

D03

OL/TH/15/0020

PROPOSAL: Outline application for the erection of a block of 56no. extra care units, 56no. dwellings and community use building with retail unit, following demolition of existing buildings and structures, including access

LOCATION: Jentex Oil Depot Canterbury Road West RAMSGATE Kent CT12 5DU

WARD: Cliffsend And Pegwell

APPLICANT: Mr A Jenkins

RECOMMENDATION: **Defer & Delegate**

Defer and delegate to Head of Built Environment to approve subject to the making of an agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as set out in this report and subject to the following safeguarding conditions:

- 1 Approval of the details of the layout, scale and appearance of any buildings to be erected, and the landscaping of the site, (hereinafter called 'the reserved matters') shall be obtained from the Local Planning Authority in writing before any development is commenced.

GROUND:

As no such details have been submitted.

- 2 Plans and particulars of the reserved matters referred to in Condition 1 above, shall be submitted in writing to the Local Planning Authority and shall be carried out as approved.

GROUND:

In accordance with Section 92(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

- 3 Application for approval of the reserved matters shall be made to the Local Planning Authority before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

GROUND:

In accordance with Section 92(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

- 4 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 2 years from the date of approval of the last of the reserved matters to be approved.

GROUND:

In accordance with Section 92(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

- 5 Details to be submitted pursuant to condition 1 above shall include a detailed sustainable surface water drainage scheme. The detailed drainage scheme shall be based on the preliminary strategy prepared by Idom Merebrook consultants and shall

demonstrate that both the rate and volume of run-off leaving the site post-development will be restricted 6.4l/s for all storms up to (and including) the climate change adjusted 100yr critical storm.

GROUND:

To ensure that the principles of sustainable drainage are incorporated into this proposal and to ensure ongoing efficiency of the drainage provisions, in accordance with the NPPF.

- 6 No building hereby permitted shall be occupied until details of the implementation, maintenance and management of the sustainable drainage scheme have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The scheme shall be implemented and thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details. Those details shall include:

- i) a timetable for its implementation, and
- ii) a management and maintenance plan for the lifetime of the development which shall include the arrangements for adoption by any public body or statutory undertaker, or any other arrangements to secure the operation of the sustainable drainage system throughout its lifetime.
- iii) evidence in written form to demonstrate that the capacity, condition and connectivity of the brick culvert has been investigated so as to ensure it will be capable of accommodating the runoff from this development throughout its likely lifetime. The submitted evidence shall include confirmation that the operating authority or owner is content with the intended discharge.

GROUND:

To ensure that the principles of sustainable drainage are incorporated into this proposal and to ensure ongoing efficiency of the drainage provisions, in accordance with the NPPF.

- 7 No infiltration of surface water drainage into the ground is permitted other than with the express written consent of the Local Planning Authority, which may be given for those parts of the site where it has been demonstrated that there is no resultant unacceptable risk to controlled waters. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approval details.

GROUND:

To protect vulnerable groundwater resources and ensure compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 8 No development shall take place until the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of:
- (i) archaeological field evaluation works in accordance with a specification and written timetable which has first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority; and
 - (ii) following on from the evaluation, any safeguarding measures to ensure preservation in situ of important archaeological remains and/or further archaeological investigation and recording in accordance with a specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

GROUND:

To ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded in accordance with the advice contained within the NPPF.

- 9 No development approved by this planning permission shall take place until a remediation strategy that includes the following components to deal with the risks associated with contamination of the site shall each be submitted to and approved, in writing, by the local planning authority:
1. A preliminary risk assessment which has identified: - all previous uses - potential contaminants associated with those uses - a conceptual model of the site indicating sources, pathways and receptors - potentially unacceptable risks arising from contamination at the site.
 2. A site investigation scheme, based on (1) to provide information for a detailed assessment of the risk to all receptors that may be affected, including those off site.
 3. The results of the site investigation and the detailed risk assessment referred to in (2) and, based on these, an options appraisal and remediation strategy giving full details of the remediation measures required and how they are to be undertaken.
 4. A verification plan providing details of the data that will be collected in order to demonstrate that the works set out in the remediation strategy in (3) are complete and identifying any requirements for longer-term monitoring of pollutant linkages, maintenance and arrangements for contingency action.
- Any changes to these components require the express written consent of the local planning authority. The scheme shall be implemented as approved.

