZ-XX-DR-L-0008 P03	Detailed Planting Plan On Plot Sheet 4 of 4	FPCR
See Appendix C- Drawing Issue Sheet	House Types Plans and Elevations	FPCR
P4266J2508 01	Topographic Survey 3D	JOMAS

Table 1.2: Application Plans

1.3 About the Client

- 1.3.1 Redrow Homes' history spans more than 40 years; the company has a proven reputation in delivering high quality residential developments, with a considered approach towards house type, movement, environment and context of the site.
- 1.3.2 Redrow continuously showcase their reputation for an attractive living environment, through their recent developments, all of which are in keeping with the local context of the site to strengthen the existing character.
- 1.3.3 All dwellings are consistently of high quality and also give the opportunity to live in a sustainable and aspirational environment, in turn creating a neighbourhood that residents are proud of.
- 1.3.4 In order to achieve this, Redrow Homes abide by three sustainable business themes:

- Creating Thriving Communities;
- Building Responsibly; and
- Valuing People.

- 1.3.5 Throughout the application preparation, Redrow have engaged with colleagues and the relevant stakeholders to help deliver a site of high-quality value which will benefit not only future residents but the existing wider community.
- 1.3.6 Redrow are accredited as a Living Wage Employer, the aim is to inspire future industry talent and to support colleagues at every stage of their career. Several job opportunities will be created through this site being brought forward.

2 Site Context

2.1 Application Site

- 2.1.1 The site is an irregular shaped 3.84 hectare parcel of land located on the south eastern boundary of Hempstead, outside the built confines of Gillingham and which therefore, in planning policy terms, lies within open countryside.
- 2.1.2 The site is open in character and has a low and gently undulating landscape formed of a large area of scrubland bisected to the western side by a public footpath (GB40).
- 2.1.3 The site is well contained on all sides by a thicket of woodland. The A278 (Hoath Way) runs along the eastern boundary of the site (but is elevated above the level of the site) with Maidstone Road running along the southeastern edge. The area to the northwest of the site consists predominantly of residential properties while the area beyond the woodland to the southwest comprises extensive agricultural farmland. A parcel of land to the southeast of the site functions as a park and ride site albeit that is not understood to be active at present.



Figure 2.1: Aerial view of site indicative of redline boundary (courtesy of Google Earth 2022)

- 2.1.4 The site falls within an Area of Local Landscape Importance as designated in the Local Plan Map. The Local Plan Map also highlights that an area of woodland to the northwest of the site is designated as an area of protected open space.
- 2.1.5 The belt of woodland running across the north and northwest of the site is designated ancient woodland and is covered by two blanket Tree Preservation Orders (G6/1971 and G9/1969).

- 2.1.6 The boundary of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty lies immediately south of the M2, approximately 200m south of the site.
- 2.1.7 There are no listed buildings or scheduled monuments located on or within the surrounding area of the site.
- 2.1.8 The site also lies within 1km of the Purple Hill (SSSI) and just over 2km from the Queendown Warren (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC). In addition, the site is located within 6km of the Medway Estuary & Marshes Ramsar Site.
- 2.1.9 The site falls entirely within flood zone 1 and is therefore at a low risk of flooding.
- 2.1.10 The site does not currently have a formal vehicular access point, although it appears the site has been previously accessible via an informal gated vehicular access point located to the southeastern boundary of the site that adjoins Maidstone Road.

Connectivity

- 2.1.11 The site is linked to Lambsfrith Grove to the north via an existing PROW (GB40) which provides pedestrian access to the Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre located approximately 400m to the north. The Shopping Centre hosts a supermarket, gym and petrol station alongside numerous retail and food establishments.
- 2.1.12 The site is connected via established pedestrian footways to nearby public bus stops along Wigmore Road to the east and at Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre, providing frequent services to Chatham, Maidstone, Wigmore and Twydall. The National Express bus also stops at Hempstead Valley, taking passengers to Dover and Victoria.
- 2.1.13 In terms of road connectivity, the adjacent M2 provides direct links to surrounding towns as well as the M25 and London.

2.2 Planning History

- 2.2.1 A summary of relevant planning of the site is provided below:

Reference	Proposal	Decision
TPA/18/1413	Woodland area to the rear of 12 Blowers Wood Grove ME7 3RD. T01 Sweet Chestnut (<i>Castanea sativa</i>) - Remove small dead stem on south eastern side of stool. Remove 1x limb over garden of 12 Blowers Wood Grove at 10m above ground level on south eastern stem. Remove 3 x limbs over garden of 12 Blowers Wood Grove at 7m, 7.5m and 8m above ground level on eastern stem. T02 Sycamore (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>) - Crown lift over garden area of 12 Blowers Wood Grove to 7m above ground level.	Approved 5/07/2018

HIS/98/63063	Outline Application for One Dwelling	Refused Date unknown (but a historic decision)
HIS/98/85551	Outline Application for Residential Development – 12 Houses or Bungalows	Refused Date unknown (but a historic decision)

Table 5.1: Relevant planning History

- 2.2.2 As set out above, the site has been subject to two separate residential planning applications both dating from 1998. No further information on these planning applications is available to review.

3 Pre application & Public Engagement

3.1 Pre-application Discussions with Medway Council

- 3.1.1 A Pre-Application request was submitted to Medway Council in April 2022 with the scheme being proposed at that stage for the construction of 89 dwellings (22 affordable) together with associated parking, access, open space, landscaping and SuDs (LPA Reference PRE/22/0772).
- 3.1.2 A virtual pre-application meeting took place on 11th May 2022 which was attended by the project team as well as representatives from Medway Council for Planning, Highways, Arboriculture and Landscape.
- 3.1.3 The written pre-application advice, which was received on 22nd June 2022, is summarised as follows:

Principle

- The site is located outside the built confines of Gillingham and is not allocated for housing or redevelopment. However, it is acknowledged that the Local Plan is of some age, being adopted in 2003, the Council does not currently have a five-year land supply, and as of the 2020-2021 Housing Delivery Test, the Council had only delivered 55% of its target number of dwellings in the preceding 3 years.
- Given the site's location within an ALLI, BNE34 will apply and development only be permitted if it does not materially harm the landscape character and function of the area, or the social and economic benefits, are so important that they outweigh the local priority to conserve the areas landscape.

Design

- Design must respond to site constraints e.g. ancient woodland and its buffer, landscaping screening to all boundaries, provision of SuDs, play space and route of PROW.
- A variety of different house types and sizes should also be provided within the development to create a diverse and mixed community.
- Number of units currently proposed would need to be reduced so it is appropriate for this site and surroundings. Massing should consider landscape quality and respond appropriately. Buildings should not exceed 2 ½ storeys.
- The dwellings should include a contrast in material types and have a variation in height from ground to ridge or eaves along with the arrangement of dwellings across the site to create a varied roof line across the development which should add visual interest to the street scene.

Amenity

- The extent of the existing woodland and any subsequent buffer should prevent any unacceptable loss of privacy, overlooking, loss of light or overbearing impact to neighbouring occupiers.
- Given the context of the site, 10m gardens should be achievable and would be expected.

Highways

- Principle of the proposed access is considered acceptable - final design needs to take account of the level of vehicle movements and speeds along this stretch of Maidstone Road.
- A crossing would be required to provide a safe crossing for residents to the coach facility opposite to future proof the development.
- To promote a reduction in private vehicle use and provide a more suitable connection to Hempstead Valley Shopping centre, Highways would seek an upgrade to the existing public right of way that leads through the ancient woodland to Lambsfrith Grove to accommodate pedestrians as well as cyclists.

Trees

- The woodland north west of the site is designated ancient woodland and also protected by a tree preservation order. Other parts of the surrounding woodland are either on the Priority Habitat Inventory, or on the National Forest Inventory.
- Trees on the northeast boundary carry no formal designation but are important because they make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of this gateway into Medway.
- The width of any buffers on the boundaries and any associated planting will need to take account of the extent to which trees overhang the boundary, especially on the ancient woodland and A278 sides.
- The development could also have an impact on the ancient woodland and public right of way (PROW) that runs through it, these pressures are further accentuated by the existing residential development to the northwest.
- Larger ancient woodland buffer than 15m is recommended given existing pressures.
- Infrastructure and change in landform, including play and SuDS requirements should be located outside of the landscape buffer to the ancient woodland.
- Contrary to highways advice, the existing PROW through the ancient woodland should also remain in its current form, as upgrading this surface, along with any lighting that may be required, would alter the characteristic of that footpath and therefore would likely have an adverse impact on the ancient woodland and the biodiversity and habitats it supports.
- Consideration must be given to matters such as shade, apprehension resulting from having large trees close to homes and seasonal nuisance from falling leaves and seed, or sticky honeydew which can all give rise

to pressures to remove or heavily prune trees if not properly considered.

- Any proposed tree planting within the site would need to take account of the presence of street lighting and any underground services, as well as the space needed (above and below ground) to allow these trees to establish.

Landscape Design

- The proposal would extend the urban settlement boundary southwards affecting the rural landscape, the setting of the AONB, and the leisure amenities enjoyed by nearby and adjacent properties.
- The site layout and number of units would appear urban in character, which is not an appropriate response given this context and would need to be reconsidered as part of any formal submission. A rural morphological framework should be adopted within this approach following local countryside distinctiveness.

Ecology

- Given the proximity and scale of the trees and vegetation surrounding the site there may be habitats and features present on and around the site, indicating ecological value and the potential for protected species to be present that must be taken account of in the decision making process.
- Whilst an increased buffer zone, with native species planting, could alleviate some of the impacts it's likely that recreational disturbance, pet predation, light pollution, etc would increase and contribute to its deterioration.

Noise and Air Quality

- The site is adjacent to the M2 and Hoath Way where levels of road traffic noise are likely to be elevated.

Flooding

- The site is not situated within an area considered to be at flood risk according to the latest Environment Agency flood mapping.
- SuDs would need to be incorporated accordingly.

