
Aylesford Aylesford	573706 157473	1 August 2014	TM/14/02671/CNA
-------------------------------	----------------------	----------------------	------------------------

Proposal:	Consultation by Maidstone Borough Council for the development of the site for 143 x one, two, three, four and five bed dwellings, new access road off A20, new estate roads, car parking, landscaping and amenity open space
Location:	Land At Former Bridge Nursery London Road Allington Maidstone Kent
Applicant:	Ward Homes And UCC Strategic Land Ltd

1. Description:

1.1 The application is a consultation by Maidstone Borough Council with regard to the proposal to erect 143 dwellings as a mixture of one, two, three, four and five bed units, the creation of a new access road from the A20 (London Road), the construction of new estate roads, car parking, landscaping and amenity open space.

2. Reason for reporting to Committee:

2.1 The application is being reported to the Planning Committee at the request of the Ward Member, Cllr Balcombe.

3. The Site:

3.1 The application site has a site area of approximately 5.5 hectares and was most recently used as a plant nursery. The site in more recent years has been vacant and has become partially overgrown.

3.2 The site fronts directly onto the A20 (London Road), however, there are only sporadic views of the site from the public highway due to an approximately 5 metre high hedgerow which runs along the site boundary at the edge of the highway. To the northern side of the site is the Maidstone East - London railway line which sits on top of an embankment offering views into the site. To the east of the site the land is largely bounded by residential development in Allington, these residential properties sit within Maidstone Borough and directly overlook the site.

3.3 To the west is an area of land which is in the ownership of the applicants but sits within Tonbridge and Malling Borough. This land is within the designated Strategic Gap and no part of the proposed development sits within Tonbridge and Malling Borough.

4. Planning History:

TM/46/10016/OLD grant with conditions 6 February 1946

Dutch Barn.

TM/74/11943/OLD Application Withdrawn 7 January 1974

Outline application for residential development with access.

TM/74/11965/OLD Local Government 1 April 1974
Review Transfer

All planning papers transferred to file TM/74/101 on 1st April, 1974.
Outline application for residential development with new access

TM/74/12555/OLD Application Withdrawn 7 May 1974

Outline Application Residential Development with new access.
(previous application no. MK/4/73/897)

TM/86/11249/OUT Refuse 17 March 1986

Outline application for residential development at not less than 12 units per acre.

TM/88/12116/OUT Refuse 26 August 1988

Outline application for residential development at not less than 12 units per acre.

TM/01/00405/FL Grant With Conditions 11 April 2001

Change of use of former nursery land to public open space

5. Consultees:

- 5.1 No consultation carried out as the application is a consultation request by Maidstone Borough Council. It is therefore the responsibility of the determining authority to carry out appropriate consultation.

6. Determining Issues:

- 6.1 The application is a consultation by Maidstone Borough Council for development which may have an impact upon, although not located within, the Borough of Tonbridge and Malling. The assessment that follows therefore evaluates the potential impact of the development upon the Borough only.

- 6.2 This site was first allocated by MBC in 2000.
- 6.3 The closest residential neighbours within Tonbridge and Malling Borough are the residents of the established Gypsy and Traveller site at Coldharbour which is located approximately 0.5 kilometres from the proposed development. This separating distance would prevent the development, by virtue of its physical presence, being harmful to the residential amenity of these closest neighbours.
- 6.4 The proposed residential development would abut the Borough boundary between Maidstone and Tonbridge and Malling. As a result, the residential development would be visible from within the Borough of Tonbridge and Malling. Although this would be the case, the presence of the railway bridge and raised railway line to the west of the site would serve to limit these views and therefore no detriment would be caused to the visual amenity of the local area.
- 6.5 Members will be acutely aware that a key concern in the locality is the cumulative impact of development along Hermitage Lane both with regard to congestion and air quality due to the proximity of the site to designated AQMA's within the this Borough. However, it is equally important to recognise that Bridge Nursery is specifically allocated in the draft Maidstone Borough Local Plan for the construction of 165 residential dwellings; this is a material consideration in the determination of any planning application. The development proposed by this planning application seeks to provide 143 units – less than cited as a likely reasonable figure by the allocation.
- 6.6 The submitted transport survey which supports the planning application makes a detailed analysis of potential traffic impacts of the development upon the local highway network. The site is located in close proximity to Junction 5 of the M20 motorway which sits within Tonbridge and Malling Borough.
- 6.7 The transport survey provides results which indicate that the development would produce an additional 71 vehicle trips in the morning peak and 83 additional vehicle trips in the evening peak. Analysis of the data has identified that 54% of the trips would be expected to rote through the A20 towards Junction 5 and 46% travelling towards Maidstone. This represents 38 additional vehicle movements into this Borough in the morning peak and 40 in the evening peak. The applicant's agents have stated that this would not have any significant detrimental impact.
- 6.8 The submitted transport assessment converts these vehicular movements into PCU's for Junction 5 of the M20 motorway (Passenger Car Units which are not necessarily equivalent to the actual number of vehicles on the road) and demonstrates that the development impact is expected to be 25 PCU's in the morning peak and 23 PCU's in the evening peak. The report then states that the Highways Agency's trigger point for detailed capacity consideration is 30 PCU's within a single hour.

