
Pre-application Report

**Land between Woodchurch Road and, Appledore Road, Tenterden,
Kent**

Reserved Matters Application

Prepared for:

Vistry

Prepared by:

Savills (UK) Limited
74 High Street, Sevenoaks, TN13 1JR



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This report is written in support of a pre-application request to Ashford Borough Council (ABC) on behalf of Vistry Homes (Kent) and Wates who are progressing the development of the site under a Joint Venture. Pre-application advice is sought in relation to a Reserved Matters Application for the erection of 141 dwellings, including details of layout, scale, landscaping and appearance pursuant to Outline Application ref: 21/00790/AS (approved at appeal ref: APP/E2205/W/21/3284479).
- 1.2. The main purpose of this pre-application enquiry is to gain feedback on the design and layout of the development. The information obtained from ABC Officers will be used to inform the Reserved Matters Application submission.
- 1.3. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) places emphasis on the significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system by early engagement between the Applicant and the Local Planning Authority (LPA). The LPA should encourage the take up of the pre-application service. The applicant is seeking to work with the LPA to achieve a proposal which is beneficial for the local area in terms of social, economic and environmental matters.
- 1.4. A pack of drawings have been provided alongside this report.

	Document / Drawing
1	Site Location Plan
2	Planning Layout
3	Planning Layout: Framework
4	Parking Strategy Plan

Table 1 – List of Application Documents and Drawings

1.5. This report is structured in the following sections and will provide the Council with full details and justification for the proposed development:

- **Section 2** provides the site context;
- **Section 3** provides the planning history;
- **Section 4** details the proposed development;
- **Section 5** details the attached conditions;
- **Section 6** reviews the relevant planning policy;
- **Section 7** sets out the planning considerations; and
- **Section 8** summarises the report.

2. Site Context

Hybrid Application

- 2.1. Planning permission (Application Reference: 21/00790/AS) was granted at appeal (Ref: APP/E2205/W/21/3284479) on 30th March 2022 for a development described as follows:

“a) Outline application for the development of up to 141 residential dwellings (50% affordable) including the creation of access points from Appledore Road (1 x all modes and 1 x emergency, pedestrian and cycle only), and Woodchurch Road (pedestrian and cycle only), and creation of a network of roads, footways, and cycleways through the site. Provision of open space including children's play areas, community orchards, sustainable urban drainage systems, landscape buffers and green links all on 12.35 ha of the site. (Save for access, matters of appearance, landscaping, layout & scale reserved for consideration).

b) Full planning permission for the change of land use from agricultural land to land to be used as a country park (8.66 ha), including community orchard and land to be used as formal sports pitches (3.33 ha), together with pavilion to serve the proposal and the surrounding area. Including accesses, ancillary parking, pathways, sustainable urban drainage systems and associated landscaping.”

- 2.2. The Hybrid Application site (red line indicated in Figure 1) is located to the east of the town of Tenterden. The site comprises 24.35ha of land and is located within the administrative area of Ashford Borough Council (ABC).