Bird Mitigation

- Application site is within 6km of the North Kent Marshes SPA/Ramsar Sites. Natural England has advised a tariff of £275.88 per dwelling.

Public Rights of Way (PROW)

- To ensure that the PROW maintains as much rural amenity as possible, should be diverted to the edge of the development site on the south west / south east perimeter so that the path maintains as much rural amenity as possible.

- Hoggin style surface encouraged for the section that would be diverted to maintain rural quality. In re-diverting the PROW, be aware of the location of any buffers to the ancient woodland.

Open Space

- The location of the proposed play appears to have been tucked away and it would be better suited located more centrally within the site, which would allow for the provision of a larger play space.

Affordable Housing

- Based on the provision of 22 units the policy compliant mix should therefore be:
 - 6 First Homes
 - 13 Affordable Rent
 - 3 Intermediate Affordable Housing (Shared Ownership is the preferred option)

3.2 Response to Pre-App

- 3.2.1 In response to this pre-application advice, the scheme has been altered so that 88 dwellings are proposed, including 22 units of affordable housing which will provide a mixture of affordable rented and first homes. The layout of the dwellings on the site moves away from the rigid approach originally shown at the pre-application stage.
- 3.2.2 There have also been alterations to the landscape buffer, which in the pre-application scheme was intended to contain active uses such as trim trails. In the submitted scheme the buffer has been altered to include a meadow, defensive planting and timber framed fence to restrict the access, to ensure it first and foremost performs the role of preventing impacts on the ancient woodland.
- 3.2.3 As a result, the children's play area and recreational green have been moved to the west of the site, which also has the effect of making that space more central to the development to encourage use.
- 3.2.4 The figures below show the pre-application plans and then the changes made with the new plans.



Figure 3.1- Pre-application Submission Plan



Figure 3.2- Amended Proposed Site Plan

4 Public Consultation

4.1 Methods

- 4.1.1 In order to achieve the best outcome for this application various methods of community involvement were used in order to engage the local community on the proposals. This led to the development of a focused public consultation, through the processes outlined below.

Council Consultation

- 4.1.2 Bredhurst Parish Council were consulted in order to inform them of the community involvement and public consultation that was occurring. They have raised concerns regarding the principle of development but intend to raise detailed comments once they have seen the full application.

Leaflet Distribution

- 4.1.3 A leaflet was created to outline the proposed development, including the site location and a proposed site plan. A copy of the leaflet is provided in **Appendix A**.
- 4.1.4 These were sent out to residents within Lambsfrith Grove and those on the east of Hoath Way, informing them of the consultation process and encouraging them to look at the website which would provide them with further details.

Website

- 4.1.5 A website was created (www.blowerswood.co.uk) to provide a more detailed explanation of the proposed scheme, along with the benefits that it would bring. An overview of the website is provided in **Appendix B**.
- 4.1.6 The website encourages people to leave their views through the feedback form provided on the website. A summary of the feedback is provided below.

4.2 Outcomes

- 4.2.1 There were mixed opinions to the proposals in regards to the public consultation.
- 4.2.2 Those in support of the application generally acknowledged the increase in housing delivery and affordable housing. Therefore, the principle of this development has been supported in a variety of comments.
- 4.2.3 Alternatively, there were a variety of comments that objected to the application. The main themes that these comments raised concerns over include: traffic, parking arrangements, stress on the local infrastructure, environmental degradation, drainage capture, access, footpath, noise, too much affordable housing. Many of these concerns were raised due to the limited information supplied at the early stage of planning. However, this application aims to mitigate these concerns.

- 4.2.4 This will be through providing a detailed transport assessment with the application which highlights the impacts that the proposals will have on the highway and the access point and how these will be minimal with regards to the current highway arrangements. The transport assessment also includes detailed explanations of the parking arrangements which can be used to combat any concerns that residents might have regarding parking. Therefore, it highlights that the proposals include adequate parking facilities in accordance with local and national policies and therefore the application should not be refused on highway grounds.
- 4.2.5 There were numerous comments with regards to the increased pressure on local infrastructure, including GP surgeries and schools. However, any planning permission issued would be subject to a Section 106 agreement which will provide proportionate financial contributions to surrounding infrastructure.
- 4.2.6 The concerns raised regarding noise from Hoath Way are explained in more detail in the Acoustic Assessment, which highlights that there is an adequate buffer between the residential dwellings and the road. The proposals have also been designed in a way so that no garden or property will back onto the eastern boundary of the site in an aim to mitigate the noise levels sufficiently.
- 4.2.7 The degradation of the local environment was raised in numerous comments through the concern over the loss of woodland and the open land currently on the site. However, through the use of ecology survey results, arboricultural impact assessment and a landscape visual impact assessment, it has been concluded that there is a minimal impact on the wider environment around the site. This is due to the use of an adequate buffer around the ancient woodland, which helps to protect and enhance the woodland. Despite the loss of the land for the development, the land is currently unused scrubland in private ownership therefore the reuse of this land for residential development, including areas of open space for community use, would create a biodiversity net gain across the site.
- 4.2.8 Some comments expressed concerns with regards to the drainage of the site, however the application is submitted with a flood risk and drainage assessment along with the SUDs designs in detail. Therefore, careful consideration of the drainage of the site has been concerned and effective measures will be put in place to ensure efficient drainage is achieved.
- 4.2.9 Numerous comments raised concerns over the existing public right of way through the site, but they primarily had concerns over the increased use of the narrow footpath at the north of the site into the Lambsfrith Grove development. However, the pre-application response stated that *'the existing PROW through the ancient woodland should also remain in its current form, as upgrading this surface, along with any lighting that may be required, would alter the characteristic of that footpath and therefore would likely have an adverse impact on the ancient woodland and the biodiversity and habitats it supports.'* The existing PROW, which would be diverted through the proposed scheme, is considered sufficient to deal with any additional movements resulting from the proposed scheme, particularly given the context of Medway Council's position regarding the impacts on the ancient woodland of any improvements.

- 4.2.10 Despite comments raising concerns over the number of affordable homes being proposed in the wider Hempstead area, Medway's local plan sets a requirement for 25% affordable housing. Therefore, this application is proposing the requirements of the local plan to meet the need of the proposed development.

5 The Proposed Development

5.1 Overview

- 5.1.1 The description of the proposed development is as follows:

"Construction of 88 dwellings (including 25% affordable) together with associated parking, access, open space, landscaping and SuDS"

5.2 Description

- 5.2.1 Full details on the design and appearance of the proposed development are included within the **Design and Access Statement** submitted as part of the application. For the purpose of this statement, a summary of the scheme is provided in the section below.

Scale

- 5.2.2 The development proposes a range of house types including, detached, semi-detached and terraced dwellings, with the majority of residential buildings to be two storeys in height, whilst the detached garages are single storey. There is also a three storey apartment block proposed to the northern corner of the site, which will help to enhance the street scene.
- 5.2.3 The size of the homes will vary between 1-5-bedrooms which will allow for a variation in the step of roof lines, reflecting the local building style.

Layout

- 5.2.4 The development will contain 88 new dwellings, surrounded by a native hedgerow. There is a minimum 15m buffer provided to the ancient woodland along the north and north-west.
- 5.2.5 The affordable and first homes will be provided to the east of the development, along with the apartment block being situated in the northeastern part of the development.
- 5.2.6 The play area and area of public open space will be in the western part of the development, along the boundary, which will provide access to outdoor recreation for the residents of the scheme.
- 5.2.7 The buildings have been located to aspect over streets and public open space, which will also help to promote surveillance across the site. The whole site has been designed to promote privacy and security.

Appearance

- 5.2.8 The buildings will display a range of materials that are all of similar style and remain sympathetic to the surrounding area.

- 5.2.9 The roofs will be a mixture of a red tone roof tile, in Forticrete Gemini Sunrise Blend and slate tone roof tiles, in Forticrete Gemini Slate Grey. There will also be a mixture of off-white render in Weber Monocouche Silver Pearl 674 (rough cast finish) and red clay tile hanging. The houses and garages will all be made of red tone brick, in ibstock western red multi.
- 5.2.10 The use of selective building materials at focal points on certain dwellings will create a sense of place, which will allow the development of varied and attractive street scenes. This has been designed to include contrasting materials at key locations, highlighting the junctions, focal areas and accentuate subtle variations along the building line.

Landscaping

- 5.2.11 There will be sufficient landscaping provided throughout the site. A minimum of a 15m buffer will be provided to the areas of ancient woodland, which will consist of a woodland edge planting, a flower rich grassland, a timber post and rail fence restricting access into the new woodland edge planting and reptile habitat area and then a hedgerow along the edge of the road.
- 5.2.12 As well as this, there will be a recreational green along with a children's play space to the west of the site which will provide an area of open space within the development. There will also be a seating area which will overlook the recreational green in order to promote the use of this open space.
- 5.2.13 The native hedgerow will also form an additional boundary to the site, with larger trees to line the entrance route.

Access and Parking Provision

- 5.2.14 The access to the site will be from Maidstone Road, to the south east of the development, this will allow private roads within the development to be created allowing access to the dwellings.
- 5.2.15 Sufficient parking for residents and visitors will be provided throughout the site, for each dwelling and the apartment block. This will limit the amount of on-street parking throughout the development. The development will provide the following parking arrangements:
- A communal provision for 1 and 2-bedroom apartments;
 - 2 allocated parking spaces per 2, 3,4 and 5-bedroom units;
 - 0.25 visitor spaces per dwelling;
 - Electric vehicle charging points for all dwellings with allocated parking and communal provision for apartments;
 - 2 cycle parking spaces per 3, 4 and 5-bedroom units; and
 - Communal cycle store for flats and maisonettes.