- 6.9 In light of the above, it is considered that the development, when viewed in isolation, would not have a significant impact upon traffic on the local highway network through Tonbridge and Malling Borough to justify an objection being raised to MBC.
- 6.10 Notwithstanding this, it is important to acknowledge that the submitted report makes no assessment of the cumulative impact of the proposed development along with other permitted development in the locality which would result in vehicular movements through the Coldharbour roundabout and Junction 5 of the M20.
- 6.11 The Transport Assessment prepared by WSP submitted with the outline application for 500 dwellings on land east of Hermitage Lane made a full assessment of the current junction capacities in the locality and made comparison with the impacts of projected growth up to 2018. This statement was accepted as part of that application as being an accurate assessment of the existing and projected traffic situation on the local highway network by KCC Highways. It is important to note that the application for the dwellings on Hermitage Lane was not refused on highway safety or air quality grounds.
- 6.12 The ahead lane of the Coldharbour Lane arm of the A20 London Road/Coldharbour Lane Junction is assessed to be nearly at maximum capacity with a 90% degree of saturation which is projected to increase to 96.3% by 2018 when taking into account committed development and growth. This report did not specifically include the development now proposed at Bridge Nursery within the committed development assumptions and therefore it is unclear to what extent this development has been taken into account in the junction capacity modelling.
- 6.13 The report does highlight the potential for junction improvements which would improve the capacity and potentially decrease the degree of saturation. This is not proposed as part of the development at Bridge Nursery and it would be for MBC to determine whether there was a requirement for Section 106 contributions to help fund such works.
- 6.14 Due to the inadequacy of the submitted Transport Assessment which makes no assessment of the cumulative impact of the development upon Junction 5 and the Coldharbour roundabout; along with the fact that the report by WSP for the application for residential development on land east of Hermitage Lane does not clearly include the impacts of the development at Bridge Nursery upon the overall junction capacity study, a full assessment cannot be made as to the potential highway impacts of the development upon this Borough.
- 6.15 There are four designated AQMA's situated on the A20 London Road within this Borough, the closest being on the western side of Junction 5 of the M20 motorway. Although the development is likely to create some traffic generation into the closest AQMA, it is considered that overall these levels would be minimal, with the majority of traffic using the motorway rather than routing along the A20. It is

considered that the impacts of any additional vehicular movement may be adequately mitigated by the adoption of low emission design options. These include:

- Electric charging points
- Cycling- the developer should consider enhancing cycle links between the development and its neighbouring communities. This is of particular importance to TMBC as a cycle link would help to complete a safe and continuous cycle route between Maidstone and West Malling, encouraging cycling and offsetting additional car trips through the AQMA along the London Road within this Borough.
- The promotion of the use of sustainable transport modes such as the use of public transport and the KCC car sharing scheme.

6.16 The application site is located in close proximity to public transport links including a park and ride facility into Maidstone town centre which would alleviate some use of the private car on the local roads.

7. Recommendation:

7.1 Maidstone Borough Council be advised that TMBC raises No Objection in principle subject to:

- 1 The submission of a more rigorous and thorough Transport Assessment which assesses the cumulative impact of the development upon the Coldharbour roundabout at Junction 5 of the M20 motorway which must include an assessment of the impacts arising from recent Committee decisions on unallocated sites by MBC, which generate traffic on this part of the highways network, and that this be shared with TMBC prior to any decision being made to allow TMBC to make further comment as necessary.
- 2 In order to minimise the environmental impacts of traffic, to consider and promote sustainable transport measures such as:
 - Electric charging points to be accommodated within the development;
 - Enhancement of cycle links between the development and the surrounding communities, linking fragmented cycle routes along the A20 as promoted by the KCC Cycle Strategy;
 - Promotion of the use of public transport and the KCC Car Sharing Scheme.

Contact: Kathryn Holland