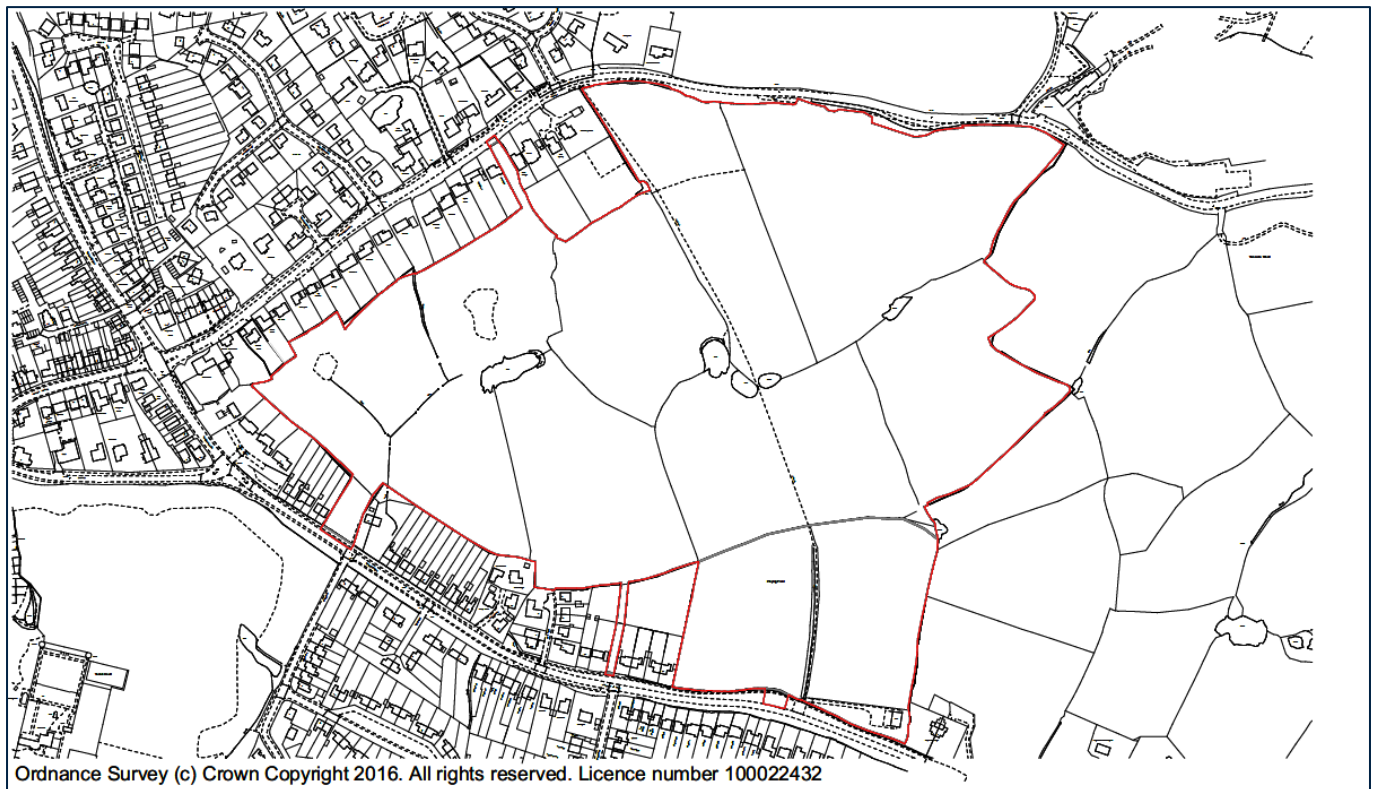


Figure 1 – Site Location (hybrid application)

- 2.3. The site is bounded by the built-up edge of Tenterden on its western, southern and northern boundaries. The eastern boundary of the site is made up of open countryside. The site is currently undeveloped agricultural land, delineated into a number of parcels by mature hedgerows.

Application Site

- 2.4. The site comprises the 12.43ha of land with Outline Planning Permission. This area is the subject of this pre application enquiry and to which the Reserved Matters Application will relate. The site is situated in the western half of the Hybrid Application site, as illustrated in red on the Site Location Plan in Figure 2. It will be accessed via a new junction onto Appledore Road, as per the approved plan (ITL9289-GA-114).