6 Planning Policy Framework

6.1 Overview

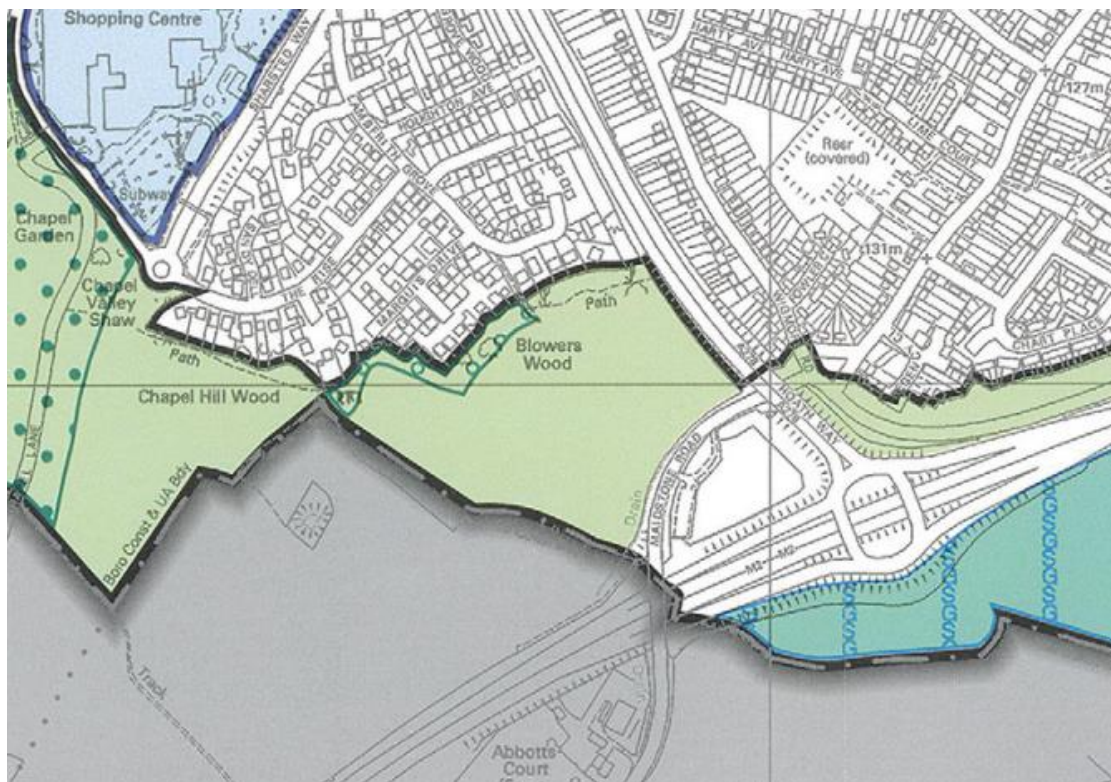
- 6.1.1 Under Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, applications for planning permission are required to be determined in accordance with the provisions of the development plan in force unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.1.2 For the purposes of this application the development plan comprises the Medway Local Plan saved policies and Proposals Maps (2003).

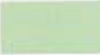
6.2 Emerging Medway Local Plan

- 6.2.1 The emerging Medway Local Plan is a material consideration which underwent its Development Strategy Consultation between March and June 2018 with the plan for it to be published for consultation in early 2022. However, it is understood that there have been various political issues with the draft Plan, with the Council now reviewing how best to take that forward. There are no formal draft emerging policies at this stage so little to assess in terms of an emerging position and the current issues with Local Plan progress means that limited weight would be afforded to any emerging position which did exist.

6.3 Site Specific Context

- 6.3.1 The site falls within the countryside in policy terms although it borders the existing urban settlement boundary to its north and north-eastern side. It is therefore considered by **Policy BNE25** – development in the countryside.
- 6.3.2 The site falls entirely within an Area of Local Landscape Importance under **Policy BNE34** with the north-western area of the site designated as Protection of Open Space under **Policy L3**.



	Boundary of Urban Area		Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Special Landscape Area
	Area of Local Landscape Importance		New Leisure Facilities
	Protection of Open Space		Retail Allocations
	Strategic Gap		

- 6.3.3 The site lies within 200m of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Special Landscape Area. The site also lies within 1km of the Purple Hill (SSSI) and just over 2km from the Queendown Warren (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC). In addition, the site is located within 6km of the Medway Estuary & Marshes Ramsar Site and thus lies within a zone of influence.

6.4 Medway Local Plan Saved Policies (2003)

- 6.4.1 The Medway Local Plan was adopted in May 2003 and a number of its policies were saved by the Secretary of State in 2007.
- 6.4.2 It should be noted that the Council's second Core Strategy was formally withdrawn by the Local Planning Authority in a letter dated 25th November 2013, meaning that there is no up-to-date local policy guidance. In light of this, weight must be placed on the saved policies of the Medway Local Plan (2003) dependent on the degree to which the policies accord with the NPPF and NPPG.

- 6.4.3 **Policy S2: Strategic Principles** - Focuses on maintaining and improving environmental quality and design standards. A sustainable approach should be taken in respect of location and mix of new development, to provide local communities with a range of local facilities.
- 6.4.4 **Policy S4: Landscape and Urban Design Guidance** – Requires a high quality of built development which responds appropriately to its context, reflecting a distinct local character.
- 6.4.5 **Policy S6: Planning Obligations** - States that provision will be sought in proportion to the size and nature of the individual development and will take into account the existing pattern of provision and capacity in the locality.
- 6.4.6 **Policy BNE1: General Principles for Built Development** - Requires the design of new development to be appropriate in relation to the character, appearance and functioning of the built and natural environment by:
- i. Being satisfactory in terms of use, scale, mass proportion, details, materials, layout and siting; and
 - ii. Respecting the scale, appearance and location of buildings, spaces and the visual amenity of the surrounding area; and
 - iii. Where appropriate, providing well-structured practical and attractive areas of open space.
- 6.4.7 **Policy BNE2: Amenity Protection** - States that all development should secure the amenities of its future occupants and that design should have regard to privacy, daylight and sunlight, noise, vibration, activity levels and traffic generation.
- 6.4.8 **Policy BNE4: Energy Efficiency** - States that energy efficiency measures will be sought within development proposals providing there is no detrimental impact on amenity. In particular proposals should have regard to:
- i. Appropriate siting, form, orientation and layout of the buildings and the appropriate size and location of windows to maximise passive solar heating, natural lighting and natural ventilation; and
 - ii. The appropriate use and siting of soft landscaping to act as shading or shelterbelts; and
 - iii. Energy efficient technology including solar panels, combined heat and power heating schemes; and
 - iv. High standards of insulation and other heat retaining features; and
 - v. The use of building materials of the lowest possible embodied energy.
- 6.4.9 **Policy BNE5: Lighting** – Requires development to minimise the loss of amenity from light glare and spillage, particularly that affecting residential areas, areas of nature conservation interest and the landscape qualities of countryside areas.

- 6.4.10 **Policy BNE6: Landscape Design** - Requires new development to enhance the character of the surrounding area through landscaping schemes. The retention of important existing landscape features will be encouraged and opportunities to enhance biodiversity will be supported.
- 6.4.11 **Policy BNE7: Access for All** - Requires development to be designed so access to buildings and external circulation areas meet the needs of people with disabilities, the elderly and young people.
- 6.4.12 **Policy BNE8: Security and Personal Safety** - states that the design and layout of development should seek to maximise personal safety and security.
- 6.4.13 **Policy BNE22: Environmental Enhancement** - Requires development to protect and improve the appearance of the environment.
- 6.4.14 **Policy BNE23: Contaminated Land** - Requires development on contaminated land or land likely to be contaminated to be accompanied by a detailed site examination. Any remedial measures must be satisfactorily implemented before the development is occupied.
- 6.4.15 **Policy BNE24: Air Quality** - Prevents development that is considered to have unacceptable effects on the health, amenity or natural environment of the surrounding area.
- 6.4.16 **Policy BNE25: Development in the Countryside** – Seeks to permit development in the countryside only if:
- i. It maintains and wherever possible enhances the character, amenity and functioning of the countryside, it offers a realistic chance of access by a range of transport modes and is either;
 - ii. On a site allocated for that use; or
 - iii. Development essentially demanding a countryside location (such as agriculture and forestry); or
 - iv. A re-use or adaptation of an existing building that is, and would continue to be, in keeping with its surroundings in accordance with Policy BNE27; or
 - v. A re-use or adaptation of an existing building that is, and would continue to be, in keeping with its surroundings in accordance with Policy BNE27; or
 - vi. A rebuilding of, or modest extension or annex to, a dwelling; or
 - vii. A public or institutional use for which the countryside location is justified and which does not result in volumes of traffic that would damage rural amenity.
- 6.4.17 **Policy BNE32: Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty** – States that development within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, as defined on the

proposals map, will only be permitted when it conserves the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area.

6.4.18 Policy BNE34: Area of Local Landscape Importance – States that development within areas of local landscape importance will only be permitted if:

- i. It does not materially harm the landscape character and function of the area or;
- ii. The economic and social benefits are so important that they outweigh the local priority to conserve the area's landscape.

Development within an Area of local Landscape importance should be sited, designed and landscaped to minimise harm to the area's landscape character and function.

6.4.19 Policy BNE37: Wildlife Habitats – States that development which would cause a loss of important wildlife habitats or features will not be permitted unless:

- i. There is an overriding need for development;
- ii. No reasonable alternative site is available;
- iii. The development is designed to minimise the loss involved; and
- iv. Appropriate compensatory measures are provided.

6.4.20 Policy BNE38: Wildlife Corridors and Stepping Stones – Requires development where practical to make provision for wildlife habitats as part of a network of wildlife corridors or stepping stones.

6.4.21 Policy BNE39: Protected Species – States that development will not be permitted if statutorily protected trees and/or their habitat will be harmed.

6.4.22 Policy BNE41: Tree Preservation Orders – States that when considering applications to works to protected trees, regard will be had to:

- i. The future health and appearance of the trees and woodlands;
- ii. Where appropriate, requiring replacement planting of felled trees, the planting of an increased number of trees and ensuring that the planting is incorporated in, and/or adjacent to, the site where the trees are to be felled; and
- iii. Resisting applications for clear felling of woodland and requiring re-coppicing or other woodland management to be carried out in accordance with good Arboricultural practice.