GROUND:

To prevent pollution of controlled waters and comply with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

- 10 No occupation of any part of the permitted development shall take place until a verification report demonstrating completion of works set out in the approved remediation strategy and the effectiveness of the remediation shall be submitted to and approved, in writing, by the local planning authority. The report shall include results of sampling and monitoring carried out in accordance with the approved verification plan to demonstrate that the site remediation criteria have been met. It shall also include any plan (a "long-term monitoring and maintenance plan") for longer-term monitoring of pollutant linkages, maintenance and arrangements for contingency action, as identified in the verification plan. The long-term monitoring and maintenance plan shall be implemented as approved.

GROUND:

To prevent pollution of controlled waters and comply with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

- 11 If, during development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site then no further development (unless otherwise agreed in writing with the local planning authority) shall be carried out until the developer has submitted a remediation strategy to the local planning authority detailing how this unsuspected contamination shall be dealt with and obtained written approval from the local planning authority. The remediation strategy shall be implemented as approved.

GROUND:

To prevent pollution of controlled waters and comply with the NPPF.

- 12 No development shall take place until details of the means of foul disposal have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with such details as are agreed and thereafter maintained.

GROUND:

To prevent pollution, in accordance with the advice contained within the NPPF.

- 13 Details to be submitted in pursuant of Condition 1 above shall include mitigation measures to minimise noise from the airport and nearby road, in accordance with the recommendations set out in the Environmental Noise Survey Report, dated 5th February 2013.

GROUND:

To protect the future occupants of the development, in accordance with Policies EP7 and D1 of the Thanet Local Plan.

- 14 Details to be submitted in pursuant of Condition 1 above shall include the provision of 980sqm of play area provision, of which 36% shall be equipped play and 64% shall be casual/informal playspace.

GROUND:

To serve the development in accordance with Policy SR5 of the Thanet Local Plan.

- 15 Details to be submitted pursuant to Condition 1 above shall include the location and design of the equipped play area. The equipped play area shall be provided prior to the first occupation of the development, and in accordance with the approved details.

GROUND:

To serve the development in accordance with Policy SR5 of the Thanet Local Plan.

- 16 The details to be submitted pursuant to Condition 1 above shall include the provision of 44no. off-street car parking spaces to serve the Extra Care Facility, and all other parking shall be in accordance with Kent Design Interim Guidance Note 3.

GROUND:

In the interests of highway safety

- 17 Details to be submitted in pursuant of Condition 1 above shall include the proposed levels and section plans through the site.

GROUND:

In the interests of the visual amenities of the area in accordance with Policy D1 of the Thanet Local Plan

- 18 No development shall take place until the highway improvement works, including the new 1.8m wide pavement, pedestrian crossing and two new bus stops, as shown on the approved plan numbered SK001 Rev C, have been completed in accordance with the specifications set out in the Kent Design Guide.

GROUND:

In the interests of highway safety and to improve the sustainability of the site.

- 19 The details to be submitted in pursuant of Condition 1 above shall include a swept path analysis for pantechnicons and emergency vehicles within the site.

GROUND:

In the interests of highway safety.

- 20 No more than 25% of the total floor area of the community building hereby permitted shall be used for the sale of retail goods.

GROUND:

To retain the community building and support the sustainability of the site, in accordance with the guidance contained within the NPPF.

- 21 Details to be submitted in pursuant of Condition 1 above shall include the location, size and phasing of the affordable housing units.

GROUND:

To promote mixed and balanced communities in accordance with Policy H14 of the Thanet Local Plan.

- 22 Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, the 43m x 2m x 43m visibility splays shown on the approved plan numbered SK001 Rev C for both of the new accesses, shall be provided and thereafter maintained, with no obstructions over 1m above carriageway level.

GROUND:

In the interest of highway safety.

- 23 Prior to the commencement of development hereby permitted, details of the loading/unloading and turning facilities for construction vehicles, and provision of parking facilities for site personnel and visitors, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved facilities shall be made available prior to the commencement of development, and for the duration of construction.

GROUND:

In the interest of highway safety.

- 24 The vehicular accesses hereby permitted shall be provided prior to the first occupation of the development.

GROUND:

In the interest of highway safety.

- 25 Details to be submitted pursuant to Condition 1 above shall show the gradient of the accesses to be no steeper than 1 in 10 for the first 1.5m from the highway boundary and no steeper than 1 in 8 thereafter.

GROUND:

In the interest of highway safety.

- 26 Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, the visibility splays at the pedestrian crossing points, as shown on the approved plan numbered SK001 Rev C, shall be provided and thereafter maintained, with no obstructions over 0.6m above footway level.

GROUND:

In the interest of highway safety.

- 27 The details to be submitted pursuant to Condition 1 above shall include the use of dark weatherboarding, and pantiles on the Extra Care facility, with details to be submitted.