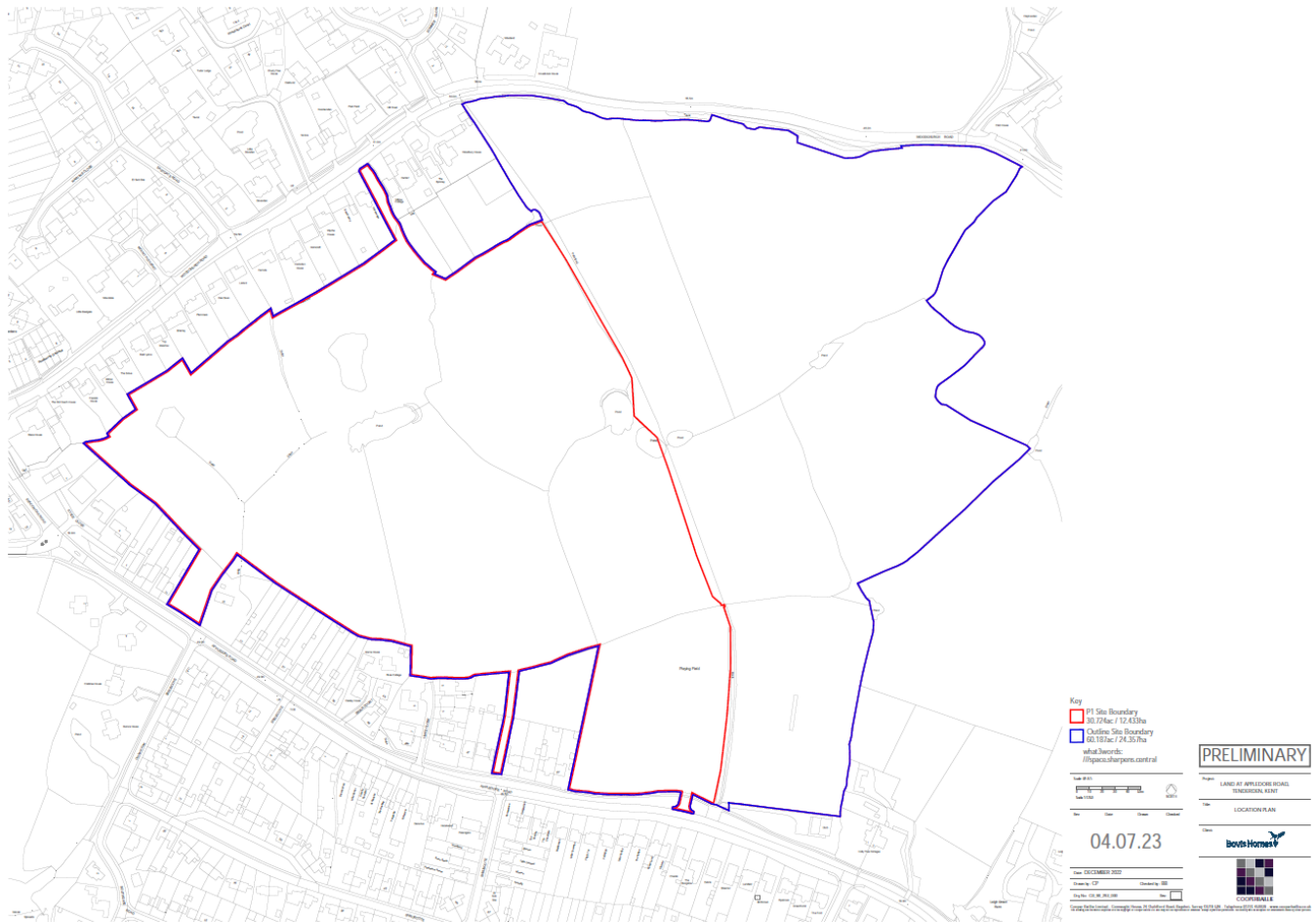


Figure 2 – Site Location (Reserved Matters Application)

3. Planning History

3.1. The planning history of the site has been checked using ABC's website. The following planning applications on the site are of note:

- 87/00259/AS – *'Proposed 124 dwellings and garages with access from appledore road'*.

The application was granted at appeal (Ref: T/APP/E2205/A/87/79807/P5) on 28th July 1988. This decision was later quashed at the high court. A subsequent appeal, also for 124 homes on the same site, (87/00259/AS), was then refused (2nd October 1989).

- 19/01788/AS – *'a) Outline application for the development of up to 250 residential dwellings (40% affordable) including the creation of access points from Appledore Road (all modes) and Woodchurch Road (pedestrian and cycle only), and creation of a network of roads, footways, and cycleways through the site. Provision of open space including children's play areas, community orchards, sustainable urban drainage systems, landscape buffers and green links all on 12.35 ha of the site. (Matters for approval: Access)*
b) Full planning permission for the change of land use from agricultural land to land to be used as a country park (8.66 ha), and land to be used as formal sports pitches (3.33 ha), together with pavilion to serve the proposal and the surrounding area. Including accesses, ancillary parking, pathways, sustainable urban drainage systems and associated landscaping.'

The application was refused on 16th September 2020.

- 21/00790/AS – *'a) Outline application for the development of up to 145 residential dwellings (50% affordable) including the creation of access points from Appledore Road (1 x all modes and 1 x emergency, pedestrian and cycle only), and Woodchurch Road (pedestrian and cycle only), and creation of a network of roads, footways, and cycleways through the site. Provision of open space including children's play areas, community orchards, sustainable urban drainage systems, landscape buffers and green links all on 12.35 ha of the site. (Save for access, matters of appearance, landscaping, layout & scale reserved for consideration')*
b) Full planning permission for the change of land use from agricultural land to land to be used as a country park (8.66 ha), and land to be used as formal sports pitches (3.33 ha), together with pavilion to serve the proposal and the surrounding area. Including accesses, ancillary parking, pathways, sustainable urban drainage systems and associated landscaping.'

The application was refused on 15th September 2021 but was subject to appeal, with amendments (see below).

- APP/E2205/W/21/3284479 – ‘a) Outline application for the development of up to 141 residential dwellings (50% affordable) including the creation of access points from Appledore Road (1 x all modes and 1 x emergency, pedestrian and cycle only), and Woodchurch Road (pedestrian and cycle only), and creation of a network of roads, footways, and cycleways through the site. Provision of open space including children's play areas, community orchards, sustainable urban drainage systems, landscape buffers and green links all on 12.35 ha of the site. (Save for access, matters of appearance, landscaping, layout & scale reserved for consideration).
b) Full planning permission for the change of land use from agricultural land to land to be used as a country park (8.66 ha), including community orchard and land to be used as formal sports pitches (3.33 ha), together with pavilion to serve the proposal and the surrounding area. Including accesses, ancillary parking, pathways, sustainable urban drainage systems and associated landscaping.’

The application was approved at appeal on 30th March 2022.

4. The Proposed Development

- 4.1. The proposed Reserved Matters Application will be for the erection of 141 dwellings as per the approved Hybrid Planning Permission 21/00790/AS.