6.4.23 Policy BNE42: Hedgerow Retention – States that all important hedgerows will be retained and protected.

6.4.24 Policy BNE43: Trees on Development Sites – Seeks the retention of trees, woodlands, hedgerows and other landscape features that provide a valuable contribution to local character.

6.4.25 **Policy H3: Affordable Housing** - Seeks affordable housing as a proportion of residential developments of a substantial scale defined as:

- i) In settlements in rural areas with a population of 3,000 or fewer, developments which include 15 or more dwellings or where the site area is 0.5 hectare or more;
- ii) Within the urban area, developments which include 25 or more dwellings or where the site area is 1 hectare or more.

Matters to be taken into account when affordable housing is negotiated, will be:

- a) The suitability of the site for affordable housing development;
- b) The economics of provision;
- c) The proximity of local services and facilities and access to public transport;
- d) The realisation of other planning objectives as priorities on a site; and
- e) The need to achieve a successful housing development taking into account the appropriate mix of affordable housing types and the proportion of affordable housing and its subsequent management.

6.4.26 **Policy H5: High Density Housing** - Seeks to avoid developments which make inefficient use of land (those of less than 30 dwellings per hectare net) and encourage housing development which makes more efficient use of land (between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare net) at places with good public transport accessibility or around major nodes along good public transport corridors.

6.4.27 **Policy H10: Housing Mix** - Requires sites larger than one hectare to provide a range and mix of house types and sizes.

6.4.28 **Policy H11: Residential Development in Rural Settlements** - States that unless the site is allocated for housing development in the local plan or an exceptional justification can be made, housing development in the rural areas will be restricted to minor development within the confines of a number of villages and settlements.

6.4.29 **Policy L3: Protection of Open Space** - Development that would involve the loss of existing formal open space, informal open space, allotments or amenity land will not be permitted unless:

- i. Sports and recreation facilities can best be implemented, or retained and enhanced through redevelopment of a small part of the site; or
- ii. Alternative open space provision can be made within the same catchment area and is acceptable in terms of amenity value; or
- iii. In the case of outdoor sports and children's play space provision, there is an excess of such provision in the area (measured against the n.p.f.a. standard of 2.4 hectares per 1,000 population) and such open space

neither contributes to, nor has the potential to contribute to, informal leisure, open space or local environmental amenity provision; or

- iv. In the case of educational establishments, the development is required for educational purposes and adequate areas for outdoor sports can be retained or provided elsewhere within the vicinity; or
- v. The site is allocated for other development in the local plan.

6.4.30 **Policy L4: Provision of Open Space in New Residential Developments** – States that where there is a proven deficiency, residential development proposals shall make open space provision within an agreed timescale in accordance with the following:

- i. Residential development likely to be occupied by 100 people or more shall include well located local open space for formal recreation on-site at a standard equivalent to 1.7 hectares per 1,000 population and open space for children's play and casual recreation on-site at a standard equivalent to 0.7 hectares per 1,000 population. Provision of some or all of the formal open space off-site or the improvement or extension of an existing off-site facility will be permitted where the Council is satisfied that this would be a better alternative;
- ii. Residential development likely to be occupied by between 50 and 100 people should include well located local open space for children's play and casual recreation on-site at a standard equivalent to 0.7 hectares per 1,000 population.

(The occupancy is based on 1 bedroom dwelling at 13.33 persons, 2 bedroom dwelling at 2.44 persons and a 3+ bedroom dwelling at 3.59 persons)

Play provision should incorporate facilities based on the hierarchy set out in the table below:

Facility	Walking Time (min)	Walking Distance	Straight Line Distance	Minimum Size		Nearest House Property Boundary	Characteristics
				Activity Zone	Total (inc buffer)		
LEAP (Local Equipped Area or Play)	5	400m	240m	400m ²	3,600m ² (0.36ha)	20m from activity zone	About 5 types of equipment. Small games area
NEAP (Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play)	15	1000m	600m	1000m ²	8,500m ² (0.85ha)	30m from activity zone	About 8 types of equipment. Kickabout and cycle play opportunities.

Table 5.1: Extract from Medway Local Plan stating play provision requirements.

- 6.4.31 **Policy L10: Public Rights of Way** – Development which would prejudice the amenity, or result in the diversion or closure, of existing public rights of way will not be permitted, unless an acceptable alternative route with comparable or improved amenity can be provided.
- 6.4.32 **Policy T1: Impact of Development** – States that in assessing the highway impact of development, proposals will be permitted provided that:
- i. The highway network has adequate capacity to cater for the traffic which will be generated by the development, taking into account alternative modes to the private car; and
 - ii. The development will not significantly add to the risk of road traffic accidents; and
 - iii. The development will not generate significant HGV movements on residential roads; and
 - iv. The development will not result in traffic movements at unsociable hours in residential roads that would be likely to cause loss of residential amenity.
- 6.4.33 **Policy T2: Access to Highway** – States that proposals which involve the formation of a new access or intensification in the use of an access will only be permitted where the access is not detrimental to the safety of other vehicle occupants, cyclists and pedestrians or as approved to the Council by the Highway Authority.
- 6.4.34 **Policy T3: Provision for Pedestrians** – Seeks to ensure the provision of attractive and safe pedestrian access into and within new development.
- 6.4.35 **Policy T4: Cycle Facilities** – Requires the provision of secure parking and associated facilities in accordance with the councils adopted cycle parking standards.
- 6.4.36 **Policy T6: Provision for Public Transport** – States that new developments will be expected to make provision for access by public transport.
- 6.4.37 **Policy T12: Traffic Management** – Requires road layouts within new developments to be designed with appropriate traffic management measures to help limit vehicle speeds and improve safety for road users. Particular care will be needed in the design of traffic management measures so that they are appropriate to their surroundings.
- 6.4.38 **Policy T13: Vehicle Parking Standards** – Requires development proposal to make vehicle parking provision in accordance with the adopted standard.
- 6.4.39 **Policy T14: Travel Plans** – Confirms that travel plans will be required for all developments which require a transport assessment.

6.5 Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework was revised in July 2021 and sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It is a material consideration when determining planning applications.
- 6.5.2 The NPPF seeks to significantly increase the supply of housing and to deliver a choice of high quality homes, and also notes that to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the viability of rural communities.
- 6.5.3 The NPPF attaches great importance to good design and promotes local distinctiveness but does note that planning decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes.

Achieving Sustainable Development

- 6.5.4 **Paragraph 7** - The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 6.5.5 **Paragraph 8** - Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives (economic, social and environmental), which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives).
- 6.5.6 **Paragraph 11** - Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking this means: c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
- i. The application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

Decision making

- 6.5.7 **Paragraph 38** - Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way.
- 6.5.8 **Paragraph 39** - Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good

quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.

- 6.5.9 **Paragraph 41** – The more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, including the need to deliver improvements in infrastructure and affordable housing, the greater the benefits. For their role in the planning system to be effective and positive, statutory planning consultees will need to take the same early, pro-active approach, and provide advice in a timely manner throughout the development process. This assists local planning authorities in issuing timely decisions, helping to ensure that applicants do not experience unnecessary delays and costs.

Promoting healthy and safe communities

- 6.5.10 **Paragraph 98** – Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.

Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

- 6.5.11 **Paragraph 60** – To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.
- 6.5.12 **Paragraph 63** – Where a need for affordable housing is identified, planning policies should specify the type of affordable housing required, and expect it to be met on-site unless:
- a) off-site provision or an appropriate financial contribution in lieu can be robustly justified; and
 - b) the agreed approach contributes to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities.
- 6.5.13 **Paragraph 64** – Affordable housing should not be sought for residential developments that are not major developments, other than in designated rural areas (where policies may set out a lower threshold of 5 units or fewer). To support the re-use of brownfield land, where vacant buildings are being reused or redeveloped, any affordable housing contribution due should be reduced by a proportionate amount.
- 6.5.14 **Paragraph 79** – to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive,

especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.

Achieving Good Design

- 6.5.15 **Paragraph 126** - The creation of high-quality buildings and places are fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. 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. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.
- 6.5.16 **Paragraph 130** – Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:
- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
 - b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
 - c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
 - d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
 - e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
 - f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.
- 6.5.17 **Paragraph 132** - Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals. Early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests. Applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot.
- 6.5.18 **Paragraph 134** - Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary

planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:

- a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or
- b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

Habitats and Biodiversity

- 6.5.19 **Paragraph 180** of the NPPF states that development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.

Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

- 6.5.20 **Paragraph 203** – In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Medway Council Interim Residential Parking Standards (2009)

- 6.5.21 Sets out the minimum parking standards referred to in Policy T13 for residential dwellings.

Medway Interim Housing Standards (2011)

- 6.5.22 The Medway Design Standards provide planning guidance that expands upon the existing Medway Local Plan policies S2: maintaining and improving environmental quality and design standards; BNE1: General Principles for Built Development, BNE2: Amenity Protection and H6: Flat Conversions. This document provides developers, landowners and their advisors with guidance on the main principles and minimum layout and space standards that will be expected in design of new housing and in the conversion of existing properties.

Guide to Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (2018)

- 6.5.23 The guide sets out that developer contributions will be required for residential developments of 10 or more units, as per the table below.

Contribution for	Amount per dwelling
Bird disturbance mitigation (SAMMS)	£275.88
Cultural Services:	
- Community services	£205.87
- Heritage and museums	£319.85
- Libraries	£185.55

Education	
- Nursery	£1,549.29
- Primary	£3,802.80
- Secondary	£3,013.09
- Sixth form	£793.15
Health	£710.46
Open/ play space, outdoor formal sport	£2,866.64
Sports facilities	£273.55
Waste and recycling	£194.42
Youth provision	£87.99
Total	£14,278.54

6.5.24 This table does not take into account affordable housing, highways safety and environmental mitigation. The table should be used as a guide, the full extent of S106 contributions will not be known until a planning application is submitted and Medway Council and other relevant bodies confirm whether mitigation is required. This is particularly relevant for items such as Education which is dependent on a number of factors.

