**Informal Planning meeting – 10th October 2023**

**Re: Pre-application Review for Land Between Woodchurch Road and Appledore Road**

**Present**: Cllrs. Kayleigh Brunger-Randall, Jean Curteis, Sue Ferguson, Nikki Gooch, Andrew Holcombe, Stuart Medcalf, Jane Mills, Justin Nelson and David Ward. Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk.

In order to form comments on the pre-application documentation, Town Councillors went through the list of advice being sought by the developer contained in pages 21 and 22 of the Pre-Application Report.

1. Principle of development. No comment – this has already been decided.
2. Quantum and mix of development. This has already been decided, but it was agreed that there should be provision of smaller houses, particularly 2/3 beds and bungalows. It was noted that the Draft Tenterden Neighbourhood Plan shows the style of housing that should be included in any new developments and the Tenterden Housing Needs Survey (2020) shows the types of housing Tenterden needs. Town Council would encourage Vistry to review these documents. It should be noted that the Housing Needs Survey was undertaken in early Covid times and the needs are now more accentuated given we are post-Covid and post-Brexit.

The Savills report, section 7.7, states how Vistry are going to provide the housing mix assessment, however, it does seem that smaller houses have been dismissed and indication is made that they would not be included. The Tenterden Housing Needs Survey clearly states that these smaller houses are required. It is noted that section 7.8 of the report states that Vistry are seeking the advice of ABC regarding housing mix and would encourage both ABC and Vistry to refer to the Tenterden Housing Needs Survey.

It was noted that affordable housing is included in the development, however, the Town Council recommends that the style and design of the affordable housing (including social housing) does not differ from that of the private housing. This is to ensure there is no division of residents.

The Town Council feel very strongly that the affordable housing should be allocated to people with local connections in the first instance. This would ensure that those who truly want to live in Tenterden do, rather than those who are forced to live here. The Town Council would encourage Vistry to liaise with the Tenterden Community Land Trust to ensure affordable housing is appropriately allocated.

The split of affordable housing between shared-ownership and affordable rent was discussed. It was felt that the higher portion of the split should be allocated to affordable rent and 1/2 bedroomed bungalows considered as part of those. A suggestion would be to include a set of terraced style bungalows similar to those currently located at Hales Close in Tenterden. This need is reflected in the Tenterden Housing Needs Survey.

With reference to the 5% serviced self-build, the Planning Inspector stated: “Enabling plots on the site to be used for custom/self-build housing is necessary to ensure compliance with ABLP Policy HOU6”. The self-build plots are not shown on the plans.

1. Proposed layout of development. Concern was raised over the single vehicle entrance onto the development given that it serves both the residents and the main route to the sports facilities and country park. It was suggested that the emergency entrance be considered as an additional entrance onto the development. Although this does not necessarily fall within the developers remit, it was agreed that a review should take place of the current speed limit along Appledore Road with a view to it being reduced to 30mph.

It was felt that not enough parking bays have been provided for the sports provision therefore this needs to be reviewed. A query has been raised as to whether a separate entrance could be considered just for the sports provision and country park; this would reduce the impact on the residential access road.

Feedback from a resident does indicate that there is not a wide enough buffer between two properties located off the Appledore Road and the road on the development (on the map they are opposite nos. 110 and 111 of the development). This will need to be reviewed to reduce the impact on the residents.

4. Key Design Features. Section 4.7 of the Savills report clearly states that ‘the architectural style and materials used in the development will be sympathetic to the existing building style of Tenterden.’ However, it has been indicated at the recent public open session at St Mildred’s Church Hall that the housing style will be contemporary. The draft Tenterden Neighbourhood Plan states the required style of housing and this should be passed onto the architect.

5. Parking. Included in section 3 above.

6. Ecology & Arboriculture. It was noted that the periphery of the development shows a mown path, however, concern was raised on how muddy this might get in the wetter months. It was suggested that a climate friendly footpath could be installed which would be both functionable and sustainable; advice could be sought from Kent Wildlife Trust.

It is requested that a detailed landscaping scheme is provided for review by the Town Council. The Town Council are keen to see more than the minimum in a planting scheme in addition to retaining the viable trees. Vistry are encouraged to install bat boxes and nesting boxes for birds.

7. Heritage, Landscape and Townscape. The Town Council would like to refer Vistry to the draft Tenterden Neighbourhood Plan to ensure these areas of the plan are incorporated.

8. General Planning Matters. It was agreed that rainwater harvesting should be included for each property and PV panels considered for all, not just a few. The Town Council were pleased to see that EV charging points have been included.

9. Supporting Information to accompany planning application. Given that the Town Council wish Vistry to refer to and follow the draft Tenterden Neighbourhood Plan and Tenterden Housing Needs Survey, these should be included. It is suggested that Tenterden’s Climate Action Plan is also documented.

10. Any other planning matters. The Town Council will be encouraging the Tenterden Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to put forward their views on the pre-application report.

More information should be provided regarding the proposed play area as this has not been mentioned, particularly the design to ensure it is a more community minded provision.

The cycling aspect of the development requires further review to ensure access is feasible.

It has been suggested that the two new bus stops on the Woodchurch Road and the existing bus stops on Appledore Road should be built/fitted with fibre/appropriate services to the bus stops; fibre connectivity will allow the installation of smart bus stops in the future.

The Town Council would like to reiterate the importance of involving the Tenterden Community Land Trust in discussions to ensure social housing needs are met from local connections. It is noted that the Land Trust do already have criteria in place to ensure local connections are met. It should be noted that going down this route would create more of a positive spin on the development, which is currently not embraced by all residents.