Unit Mix and Density

- 4.2. The proposed development will deliver 141 new dwellings, 50% of which will be affordable. The proposed unit mix for the development is set out in Table 4.1 below.

Type	Market	Affordable
1 bed Homes	0	0
2 Bedroom Homes	0	32
3 Bedroom Homes	24	35
4 Bedroom Homes	33	4
5 Bedroom Homes	13	0
TOTAL NO.	70	71
TOTAL %	50%	50%

Table 4.1 – Proposed Housing Mix

Layout

- 4.3. The proposed development has been naturally divided into development parcels by retaining the existing hedgerows on-site and landscape features.
- 4.4. A green buffer has been retained around the edge of the proposed development in order to maintain a more open feel for existing nearby residents. As well as maintaining the existing ponds across the site, four new ponds have been proposed around the perimeter of the site.
- 4.5. Two Local Areas of Play and one Local Equipped Area of Play are proposed across the site, providing accessible play areas for existing and future residents in the area.
- 4.6. The proposed development comprises mainly detached dwellings, with a small number of semi-detached and terraced dwellings. This is in general accordance with the existing built form of the surrounding area.

Housing Types and Appearance

- 4.7. The architectural style and materials used in the development will be sympathetic to the existing building style of Tenterden.

Parking

- 4.8. Parking is provided on plot for the dwellings. As can be seen from the submitted plans, dwellings will typically have two off street parking spaces, with larger dwellings also having garages. The proposal also includes 45 visitor parking spaces across the site. More detail can be found on the submitted parking strategy plan.
- 4.9. Cycle storage will also be accommodated on plot within the garden or garages.

Refuse Space

- 4.10. Refuse storage will be accommodated on plot for each dwelling.

Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

- 4.11. The application's effect on pedestrian access and safety in the area, with particular regard to an unconfirmed Public Right of Way (PRoW) AB70 was discussed at appeal. The inspector noted that although the site has many areas on it where the public has gained access, the only official public access is on PRoW AB12 that roughly follows the ridge between Appledore Road and Woodchurch Road.
- 4.12. A local resident submitted an application to add footpath AB70 to the Definitive Map and Statement (DMS) for the area. A public enquiry was held on 6-7th April 2022 and the Inspector concluded that the Order was not confirmed and footpath AB70 is not a PRoW. The decision was made on 24th May 2022 for the Order Ref: ROW/3273792.
- 4.13. Apart from the pavilion building (approved under the Hybrid Application), all the built development will be sited to the west of PRoW AB12.
- 4.14. As well as retaining the existing PRoW, the proposed development includes additional public accesses across the site. This will create a pedestrian friendly and easily accessible development site. The proposed pedestrian and cycle access from the western edge of the site to Appledore Road will create permeable boundaries and merge sensitively with the existing public realm.
- 4.15. Condition 49 of the appeal decision states that:

“Notwithstanding the details provided on the illustrative Site Plan No 21037 - RFT - 00 - 00 - DR - A - 0121 S2 Rev P08, in the event that the Secretary of State confirms Public Right of Way (PRoW) AB70 on the current proposed alignment, no development shall take place until revised plans showing how the PRoW can be accommodated have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out and maintained in accordance with the approved details.”

- 4.16. Since the Inspector for the Order (Ref: ROW/3273792) decided that footpath AB70 is not a PRoW, Condition 49 becomes irrelevant and can be discharged.



5. Conditions

- 5.1. The Hybrid Planning Permission (Application Reference: 21/00790/AS) for the erection of 141 dwellings includes 50 conditions. These conditions are divided into the Outline and Detailed Planning Permission and cover matters of compliance as well as requiring additional information to be submitted as part of any planning application.
- 5.2. This Reserved Matters Application also seeks to discharge a number of conditions attached to the Outline Planning Permission insofar as they are relevant to the proposed development. For clarity the discharge of the following conditions is specifically sought.