7 Planning Appraisal

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

7.1.2 In determining whether the proposal accords with the development plan, the following issues are considered:

- Principle of Development;
- Design and Layout;
- Landscape and Visual Impact;
- Arboriculture;
- Highways and Access;
- Other Matters
 - Amenity;
 - Noise;
 - Air Quality;
 - Open space;
 - Ecology;
 - Contamination;
 - Drainage;
 - Lighting;
 - Utilities;
 - Archaeology; and
 - Refuse.

8 Principle of Development

8.1 Context

- 8.1.1 As noted in this Statement the site lies within the countryside in planning policy terms and has not been allocated for development.
- 8.1.2 Policy BNE25 of the Local Plan states that development in the countryside will only be permitted in specific circumstances but is a policy the Council have acknowledged as having serious issues in respect of NPPF compliance.
- 8.1.3 The proposed development then also falls within an Area of Local Landscape Importance (ALLI) as designated in the Local Plan Map. Policy BNE34 seeks to prevent development which would materially harm the landscape character and function of the area, or unless the economic and social benefits are so important that they outweigh the local priority to conserve the area's landscape. The policy then states that development within an ALLI should be sited, designed and landscaped to minimise harm to the area's landscape character and function.
- 8.1.4 The Local Plan Map also highlights that an area of woodland to the northwest of the site is designated as an area of protected open space. The north-western area of the site is designated as Protection of Open Space and is therefore protected under Policy L3.

8.2 Housing Supply and Presumption in favour of sustainable development

- 8.2.1 Paragraph 74 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old.
- 8.2.2 Medway Council cannot currently demonstrate a five-year supply of housing, and as of the 2020-2021 Housing Delivery Test, the Council had only delivered 55% of its target number of dwellings in the preceding 3 years.
- 8.2.3 The lack of a five-year supply of housing has been consistently acknowledged in recent appeal decisions (including Land at East Hill Chatham¹, Gibraltar Farm Hempstead² and Orchard Kennels Rainham³) with the latest of those appeals, Orchard Kennels, quoting a 3.64 year supply of housing. Medway Council accepted in their pre-application advice issued on 22nd June 2022 in respect of the site which is the subject of this application that they cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of housing at present.
- 8.2.4 As there has also been a significant under-delivery of housing over the previous three years, as set out in the NPPF the Council must include a 20% buffer to their annual housing requirement to make up the shortfall. The Council has also been

¹ Land at East Hill, Chatham – APP/A2280/W/21/3280915

² Gibraltar Farm, Hempstead – APP/A2280/W/21/3276864

³ Orchard Kennels, Rainham – APP/A2280/W/21/3274932

required to produce an action plan to demonstrate how they will address the shortfall in accordance with the Housing Delivery Test in which Medway Council only delivered 55% of the required housing over the last three years. As shown in the table below this has resulted in a significant shortfall that needs to be addressed.

Year	Completions	Requirement	Surplus / Deficit
2012/13	565	1,000	-435
2013/14	579	1,000	-421
2014/15	483	1,000	-517
2015/16	553	1,000	-447
2016/17	642	1,000	-358
2017/18	680	1,000	-320
2018/19	647	1,683	-1,036
2019/20	1,130	1,662	-532
2020/21	1,082	1,586	-504
2015/16-2020/21	4,734	7,931	-3,197

Table 6.1: Completed residential dwellings for Medway between 2013-2020
(Source: Medway Annual Monitoring Report 2021)

- 8.2.5 Against that significant shortfall and recognition by the Council regarding their lack of a five-year supply of housing, Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) sets out a clear presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking, this means approving development that accords with an up-to-date development plan or in this case (paragraph 11d) where the policies in the development plan are out of date because the Local Planning Authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites, granting planning permission unless the circumstances set out at Paragraph 11 d) i. or d) ii apply. The effect of Paragraph 11d) is therefore to tilt the balance in favour of granting planning permission.
- 8.2.6 Part i) of Paragraph 11 d) of the NPPF requires development to accord with the policies of the NPPF which protect areas or assets of particular importance. Footnote 7 provides a list of these areas and assets of particular importance, which includes irreplaceable habitats. The ancient woodland adjacent to the development site is one such irreplaceable habitat and has been addressed in detail within this application, with the proposed scheme including a significant buffer, appropriately designed to ensure that any impacts on the ancient woodland are avoided. As demonstrated in this Statement and in the relevant technical reports within this application, the ancient woodland does not therefore provide a clear reason for refusing the development proposed.
- 8.2.7 As then demonstrated throughout this Statement and within the application itself, in respect of part d)ii. there are no adverse impacts considered to arise from the proposed development which would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits which have been identified, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF as a whole.

- 8.2.8 In particular, as confirmed by the three appeals identified within this Statement, the development of both affordable and market homes within an area where there has been under-delivery can be afforded significant positive weight, with associated social, economic impacts being afforded moderate positive weight.
- 8.2.9 In that respect Paragraph 11.d) therefore states that planning permission should be granted.

8.3 Area of Local Landscape Importance (ALLI)

- 8.3.1 The three appeals referred to in this Section each dealt with schemes which fell within ALLI in Medway. Those appeals take a consistent approach to the ALLI, noting that locally designated landscape policies such as ALLI are at the lower end of the designated landscape hierarchy, and taking the view that the policy continues to have full weight as its primary aim is to protect the character of the landscape.
- 8.3.2 In those other appeals the consideration of the impact of those proposed developments on the ALLI has included assessments of the visual relation and functionality of those sites as part of the wider ALLI designation, the defining characteristics of each ALLI, together with the presence of any boundary vegetation and detracting features, and the prominence and visibility of the development proposed. It is noted in those appeal decisions and in this Statement that Policy BNE34 does allow for development in ALLI if the social and economic benefits are so important that they outweigh the local priority in respect of the landscape. The Gibraltar Farm Inspector concluded that the overall function of the ALLI had been preserved and the East Hill appeal Inspector concluded that whilst some harm would be caused it did not amount to material harm as set out in BNE34 and similarly that therefore the overall function of the ALLI had been preserved.
- 8.3.3 This planning application is accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment which includes a consideration of the proposed scheme's impact on the ALLI. As demonstrated within that LVIA, the site is very well contained visually due both to local topography and adjacent woodland parcels, with the number of visual receptors being limited. That context would minimise the impact of any development of the site on the ALLI, particularly the overall function of the ALLI in the vicinity of the site.
- 8.3.4 In that respect the scheme is submitted to accord with that aspect of BNE34 which requires development to be sited in a way which minimises harm to the areas landscape character and function, whilst also using design and landscape to ensure that impacts of the development on the ALLI are minimised.
- 8.3.5 In this case it is submitted that the proposed scheme does not therefore materially harm the landscape character and function of the area. However if the Council did consider there to be some degree of harm created it is submitted that the housing provided by the proposed development, in the context of the lack of supply within Medway, would deliver an economic and social benefit which is sufficiently important to outweigh the local priority to conserve the area's landscape.

8.4 Sustainability

- 8.4.1 A climate change and energy efficiency statement has been prepared by Icen Projects Limited in support of the application to provide an overview into how the development contributed to sustainable development.
- 8.4.2 The NPPF at paragraph 8 sets out three dimensions of sustainability which are economic, social and environmental, and Paragraph 11 sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 8.4.3 The proposed development would contribute to economic sustainability by generating direct and indirect construction jobs during the construction period. There would be further economic benefits through the induced and indirect jobs once operational as the future occupiers would be supporting the local economy when using the services and amenities.
- 8.4.4 The proposed development meets the social dimension as the proposed development increases the supply and range of housing for the local community which is a significant benefit given that Medway Council cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of housing. In pre-application discussions Medway accepted that significant weight should be given to the provision of private and social housing in the district at this time. In addition, the additional population arising from the development would help support local services and community facilities. The development would provide a proposed development that is well-designed and safe, with open spaces to promote physical and mental well-being of the future occupiers.
- 8.4.5 In addition, the proposed development would increase the supply of affordable housing by seeking to achieve 25% affordable housing for the scheme, with that affordable housing then performing a social role by allowing access to homes for those otherwise unable to access property ownership or accommodation.
- 8.4.6 The proposed development contributes to the environmental objective through being carefully designed to respond to and enhance the natural and historic local environment. The proposals include measures to ensure the protection of the adjacent ancient woodland, as well as creating biodiversity net gain across the site, and including features such as electric charging points, with the dwellings themselves built to Redrow's enhanced levels of design sustainability.
- 8.4.7 The climate change and energy efficiency statement outlines that the designs are to rigorous energy standards, with air source heat pump (ASHP) technology to provide an appropriate carbon dioxide emission saving of 59.1%, to mitigate the Climate Emergency.
- 8.4.8 The proposed development also will enhance the sustainability of the development by fitting all homes with triple glazing, improving building fabric for energy efficiency and air source heat pumps. This will limit the use of gas within homes and help the sustainability of the site.
- 8.4.9 The government have also stated that all new homes should be fitted with electric vehicle charging point, so this proposal complies with that by installing charging points on all new dwellings.

- 8.4.10 The NPPF therefore tilts the balance towards the granting of planning permission, along with complying with policy BNE1, BNE4 and BNE22, which provides a holistic sustainability approach for proposals.