GROUND:

In the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policy D1 of the Thanet Local Plan

- 28 Details to be submitted in pursuant of Condition 1 above shall show development not exceeding the building heights shown in the illustrative section plan, numbered

GROUND:

In the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policy D1 of the Thanet Local Plan

- 29 The details to be submitted in pursuant of Condition 1 above shall show at least 15% of the development provided as lifetime homes and wheelchair housing.

GROUND:

To meet a range of community needs, in accordance with Policy H8 of the Thanet Local Plan.

- 30 All dwellings hereby permitted shall be provided with Superfast Fibre Optic Broadband 'fibre to the premises', where there is adequate capacity (internal min speed of 100mb to each building)

GROUND:

To serve the future occupants of the development in accordance with Policy D1 of the Thanet Local Plan and the guidance contained within the NPPF.

- 31 The sheltered flats hereby permitted shall only be occupied by persons of 55 years of age or over, together with a spouse or partner.

GROUND:

In the interests of proper planning of the area and in compliance with Thanet Local Plan Policy TR16.

SITE, LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The site lies to the north-west of the village, and falls outside of the village confines. It is a site of 2.05 hectares, and is currently occupied by Jentex, an oil storage depot. Adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site, and opposite part of the site to the south, is residential development, which is semi-detached and detached, and which does not exceed 2-storey in height. Adjacent to the northern boundary of the site is Manston Airport, and adjacent to the western boundary of the site is open grassland. Part of the land opposite the site to the south is agricultural land. The site is currently occupied by two oil storage tanks, a small office building, and five other small storage buildings and workshops. The majority of the site is open, with space for parking and storage, and there are a few trees to the front of the site and along the eastern boundary.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

No relevant site history.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposal is for the redevelopment of the site, and includes the removal of the two oil storage tanks and associated buildings, and the erection of 56no. dwellings and 56no. Extra Care units. Of the 56no. dwellings, the applicant is proposing that 25no. of these will be family houses of 3 and 4 bedrooms, 16no. will be 'retirement' cottages, and 15no. will be bungalows (mostly 2-bed units but larger in size, 75Sqm to 81sqm, to accommodate special pieces of furniture). The intention of the applicant is to establish a unique 'rural hub' that integrates families, young couples and singles with active younger retirees and older frailer people, in order to provide a sustainable community, and therefore they intend to provide a range of graduated housing with care choices on site, which will enable older people to continue to live independently in the local community, along with good quality Extra Care accommodation that is fit for modern purpose. In addition to the residential units, a 2-storey community building is proposed that accommodates meeting space, an office and a small retail unit.

The application is in outline form only, with only vehicular access requiring consideration. All other matters are reserved for future consideration. However, in order to prove that the site can accommodate the number of units proposed, illustrative layout and elevation plans have been submitted.

With regards to the access, two vehicular access points into the site are proposed, along with a number of other highway improvements.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

Thanet Local Plan (2006)

EC12 - Retention of Employment Site
CC1 - Development in the Countryside
H1 - Housing
H8 - Size and Type of Housing
H14 - Affordable Housing
SR5 - Play space
TR12 - Cycle Parking
TR16 - Parking Provision
CF1 - Community Facility
EP7 - Noise

NOTIFICATIONS

Neighbouring occupiers have been notified and a site notice posted.

Two letters of objection have been received. The main concerns are:

- Affordable housing on the site will devalue home,
- Increased crime,
- Increased traffic,
- Risk of accidents,
- Increase noise,
- Occupancy of units should include residents of Ramsgate, not just those from Cliffsend.

One letter of support has been received on the grounds that this later life accommodation is desperately needed, the site will be part of the community, and the community facilities proposed are really needed in the village.

Cliffsend Parish Council - Offer support to the application, but would like to see a limit on the times that the contractors can work on the site (8-6pm Monday-Friday) and also ensure roads and entrance/exits are kept free of mud and debris.

Ramsgate Conservation Area Advisory Group - Approved with the proviso that an archaeological recording of FIDO petrol tanks are made, as well as any other wartime uses.

Cliffsend Residents Association - No objections.

CONSULTATIONS

KCC Highways and Transportation - I have no objections in respect of highway matters in response to the amended drawings. The proposed accesses and highway alterations are acceptable in principle. Whilst the indicative layout shows a shortfall of car parking spaces, I am content that a sufficient amount of parking can be provided with alterations to this layout or the provision of an alternative layout at the reserved matters stage. It may not be necessary to provide additional parking if suitable controls are in place on the nature of occupancy of the independent residential units. I understand the internal access roads are to remain private. Safeguarding conditions are required.