Condition No.	Condition description	Comment
10	Details of the layout, scale, appearance and landscaping (hereinafter called 'the reserved matters') shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority before development on the 'Outline application areas' shown on the 'Detailed application identification plan' No 21037 - RFT- 00 -XX- DR - A – 101 Rev P05 commences, and the development shall be carried out as approved.	This is the principal condition to which a number of other conditions relate
13	The number of dwellings for which reserved matters approval is sought shall not exceed a total of 141 and the layout and developable areas shall be generally in accordance with the illustrative Site Plan No 21037 - RFT - 00 - 00 - DR - A - 0121 S2 Rev P08.	The submitted site layout plan shows 141 dwellings and general accordance with the illustrative Site Plan No 21037 - RFT - 00 - 00 - DR - A - 0121 S2 Rev P08.
17	Any application for reserved matters submitted pursuant to Condition 10 shall show land, reserved for parking to meet the needs of the development and in accordance with policy TRA3(a) of the Ashford Local Plan 2030 and design layout and accessibility guidance contained in Ashford Borough Council's adopted Residential Parking and Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document or any adopted guidance or policy which may have superseded it. The approved area shall be provided, surfaced and drained in accordance with details that shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority before the dwellings to which it relates are occupied and shall thereafter be retained for parking.	The parking shown on the submitted site layout plan meets the required parking standards.
18	Any application for reserved matters submitted pursuant to Condition 10 shall show space laid out within the site for bicycles to be parked securely and undercover for residential uses in accordance with policy TRA6 of the Ashford Local Plan 2030 or any adopted guidance or policy which may have superseded it. The approved cycle parking facilities shall thereafter be retained available for use for residents of the dwellings hereby permitted.	The submitted layout plan for the Reserved Matters Application will show suitable bicycle storage.



19	Any application for reserved matters submitted pursuant to Condition 10 shall include details of the proposed roads, footways, verges, junctions, street lighting, sewers, drains, retaining walls, service routes, surface water outfalls, vehicle overhang margins, embankments, visibility splays, accesses, carriageway gradients, driveway gradients and street furniture. The development shall be laid out and constructed in accordance with the approved details.	This Reserved Matters Application includes the details required in condition 19.
21	Any application for reserved matters submitted pursuant to Condition 10 shall include the following: A) Each dwelling with a designated off-road car parking space to include provision for a minimum of 1 electric vehicle charging point. Any unallocated communal parking such as serving apartments to include provision of 10% active and the rest passive electric vehicle charging points. All electric vehicle charging points shall be provided to Mode 3 standard (providing up to 7kw) and SMART (enabling Wifi connection). B) Each charging point to be installed prior to the occupation of the dwelling unit it relates to in accordance with the approved details and thereafter retained in a working order for the charging of electric vehicles.	The submitted layout plan illustrates all parking spaces and EV charging points and will provide individual EV charging points to all dwellings.
25	Any application for reserved matters submitted pursuant to Condition 10 shall include details of a sustainable surface water drainage scheme for the site. The detailed drainage scheme shall be based upon the Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy detailed on the Proposed Surface Water General Arrangement plans Nos RSK-C-ALL-05-03-01 Rev P07 and RSK-C-ALL-05-03-02 Rev P07 and shall demonstrate that the surface water generated by this development for all rainfall durations and intensities up to and including the climate change adjusted critical 100-year storm can be accommodated and disposed of without an increase to flood risk on or off-site. The drainage scheme shall also demonstrate with reference to published guidance that: • silt and pollutants resulting from the site use can be adequately managed to ensure there is no pollution risk to receiving waters. • appropriate operational, maintenance and access requirements for each drainage feature or sustainable drainage system component are considered, including any proposed arrangements for future adoption by any public body or statutory undertaker. The drainage scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.	This will be dealt with through the submission of a drainage report
26	The reserved matters details submitted pursuant to Condition 10 shall show how each unit accords with: a) National described space standards set out under Policy HOU12 (internal space) of the Ashford Local Plan 2030 or any subsequent amended national described space standards in force at the time of the reserved matters submission.	The dwellings proposed in this Reserved Matters Application will be designed in accordance with the national space standards and Policy HOU12 and HOU15 of Ashford's Local Plan.



	b) Private usable external open space set out under Policy HOU15 of the Ashford Local Plan 2030 or any other or any subsequent amended standard/policy in force at the time of the reserved matters submission.	
27	The reserved matters details submitted pursuant to Condition 10 shall include full details of facilities to accommodate the storage of refuse and material for recycling for each dwelling and its collection by refuse vehicles. The approved details shall be implemented before the occupancy of the dwellings to which they relate and the facilities and access to them shall thereafter be retained as approved.	The submitted drawings illustrate the location of refuse and recycling storage.
28	The reserved matters details submitted pursuant to Condition 10 shall include details of any sustainable drainage schemes and other physical features as part of the development in the vicinity of Tree Preservation Order tree no 313 (SJA air April 2021). The detailed drawings shall show the area and depth of all excavations and their method of construction in relation to the tree's root protection area and any method of protection to ensure that no adverse impact will occur through construction of the development. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the details that will have been approved under reserved matters.	This will be dealt with through the submission of relevant material with the Reserved Matters Application.
29	The reserved matters details for landscaping submitted pursuant to Condition 10 shall include hard and soft landscaping including planting plans; written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment); schedules of plants, noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate; and an implementation programme.	This will be dealt with through the submission of relevant material with the Reserved Matters Application.
30	Any application for reserved matters submitted pursuant to Condition 10 shall include details of street lighting or other external lighting within the development. The lighting scheme supported by an ecological report shall be designed to avoid, or if not possible, mitigate any adverse impact on protected species in line with Policy ENV4 of the Ashford Local Plan 2030 or any other or any subsequent amended standard/policy in force at the time of the reserved matters submission. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.	This will be dealt with through the submission of relevant material with the Reserved Matters Application.
49	Notwithstanding the details provided on the illustrative Site Plan No 21037 - RFT - 00 - 00 - DR - A - 0121 S2 Rev P08, in the event that the Secretary of State confirms Public Right of Way (PRoW) AB70 on the current proposed alignment, no development shall take place until revised plans showing how the PRoW can be accommodated have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out and maintained in accordance with the approved details.	The Secretary of State found that footpath AB70 is not a PRoW and therefore it does not need to be retained in the proposed development.