8.5 Summary of Principle of Development

- 8.5.1 As established within this section this application must be assessed against the context of a significant under-delivery of housing and the recognised lack of a five-year housing land supply in the district, which results in a presumption in favour of sustainable development, where planning permission should be granted in areas which are not protected in the NPPF and where the adverse impacts of granting planning permission would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 8.5.2 The development proposed would deliver both market and affordable housing, together with associated social, economic and environmental benefits, all of which should be afforded positive weight. The proposed scheme avoids any detrimental impacts to the ancient woodland, through careful design and mitigation measures. It then preserves the overall function of the ALLI, due again to careful design as well as the visually contained nature of the site itself. On that basis it is submitted that the proposed scheme is acceptable in principle, on the basis of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

9 Design and Layout

- 9.1.1 A Design and Access Statement has been provided in support of this application, to indicate the detailed masterplan, street hierarchy and sustainability of the proposed development.
- 9.1.2 The proposed development has been designed to be sympathetic to the local character, mirroring and complementing the materials and architectural features which make up the local vernacular. This complies with policy S4 and BNE1 of the local plan as the high quality of built development responds to the context of the site and reflects the distinct local character.
- 9.1.3 The residential area of the scheme extends to 2.66ha, containing 88 homes, with 66 for the private market, 16 affordable homes and 6 first homes. The housing type mix has been carefully considered to include variation in street scenes as well as mitigating the needs of the community. Policy H3 and H5 are complied with here as the density of housing and provision of affordable housing have been incorporated into the development.
- 9.1.4 The dwellings will be a mixture of 1-5 bedroom properties, with a range of house types, complying with policy H10, including detached, semi-detached and terraced dwellings. One apartment building is proposed, in the northern corner of the site. That apartment block performs an important role in providing a range of dwelling sizes and it is therefore submitted that it is appropriate, in the context of the well contained and visually screened nature of the site for that apartment building to be three storeys in height.
- 9.1.5 Policy BNE8 of the Local Plan is complied with as the design and layout of the development seeks to maximise personal safety and security through the placement of buildings to actively face streets and public areas to promote the 24-hour surveillance. The public areas have also been designed so that they are safe and accessible to all.
- 9.1.6 Therefore, careful consideration over the design and layout of the proposed development has been undertaken to comply with the local plan policies, to provide high quality design throughout the development.

10 Landscape and Visual Impact

10.1 Context

- 10.1.1 The application site lies within an Area of Local Landscape Importance (ALLI), within the countryside by virtue of being outside any defined confines of a settlement and the area to south of the M2 contains the Kent Downs AONB. Consequently, a Landscape and Visual Appraisal has been undertaken.
- 10.1.2 The proposed scheme will provide appropriate landscaping throughout the site in order to provide a buffer for the ancient woodland and retain the existing species found throughout. Landscaping along the southwestern edge of the site will directly respond to the neighbouring woodland using species found within it. The use of these distinct species will help create a distinct character area within the development and positively contribute to the local landscape context.
- 10.1.3 Even when taking the approach that the development of the site would create adverse landscape effects on the site itself, there will be very limited effects upon the wider landscape context, due to the containment of the site.
- 10.1.4 This complies with policy BNE22 as the development is protecting and improving the appearance of the environment.
- 10.1.5 The proposed development would not harm the AONB or the setting of that designation given the strong existing boundary planting which provides a sufficient buffer between the site and the AONB. Therefore, this proposal complies with policy BNE32 as the AONB is conserved and this proposal does not cause any harm to it.

11 Arboriculture

11.1 Context

- 11.1.1 The site is bound by an area of woodland, with ancient woodland to the west of the site. Therefore, an Arboricultural Report (AR) has been submitted in support of the application.
- 11.1.2 Through the ongoing arboricultural input during the iterative process, tree removal has been limited to category B and C trees where unavoidable to secure the vehicular access to the site, or they are sections of scrub within the site itself. The remaining tree cover is retained or enhanced.
- 11.1.3 However, the removal of these trees has been mitigated by the comprehensive landscaping scheme proposed throughout the proposed development.
- 11.1.4 A sufficient buffer which varies between 15.5m and 20.7m has been provided around the site to protect the ancient woodland. The design of the buffer area ensures that limited activity occurs within that woodland buffer zone.
- 11.1.5 The buffer will include an area of flower rich grassland, then a timber post and rail fence restricting access into the new woodland edge planting and reptile habitat area. Then, a new native hedgerow will provide an element of separation between this open area and the new housing, which will also prevent parking on verges throughout the site boundaries.
- 11.1.6 Therefore, this development complies with policy BNE43 and paragraph 180 of the NPPF due to the retention of trees, woodlands and hedgerows within the site, so by providing a buffer the ancient woodland and existing hedgerows will be maintained.
- 11.1.7 This will also comply with policy BNE38 which requires the provision of a wildlife corridor to make provision for wildlife habitats.

12 Highways and Access

12.1 Context

- 12.1.1 The proposed development seeks to provide 88 new dwellings with a new access via Maidstone Road, to the southeast of the development. A Transport Assessment and draft Travel Plan is submitted in support of the application.
- 12.1.2 The assessment found that access to the site is sustainable from all modes of transport, including walking, cycling, bus and train routes. The location is particularly sustainable due to its proximity and connectivity to the Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre which provides a range of services, facilities and public transport links.
- 12.1.3 A Framework Travel Plan is included within the report which encourages the sustainable travel to the site and promotes a range of sustainable travel measures. The Travel Plan would be monitored over a five year period with the aim of achieving a set of agreed targets over the period.
- 12.1.4 Overall, the assessment finds that the impact of the additional vehicle trips generated onto the network will be negligible and would likely represent normal day to day fluctuations in traffic flow, therefore no further highways assessment is required.
- 12.1.5 Each dwelling will have at least the minimum required parking spaces along with additional visitor spaces located throughout the site which aims to limit the amount of on-street parking, limiting the disturbance to neighbours.
- 12.1.6 The development will have suitable turning areas for refuse and fire vehicles throughout the site. Emergency and fire tenders will be able to enter the site and access all units within 45m. There is provision for them to turn on site and re-enter the highway in a forward gear, in line with national guidance. This has all been confirmed in the transport assessment through a vehicle swept path analysis.
- 12.1.7 The proposed development does not result in a severe residual impact in accordance with Paragraph 111 of the NPPF in light of the proposed mitigation. Therefore, the proposed development complies with the NPPF and Policies T1, T2, T4, T12, T13 and T14 of the Local Plan.

13 Other Matters

13.1 Amenity

- 13.1.1 By using the existing woodland as a buffer around the whole site, any unacceptable loss of privacy, overlooking, loss of light or overbearing impact to the neighbouring occupiers will be prevented.
- 13.1.2 As demonstrated throughout this Statement the design of the proposed dwellings has regard to the amenity of future occupants, in respect of matters such as road noise. Within the scheme itself the design and layout of the proposed dwellings, including the use of 10m back gardens, will prevent any internal overlooking within the development itself.
- 13.1.3 This therefore complies with policy BNE2 as the development secures the amenities of its future occupants.

13.2 Noise

- 13.2.1 The site has the potential to be affected by road traffic noise from Hoath Way and the M2 and an Acoustic Assessment has therefore been undertaken by WSP and submitted in support of the application.
- 13.2.2 The report assessed the noise impacts of the surrounding roads, including the M2 and Hoath Way, and the potential for noise impacts from the air source heat pumps that will be provided.
- 13.2.3 The proposed development has been informed via an acoustic design process to ensure that the layout and building positioning is optimised to minimise noise exposure for future occupiers. Façade mitigation will be necessary on the exposed façade of the first row of units opposite Hoath Way and Maidstone Road, but standard glazing and vents will be adequate on the remainder of the development.
- 13.2.4 The report concludes that acceptable noise criteria has been achieved in external amenity spaces with the vast majority of garden spaces predicted to be exposed to sound levels below 55 dB $L_{Aeq,16h}$. However, the most stringent internal criteria will not be met with windows open, so intermittent extract ventilation is recommended for habitable rooms to allow noise sensitive residents to increase ventilation without opening windows.
- 13.2.5 The noise levels generated by the operation of the proposed Air Source Heat Pumps has also been assessed and it is concluded that any associated impacts will be acceptable at this site.
- 13.2.6 Therefore, the development is compliant with policy BNE2 and BNE3 of the local plan by protecting the residential amenity of the development.

13.3 Air Quality

- 13.3.1 The proposed development of up to 88 dwellings is expected to generate additional vehicle movements. In light of this, an Air Quality Assessment (AQA)

has been submitted in support of the application which primarily focusses on the potential impacts from construction and on local traffic emissions once the development has been completed.

- 13.3.2 The report concludes that providing there are suitable mitigation measures and good site practice throughout the construction phase, the residual effects on air quality will be negligible.
- 13.3.3 Once operational, the proposed development will generate traffic movements on the local road network. A qualitative assessment of the potential impact of the proposed development on air quality was undertaken and the proposed trip generation is low in comparison to the existing traffic flows and below the necessary screening criteria. Therefore, the proposed development is not expected to have significant effects on local air quality at nearby receptors and a detailed assessment is not required.
- 13.3.4 The report concludes that mitigation equivalent to £31,302 should be provided within the site and a range of mitigation measures have been proposed throughout the development. These include: electric vehicle charging points, cycle parking, a residential travel plan and tree planting throughout the site. The cost of the mitigation proposed is expected to exceed the costs calculated from the emissions mitigation assessment, and therefore no further mitigation is required.
- 13.3.5 Therefore, the development complies with Policy BNE24.

13.4 Open Space

- 13.4.1 The west of the site provides a recreational green which will create an area of open space within the development, along with a children's play space beside it.
- 13.4.2 The new recreational green creates a soft, landscaped edge to the development with visual interest provided by new landscape planting and openness. It will include seating as meeting and resting points whilst the open area of amenity grass will provide an area of flexible multifunctional green space for the new community.
- 13.4.3 This complies with policy L3 and L4 ensuring that the proposals have a clear provision of open space along with an allocated children's play area.
- 13.4.4 There will also be mowed grass paths to the north of the site, which will provide the link with the Public Right of Way, which runs north to south through the site along grass verges where possible, to limit the amount of the PRoW on pavements.
- 13.4.5 This complies with policy L10 as the diversion of the public right of way is providing alternative route, to the west side of the development, which is of comparable amenity.