Table 5.1 – Conditions to be discharged

- 5.3. Advice is sought as to whether the conditions listed in table 5.1 can be discharged as part of the proposed Reserved Matters Application.

6. Planning Policy Context

The National Planning Policy Framework (revised July 2021)

- 6.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and guidance is a material consideration and relevant to this proposal. The revised NPPF was published in July 2021, replacing the previous NPPF (2019). It sets out the national policy which guides Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) on plan making and decision taking.
- 6.2. The Government places great emphasis on the presumption in favour of sustainability and for decision making, this means proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan should be approved without delay (paragraph 11). In order to achieve sustainable development, the planning system should seek to deliver three overarching objectives – an economic objective, a social objective and an environmental objective. Any application submitted to ABC should ensure it pursues the three overarching objectives as well as adhering to other policies set out in the NPPF.
- 6.3. Other national guidance includes the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) and the National Design Guide (NDG) which are material considerations and support the details of the NPPF.

Adopted Development Plan

- 6.4. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires that planning decisions be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.5. The adopted Local Development Plan for ABC comprises:
- ABC Local Plan (2019);
 - Chilmington Green Area Action Plan (2013);
 - Affordable Housing SPD (2019);
 - Landscape Character SPD (2011);
 - Residential Parking SPD (2010);
 - Sustainable Drainage SPD (2010);
 - Residential Space and Layout SPD (2011);
 - Public Green Space and Water Environment SPD (2012);
 - Dark Skies SPD (2014);
 - Stables, Arena's and Horse related Development SPD (2014);
 - Fibre to the Premises SPD (2020);
 - The Kent County Council Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2016) (Amended in 2020);
 - The Kent County Council Design Guide (2006 and currently under review);
 - Local Plan Policy Maps; and

- Any made Neighbourhood Plans.

6.6. The Development Plan policies considered to be of particular relevance to this proposal are listed below:

- ABC Local Plan Policy HOU1 (Affordable Housing);
- ABC Local Plan Policy HOU5 (Residential Windfall Development in the Countryside);
- ABC Local Plan Policy HOU18 (Providing a Range and Mix of Dwelling Types and Sizes); and
- ABC Local Plan Policy ENV3a (Landscape Character and Design).

Emerging Local Plan

6.7. The Ashford Local Plan 2030 was adopted in February 2019. ABC published an updated Local Development Scheme (LDS) in March 2023 which sets out that ABC will begin its Local Plan review at the end of Q3 2023.

6.8. An update on the position of this is requested as part of the pre application engagement.

Housing Delivery Test

6.9. The Housing Delivery Test measurement was published by the Government in January 2022. The 2021 measurement stated that ABC had a delivery rate of 118% of its target.

Housing Land Supply

6.10. The appeal decision notice for the Land between Woodchurch Road and Appledore Road confirmed that ABC cannot demonstrate a 5YHLS and the Inspector estimated the deliverable supply to be about 3.5 years. Therefore, in accordance with NPPF paragraph 11, the presumption in favour of sustainable development is triggered.

7. Planning Considerations

Principle of Development

- 7.1. The principle of development has been established via the Outline Planning Permission (Ref: 21/00790/AS). The proposal is in general accordance with the Outline Planning Permission and associated plans. Therefore, the general principle of development remains acceptable.
- 7.2. This pre-application report seeks comments and support from ABC on the proposal and whether it would be acceptable in terms of layout, appearance, landscaping and scale in accordance with Condition 10 of the Hybrid Planning Permission.

Housing Mix

- 7.3. NPPF paragraph 126 requires new development to function well and add to the overall quality of the area. Policy HOU18 (Providing a Range and Mix of Dwelling Types and Sizes) of ABC's adopted Local Plan outlines that development proposals should deliver a range and mix of dwelling types and sizes to meet local needs and be informed by robust, up to date evidence.
- 7.4. The 2014 Strategic Housing Market Assessment recommends the following housing mix:

Type	SHMA Market	Proposed Market	SHMA Affordable	Proposed Affordable
1 Bed Homes	5-10%	0%	25-30%	0%
2 Bedroom Homes	25-30%	0%	35-40%	45%
3 Bedroom Homes	40-45%	34%	25-30%	49%
4+ Bedroom House	20-25%	66%	5-10%	6%

Figure 7.1- SHMA (2014) Housing Mix Comparison

- 7.5. The submitted plans show a range of dwelling types, sizes and tenures incorporated into the development. The proposed development includes 50% affordable housing. This exceeds the required 40% affordable housing for all developments outside of Ashford stated in Policy HOU1 (Affordable Housing) of ABC's adopted Local Plan.
- 7.6. Policy HOU6 (Self and Custom Built Development) requires all development sites on the edge of Ashford and Tenterden delivering more than 40 dwellings to supply no less than 5% of serviced dwelling plots for sale to self or custom builders.
- 7.7. There is some deviation of the proposed housing mix compared to the 2014 SHMA recommendations. However, since the SHMA is now nearly 10 years old, the market demands have changed. The proposed



housing mix reflects the market conditions of a higher demand for larger houses and is located in an area suitable for family housing. Some variation is also required to support the 50% affordable housing provision.

7.8. Advice is sought from ABC with regards to the proposed mix of market and affordable housing.

Design

7.9. Hybrid Planning Permission for this site was granted with all matters reserved except for access. Matters of landscaping, scale, layout and appearance are to be determined and subsequently form part of the forthcoming Reserved Matters application.

7.10. The NPPF, National Design Guide and Policy SP6 (Promoting High Quality Design) of ABC’s adopted Local Plan generally require development to be of high-quality design which take into account the surrounding character and be of appropriate scale, layout, form, scale and appearance.

7.11. With regards to the design of the development, notably the layout, form and scale of development, full details will be submitted as part of the Reserved Matters Application. The details set out in this report and the submitted plans align with national and local design guidance and reflect the requirements of relevant local planning policies. The development has been designed in general accordance with the approved masterplan, ABC policy and all identified site constraints.

7.12. Advice is sought on the design of development, including comments on the submitted plans, as part of this pre-application advice request.

Parking

7.13. Policy TRA3a (Parking Standards for Residential Development) of ABC’s adopted Local Plan states that:

“Proposals for residential development within the town centre area identified on the Policies Map or within ‘central areas’ of larger developments shall deliver a minimum parking standard of 1 space per residential unit on average. It is expected that all of this provision should be delivered on-site.”

7.14. The site is not located in a town centre area on the Policies Map.

7.15. Policy TRA3a sets out the following minimum parking standards for residential development:

No. beds	Suburban and Rural Locations
1-bed dwelling	1 space per unit
2-bed dwelling	2 spaces per unit
3-bed dwelling	2 spaces per unit
4-bed house	3 spaces per unit

Figure 7.2 – ABC Parking Requirements

- 7.16. Policy TRA3a (Parking Standards for Residential Development) of ABC's adopted Local Plan states that visitor parking should be provided primarily off-plot in short stay car parks where available or on-plot at 0.2 spaces per dwelling in major residential schemes where layout permits.
- 7.17. The policy also states that parking to support residential development within the Borough shall follow the design, layout and accessibility guidance contained within the Council's Residential Parking and Design Guidance SPD.
- 7.18. The proposed site layout shows that all dwellings will benefit from 1-2 off street parking spaces, with larger dwellings also having single or double garages.
- 7.19. Policy TRA6 (Provision for Cycling) of ABC's adopted Local Plan requires 1 cycle parking space per unit (flats/ maisonettes) and it is expected that sufficient accommodation will be provided in any case for houses.

Heritage and Townscape

- 7.20. Policy ENV3a (Landscape Character and Design) of ABC's adopted Local Plan states that:

"All proposals for development in the borough shall demonstrate particular regard to the following landscape characteristics, proportionately, according to the landscape significance of the site:

- a) Landform, topography and natural patterns of drainage;*
- b) The pattern and composition of trees and woodlands;*
- c) The type and composition of wildlife habitats;*
- d) The pattern and composition of field boundaries;*
- e) The pattern and distribution of settlements, roads and footpaths;*
- f) The presence and pattern of historic landscape features;*
- g) The setting, scale, layout, design and detailing of vernacular buildings and other traditional man made features;*
- h) Any relevant guidance given in the Landscape Character SPD;*
- i) Existing features that are important to and contribute to the definition of the local landscape character shall be retained and incorporated into the proposed development; and,*
- j) Any non-designated, locally-identified, significant landscape features justified in a Parish Plan or equivalent document."*

- 7.21. There are no listed buildings located within the site or in close proximity.
- 7.22. A Landscape and Visual appraisal of the site was undertaken in April 2021 by SLR Consulting Ltd for the development proposed in the Hybrid Application Ref: 21/00790/AS.
- 7.23. Another Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment was previously prepared by Rummey Environmental in December 2019 to assess the potential effects of the refused application for 250 homes (Ref: 19/01788/AS).