13.5 Ecology

- 13.5.1 An Ecological Appraisal (EA) and a biodiversity net gain Assessment has been submitted in support of the application.

- 13.5.2 The Phase 1 habitat survey has outlined that the site is dominated by habitats not considered to be of ecological importance, but the proposals have sought to retain those features considered to be of value. Where a loss of habitats has not been possible, new habitat creation has been proposed to offset this loss. Other mitigation measures have been put in place to minimise the harm to protected species.
- 13.5.3 The scheme includes 0.27ha of planting of scrub along the northern boundary of the site, forming the ancient woodland buffer, which will protect the woodland against loss and deterioration. The largest biodiversity net gain is through the establishment of 0.57ha of species rich wildflower grassland and tree planting. The report concludes that the development will result in a 3.97 (42.69%) biodiversity net gain for habitats and a net gain was also recorded for linear habitats (hedgerow).
- 13.5.4 An appropriately worded condition could be put in place to ensure that there are no adverse effects of light-spill to the woodland and associated wildlife.

13.6 Contamination

- 13.6.1 A Geo-environmental and Geotechnical assessment (Ground Investigation) report has been submitted in support of this application.
- 13.6.2 The report found that the ground conditions comprise a veneer of top soil followed by clay-with-flint formation and then Seaford Chalk formation further down. Groundwater was also not reported to have been found within this report. Therefore, JOMAS found no evidence of contaminated land throughout their assessment and no further assessment or risk mitigation is required, and the site is considered suitable for the proposed use.
- 13.6.3 However, the report does state that the presence of further hotspots between the sampling points cannot be ruled out, therefore should any contamination be encountered during construction, an environmental consultant should be informed immediately. The management of this is welcomed through an appropriately phrased condition. Policy BNE23 has therefore been complied with through this application.

13.7 Drainage

- 13.7.1 As the proposed development site exceeds 1ha in size a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been submitted in support of the application. The assessment has been prepared in accordance with guidance given in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (July 2021) and the latest Planning Practice Guidance. The assessment covers the identification of all sources of flooding, their impact on the development, their residual risk and mitigation.
- 13.7.2 The assessment concludes that the proposed site is in Flood Zone 1 and is located approximately 8km from the River Medway. The risk of flooding from tidal or fluvial sources is deemed low as the site is in Flood Zone 1. Flood risk from reservoirs, surface water, groundwater and sewers is deemed relatively low, therefore no flood mitigation measures are needed or proposed.

- 13.7.3 A drainage strategy is included, with a SuDS hierarchy being applied. The report states that the development's surface water will be routed via gravity to an infiltration basin located near to the northwest corner and the soil's soakage rate is high at this location. There is an infiltration basin that provides the treatment necessary to mitigate the 3 pollution indices encountered in residential estates. The development also proposes a pond that has a basin volume larger than needed, meaning that there is additional capacity in extreme storm events.

13.8 Lighting

- 13.8.1 Policy BNE5 is complied with within this development due to the minimal loss of amenity from light glare and spillage. Due to the woodland boundary around the site, the AONB will not be impacted from the glare of the residential development.
- 13.8.2 A suitably worded condition is welcomed to control the details of lighting within this scheme.

13.9 Utilities

- 13.9.1 A utilities assessment has been produced by Premier Energy in support of the application. The report finds that there is no main utility infrastructure within the existing site, however they are available within the local area. Therefore, the development seeks to connect to the existing utilities in the surrounding area.

13.10 Archaeology

- 13.10.1 An archaeological desk-based assessment has been prepared and has been submitted in support of the application.
- 13.10.2 The report found that there are no nationally significant Scheduled Monuments within the vicinity of the site, with a motte and bailey castle being 3km to the south east, but view of that site are blocked by trees bordering the southern edge of the site.
- 13.10.3 It concluded that the site has low or low-moderate archaeological potential and any development on the site is considered unlikely to have a widespread or high level adverse effect on buried archaeology.
- 13.10.4 A suitably worded condition is welcomed with any consent to secure archaeological evaluation fieldwork to ensure that archaeological remains, if present, are suitably mitigated by design or by preservation by record.

13.11 Refuse

- 13.11.1 All dwellings will have their own individual refuse stores located at the front of the property for 1 x 240 litre bin, 1 x 50 litre white reusable bag and 1 x 50 litre blue reusable bag and 2 black refuse sacks as a minimum. Residents will not be required to move wheeled bins more than 30m from their residence, as per the Waste Management Requirements. The proposed development has also been designed to ensure that collection crews will not have to carry containers or move wheeled bins more than 15m from the highway to the collection vehicle.

- 13.11.2 This is shown through a swept path analysis, provided within the transport assessment to highlight the suitable turning areas for 10.4m refuse vehicles throughout the site.
- 13.11.3 Therefore, this complies with local and national policy requirements of waste collection.

14 Summary and Conclusion

14.1 Summary

14.1.1 This Planning Statement accompanies an application for full planning permission by Redrow Homes South East on land at Blowers Wood, Hempstead for Construction of 88 dwellings (including 25% affordable) together with associated parking, access, open space, landscaping and SuDS.

14.1.2 The planning case for the proposed development is based on the following, as discussed within this Statement:

- (1) There is a compelling need for more housing to help Medway Council address the significant deficiency which has arisen in housing delivery in the district;
- (2) The proposal would make a housing contribution of up to 88 dwellings; of which 25% will be provided as affordable homes in an authority where there is demonstrable need for such provision, which as such should be give significant positive weight in its own right in support of the proposed scheme;
- (3) The development of that housing would also create associated social, economic and environmental benefits which similarly should be given positive weight;
- (4) This site is an appropriate and acceptable location within the district to accommodate new housing. It is sustainably located by virtue of its proximity to a range of services, facilities and public transport routes and is then a physically and visually contained parcel of land which would provide a logical extension to Hempstead. In that respect the proposed development would preserve the overall function of the Area of Local Landscape Importance within which it is located.
- (5) The proximity of the adjacent ancient woodland has been an integral part of the design process. Through careful design and the introduction of an appropriate buffer area the proposed development would avoid adverse impacts on the ancient woodland area.
- (6) The proposal site and the proposed development fully accord with the principles of development as set out in national policy and provides an appropriate, accessible and highly sustainable location for new development;
- (7) The current highway infrastructure is able to accommodate the development without giving rise to any highway safety concerns and the proposed access meets with policy requirements and will adequately support the scheme.
- (8) The site can successfully accommodate residential development without detrimental impact to the local environment in terms of landscape, visual

amenity, biodiversity, heritage, air quality, archaeological, transport or arboriculture in light of the mitigation measures being proposed.

- 14.1.3 It is therefore requested that planning permission be granted, subject to appropriate conditions and to a S106 agreement which secures the necessary financial contributions arising from the scheme.

Appendix A

Public Consultation Leaflet



YOUR **REDROW**

TOGETHER, WE'RE CREATING A BETTER WAY TO LIVE



Why have I received this leaflet?

Redrow Homes is seeking your views as it prepares a planning application which will seek full planning permission for a residential development of 88 new homes on land at **Blowers Wood in Hempstead**. The location of this site is shown edged in red on the plan overleaf.

What is Proposed?

A mix of two to five bedroom homes are proposed, with 25% of the homes being affordable and First Homes. The majority of the properties would be two storeys in height, with a single two and a half storey apartment block proposed. A large landscaped buffer area at least 15 metres in width and containing a new wildflower meadow would be provided between the development and Blowers Wood to the northwest. An amenity open space and play area would be provided, in addition to new tree planting and landscaping throughout the scheme.

The development would be accessed by vehicles from Maidstone Road to the southeast of the site. The existing public right of way running across the site would be diverted and incorporated into the development to ensure a continued pedestrian route across the site between Lambsfrith Grove and the woodland to the south.



Courtesy of Google Earth 2022

What's next?

Redrow Homes is currently in the process of preparing the application for submission to Medway Council, who will then provide an opportunity for formal representations to be made on the proposed development which the Council will take into account when determining that application.

Redrow is taking the opportunity to share the emerging proposals at this stage and to invite comments prior to the application being submitted in early 2023.

Find out more

To find out more about Redrow, visit their website at: www.redrow.co.uk. To find out more about the scheme and to make comments please visit our project website at: www.blowerswood.co.uk

Comments should be made no later than Friday 13th January 2023.



Appendix B

Public Consultation Website Overview

Introduction

Redrow Homes welcome you to this public consultation website.

This public consultation website has been produced as part of our community engagement regarding a detailed planning application which will be submitted to Medway Council for a proposed development of 88 homes on land at Blowers Wood in Hempstead.

We are preparing an application for the proposed development which will include the following elements:

- 88 dwellings in total, including 22 affordable dwellings (comprising 6 First Homes and 16 affordable homes)
- Open space and a play area
- A 15 to 20m natural buffer area beside Blowers Wood
- New tree planting and landscaping throughout

There would be a single vehicle access into the site from Maidstone Road to the southeast of the site.

As a full planning application the submission to the Council will include full details of the site layout and appearance of the development, including the mix and type of housing proposed.

This consultation website provides details of the site, Redrow Homes and details of the proposed development and is an opportunity for you to provide feedback on the proposals.

The feedback received will be reviewed and analysed and where possible used to inform the final application submitted to Medway Council.

To leave feedback on any aspect of the development please click on the Feedback tab which will allow you to submit your feedback. We encourage you to review the draft layout plan before leaving comment.



About Redrow

A Better Way to Live

At Redrow, we build more than just homes; we create thriving communities. We care about the quality of the homes we build, are committed to providing safe and considerate working environments and work hard to manage the environmental impacts from our activities.

Redrow has long embraced the design principles of Garden Towns and Villages to create new communities that stand the test of time based around the key values that are essential to create better places to live and are applied to all of our developments, irrespective of their scale and location.