- 7.24. The site itself lies just outside, but adjoins, the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and is located within an area classified as National Character Area (NCA) 122, High Weald. In the Ashford Landscape Character Assessment (2009) it forms part of the 'Woodchurch Undulating Farmlands' character area (area 23).
- 7.25. The eastern part of the Outline site is within the setting of the High Weald AONB. However, the inspector found that the western part of the site is not, due to it having no intervisibility with the AONB as it is enclosed by settlement edges to the north and south and the ridge to the east.
- 7.26. The proposed residential area will slope south-westwards, towards the settlement edge, and the countryside open space, referred to as a 'country park', will slope eastwards, towards the High Weald AONB. The built development will be located between existing residential areas at Woodchurch Road, to the north, and Appledore Road, to the south and would not extend any further east than existing housing on both roads.
- 7.27. The proposed residential development is structured around four main 'greenways', as indicated on the submitted plans. These 'greenways' will allow the hedgerows and mature trees to be protected and enhanced and will retain some of the views to the west that are currently available from PRoW AB12 of St Mildred's church tower. The proposed development also allows additional public access along the greenways and other green space that will provide the opportunity of other views. The country park will also form a landscape buffer to the High Weald AONB, with the point between the nearest part of the AONB and the closest proposed residential property being over 250 metres.
- 7.28. The proposed scheme has therefore been sensitively designed in order to minimise any adverse impacts on the existing landscape and improve public access where possible.

Ecology

- 7.29. Updated pond surveys were conducted by Bakerwell Ecology in June 2023 and four of the seven existing ponds on site were found to have Great Crested Newts (GCN) present. The four ponds which were found to contain GCN have been retained within the proposed layout, including a 5m protection buffer. These four ponds are also excluded from the Sustainable Urban Drainage Strategy to protect and enhance the GCN habitat.
- 7.30. Four new ponds are proposed across the site, providing additional and enhanced habitat for aquatic wildlife.

Arboriculture

- 7.31. A tree survey was conducted by SJA Trees in April 2020. A number of Category A, B, C and U trees were identified across the site. There are also a number of Ancient Woodland parcels identified outside of the redline but within close proximity of the site.

- 7.32. A number of Category A trees, Category B trees, Category C trees and Tree Protection Orders are present across the site. As evidenced in the submitted drawings, all of these trees are being retained. A couple of low quality and poor value Category U trees will be removed from the site.
- 7.33. The proposed layout has been designed in order to maintain and enhance the existing mature hedgerow and trees located across the site.

Community Engagement

- 7.34. A public consultation will take place. This will provide a platform for local stakeholders to share their opinions and influence the design of the development in a collaborative manner.

8. Summary and advice being sought

- 8.1. This report is written in support of a pre-application request to Ashford Borough Council (ABC) on behalf of Vistry.
- 8.2. Pre-application advice is sought in relation to the development of 141 homes, in relation to the Hybrid Planning Permission Ref: 21/00790/AS. This Outline Planning Permission established the principle of development for the site.
- 8.3. The proposed development, the subject of this pre application enquiry, has been prepared and designed in accordance with the Hybrid Planning Permission.
- 8.4. It is considered that the proposed development is consistent with national and local policy, notably:
- The proposed development includes 50% affordable housing. This exceeds the required 40% affordable housing for all developments outside of Ashford stated in Policy HOU1 (Affordable Housing) of ABC's adopted Local Plan. A range of dwelling types, sizes and tenures are also proposed.
 - Parking is provided in accordance with Policy TRA3a (Parking Standards for Residential Development) of ABC's adopted Local Plan. Sufficient space is available on plot for cycle storage for residents.
 - The proposal seeks to protect and match the landscape and streetscape character of the existing built form of Tenterden in line with ABC's Local Plan Policy ENV3a (Landscape Character and Design).
 - All new units will provide a high-quality and functional living environment. Therefore, the proposal meets the requirements set out in the National Design Guide.

Advice being sought

- 8.5. Taking into account the details submitted in this report, in addition to the submitted plans and Design and Access Statement, advice is sought from the Council in relation to the following:
1. The principle of development;
 2. The proposed quantum and mix of development;
 3. The proposed layout of development;
 4. Comments regarding key design features that should be considered for the proposal and prior to submission of the Reserved Matters Application;

Land between Woodchurch Road and, Appledore Road

Pre-application Report



5. Parking arrangements;
6. Ecology and arboriculture;
7. Information required with regards to heritage, landscape and townscape;
8. General planning matters and technical considerations applicable to the site;
9. Confirmation of the supporting information required to accompany the planning application;
10. Any other planning matters which apply to the application site and proposals.