Not only do we build communities of our own, we work hard to integrate into the wider community, improving services for the benefit of the whole neighbourhood and making leisure spaces more accessible for everyone to enjoy. We create and improve transport infrastructure via roads, paths and cycleways that blend seamlessly with the existing network.

Creating Sustainable Communities and Building Responsibility

Our philosophy is to create attractive and desirable places to live the contribute to wellbeing and consider the needs of the local community. Our innovative design principles ensure our developments enhance the appeal of an area and stand the test of time.

Our people are the heart of our business. We invest in attracting and developing talented people and work with education bodies to encourage the next generation of housebuilders.

We never forget that our communities also include a wide range of other local wildlife residents too. Redrow enhances the ecological value of our developments recognising the importance of strengthening people's connections with nature and their natural surroundings. We achieve this through design, partnerships and our commitment to continually refine our understanding of important biodiversity principles.

That's why we create layouts carefully designed to allow the natural flow of life, with ponds, wetlands and wildlife habitats, bee friendly gardens and family friendly woodlands. We often are able to create valuable wildlife corridors and habitat areas on our developments and work hard to protect the wider environment.

Award Winning Homes

Every element of our award winning Heritage homes are carefully considered to offer a better way of living. Inside and out, from first time buyer to large family homes, we never lose sight of our responsibility to our customers, making sure that their home is not just a place to live, but a place for living.

At Redrow we develop places where individuals and families can live and flourish. Places that not only cater for community needs but enhance lifestyles. Places that feel like home.

Redrow is proud to retain its 5* HBF rating, meaning that over 90 percent of customers would recommend Redrow.

Please visit www.redrow.co.uk (<http://www.redrow.co.uk/>) for further information.



Location

The site is a parcel of land of just under 4 hectares in size. It is enclosed by Blowers Wood and Chapel Hill Wood to the west and south and by Hoath Way and Maidstone Road to the north and east. There is a single existing vehicular access from Maidstone Road.



The site is linked to Lambfrith Grove to the north via an existing Public Right of Way which provides pedestrian access to the Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre located approximately 500m to the north of the site. The Centre hosts a supermarket, gym and petrol station alongside numerous retail and food establishments.

The site is connected via established pedestrian footways to nearby public bus stops along Wigmore Road to the east and at Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre, providing frequent services to Chatham, Maidstone, Wigmore and Twydall, The National Express bus also stops at Hempstead Valley, taking passengers to Dover and Victoria.

The A278 provides access into the Medway Towns and the nearby M2 provides direct links to surrounding towns as well as the M25 and London.

The Proposed Development

We are proposing to build 88 homes within a high quality, inclusive and safe development which respects and retains the existing site boundaries and provides new landscaping and biodiversity enhancements.

The scheme would include a mix of terraced, semi-detached and detached dwellings which are two storeys in height as well as nine apartments in a single block of two and a half storeys high. The dwellings for market sale (66 in total) would be a mixture of 2, 3, 4 and 5 bed houses.

25% of the dwellings (22 properties) would be affordable homes. The affordable dwellings would be a mixture of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom properties and would include First Homes and affordable properties.

Ample on plot parking spaces would be provided along with visitor spaces spread throughout the development.

The houses which face the A278 have been designed to screen the rest of the development and garden areas from road noise.

The site would include a pumping station and electrical substation. Connections would be made into the surrounding water and electrical infrastructure, which have capacity to serve the development.



-  **Site Boundary**
-  Existing Trees along site boundary
-  15m Buffer to Ancient Woodland
-  Proposed Arrival Street Tree Planting
-  Blowers Wood View Street Tree Planting
-  Proposed Native Hedgerow - POS
-  Proposed Native Hedgerow - Front Gardens
-  Proposed Trees within POS
-  Woodland edge / Scrub planting mix
-  Amenity Grassland
-  Species Rich Wildflower Grassland



Reptile Habitat Area



Proposed Equipped Play Area



Proposed SuDS
(predominantly dry - including wet tolerant grass species)



Proposed Formal Footpath
(2m wide all access hard surface)



Proposed Informal Footpath
(2m wide cut grass)



PRoW diverted within site



Potential Primary Vehicular Access



Timber post & rail fence restricting
access into new woodland edge
planting and reptile habitat area

Sustainability

The standard specification of our homes goes above and beyond the minimum requirements of current building regulations. Our homes include features which make them highly energy efficient, comfortable and more affordable to run. This in turn helps our customers to reduce their demand for energy and their own carbon footprint.

All homes would be fitted with:

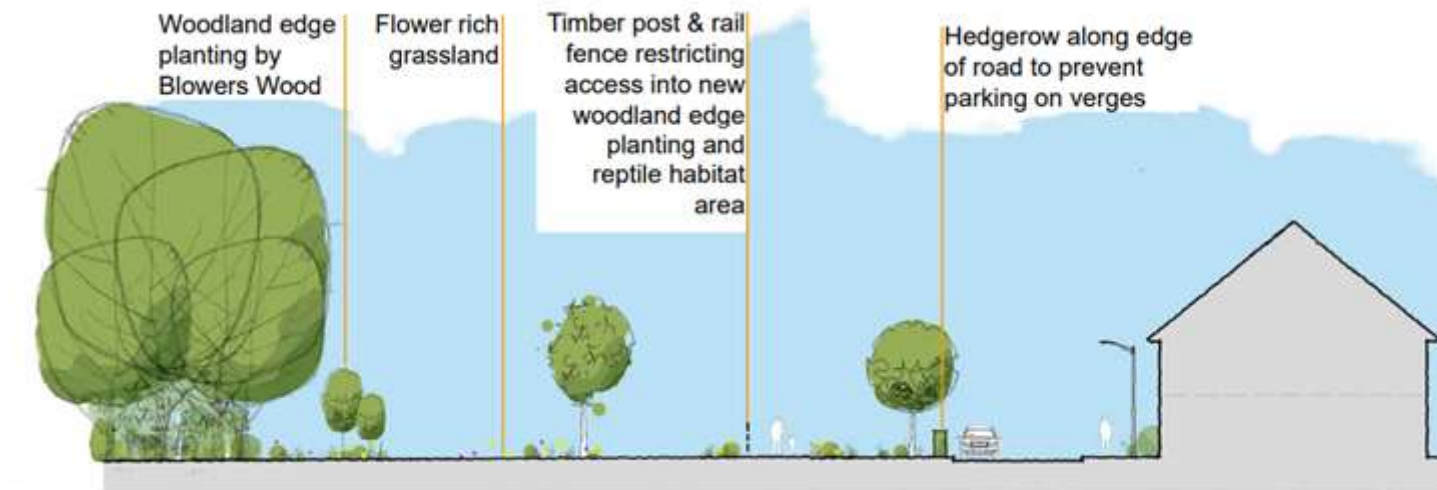
- Triple glazing
- Improved building fabric for energy efficiency
- Air Source Heat Pumps
- Electric vehicle charging points to promote the use of electric cars



Landscaping

The site is well enclosed by the existing woodland and established boundary trees.

There would be a landscape buffer between the development and the Blowers Wood ancient woodland of between 15.5m – 20m containing scrub planting, wildflower meadows and ecological habitats.



All existing woodland and tree boundaries would be retained and strengthened. There would be no houses backing onto the woodlands to avoid future overshadowing issues.

There would be a children's play space within the development together with a recreational green area.

The site is proposed to have a variety of internal landscaping to enhance the site. There would be a strong, spinal tree-lined route through the site. Larger street trees would line the main street from the entrance leading to the Central Green and landscaping across the wider site would be used to create different character areas within the development.



Biodiversity

The site is currently comprised of species-poor grassland (former rough pasture), with emerging bramble in some places.

Bats use the vegetated corridors around the site, with buffer zones and sensitive lighting proposed to ensure bat foraging continues to take place. There is a small population of reptiles present which would be accommodated within enhanced habitat in the ancient woodland buffer zone.

A preliminary Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment has been carried out which indicates that the scheme would achieve greater than 20% net gain in biodiversity, using the Defra calculation metric. This is sufficient to meet the emerging national requirements for net gain and also Medway's higher 20% target.

This biodiversity net gain would be achieved through the provision of a range of high quality habitats within the Ancient Woodland Buffer zone, and other areas of Public Open Space, which would replace the relatively species-poor grassland which currently dominates the site. There would be numerous Urban trees within the Streetscape of the proposed development. Enhancements (such as bird and bat boxes, reptile habitat features, hedgehog highways and bug hotels) would also be included in the proposals.



Q&A

Why do Redrow think this site is appropriate for housing?

There is a shortage of housing land and new homes being delivered in Medway. We believe this site is an appropriate opportunity to provide new market and affordable housing in a sustainable location, through a sensitively designed and well landscaped scheme which is visually well enclosed by the surrounding woodlands and existing boundary trees.

Will Redrow have to contribute to local services?

Yes. As part of the planning application Medway Council would require financial contributions to be made to services including education, healthcare, open space, community facilities and local libraries, in addition to the affordable housing and open space being proposed as part of the scheme.

What are the timescales?

We are currently preparing the application for submission in late 2022. We would anticipate that application being determined during 2023 and if planning permission was granted would expect works on site to begin during 2024.

Is this development linked to the Lidsing Garden Development proposals?

No. This site is in a single private ownership and Redrow have a contract in place with the landowner to make a planning application for the development of the land, which is separated from the Lidsing Garden Development land by Chapel Hill Wood. The site is not linked in any way to the Lidsing proposals being promoted through the Maidstone Local Plan.

Feedback

Thank you for your interest in this public consultation website.

The feedback which was received before Friday 13th January 2023 is being considered and will inform the final planning application.



Appendix C Drawing Issue Sheet

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Page: 1 of 3

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HJL	01	02	23

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Page: 2 of 3

Date of issue:

Submission Issue

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Page: 3 of 3

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- environmental assessment
- landscape design
- urban design
- ecology
- architecture
- arboriculture

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