Environment Agency - There is limited contamination in the ground that will affect the development proposals. Based on this and previously submitted information, we consider that planning permission could be granted for the proposed development if safeguarding conditions are included.

Southern Water - There is currently inadequate capacity in the local sewerage network to accommodate the proposed storm flows. It is recommended that a localised solution such as the use of soakaways or direct connection to the watercourse be considered for the storm runoff drainage. There is currently adequate capacity within the local sewerage network to accommodate a foul flow from the proposed development. Safeguarding conditions that seek further information are required.

KCC Flood Risk Project Officer - Confirm that they are generally satisfied with the surface water management principles outlined within the submitted FRA/SWMS. Safeguarding conditions requiring further details as part of the reserved matters application are required.

Environmental Health Officer - In assessing the Environmental Noise Survey Report, I am satisfied with the methodology, assessment and concur with the conclusions. Provided that mitigation suitable for a site falling within NEC C is fully implemented I have no objection to the proposal whether Manston remains an airport or not.

KCC Commissioning Manager - The Jentex Group of Companies has engaged with KCC from a very early stage in the development of the proposals for the Jentex site and they continue to do so. We continue to be supportive of the development of the provision of Later Life Cottages, Bungalows and Extra Care Housing at the Jentex site. The proposal offers a unique range of housing choices and responds to and will contribute to many desired health and social care outcomes in Thanet.

Crime Prevention Design Advisor - Have some concerns with the indicative layout and suggests that the agent contacts them to discuss the layout prior to the submission of a reserved matters application.

Senior Archaeological Officer - The site lies within an area which has high potential for prehistoric and later settlement and burial sites. In view of the archaeological potential, a condition requiring archaeological field evaluation works is required.

Senior Strategic Housing Officer - No objections to the 30% affordable housing provision, but requires that in terms of the allocation of the affordable housing units, Thanet District Council have 100% nomination rights to the units for households on the Housing Register, with priority being given to local residents of the parish.

KCC Development Project Manager - Require a financial contribution of £4000 per applicable unit towards Phase 1 of the new Primary School at St Georges, and £5377.77 towards additional library book stock, to mitigate the impact of the new borrowers from this development, supplied to the local Library at Ramsgate.

COMMENTS

This application has been brought before members as it involves the loss of employment land, and the erection of housing development within the countryside, and is therefore a departure to Thanet Local Plan Policies EC12 and H1.

Principle

- Loss of Employment Land

The application site is allocated as land to be retained for employment use within the Thanet Local Plan. Policy EC12 states that the site is to be retained for employment uses falling within use classes B1 and B8 in locations close to residential areas, with additional B2 use for sites away from residential areas. The proposal is to re-develop the site for residential use, and is therefore contrary to Policy EC12 of the Thanet Local Plan.

The applicant has advised that the Jentex storage installation is no longer required, as operational changes affecting the supply of marine oil to the Kent Ports have significantly reduced the requirement for oil storage at the Cliffsend site. Most oil distribution is now made direct from the refinery, with only two of the original six oil storage tanks remaining on site. The applicant has confirmed that only one of these tanks are now used, and never to more than 25% of its capacity. This shift in the industry means that a site of this size is no longer required, and so it is the Company's intention to relocate to a much smaller site, consisting of a small office and vehicle depot. The continued use of the land by Jentex Oil Depot is therefore no longer required.

The current layout of the site specifically suits the needs of the existing oil storage use, with two oil tanks, a small office building, and five other small storage buildings and workshops scattered across the site. Most of the site consists of open land, having either previously been occupied by oil tanks or used for parking. Whilst the principle of alternative employment uses would be supported on this site, it is only likely to be an open storage use that could occupy the site in its current format. For any other employment uses, larger office space or storage/industrial units would be required, which could only be provided through the redevelopment of the site. This significantly limits the potential future occupation of the site by alternative employment uses, especially given its isolated village location.

Jentex occupies a large site, but currently it only employs seven people. The proposed uses include a care home, which although not an industrial/office/storage use, would employ approximately forty people in a business that may also be more likely to suit the employment needs of the village, and as such the change of use of the land could still continue to support economic growth in a rural area, in accordance with paragraph 28 of the NPPF.

Para 22 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that 'where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for the allocated employment use, applications for alternative uses of land and buildings should be treated on their merits having regard to market signals and the relative need for different land uses to support sustainable local communities.' An employment land review has been carried out by the Council, which has identified that Thanet has an over-supply of employment land. Following an assessment of existing employment sites, Jentex is no longer allocated as an employment site within the Draft Thanet Local Plan Preferred Options Consultation document. Whilst the policies contained within the Preferred Options document carry little weight at this time, they indicate the Council's intentions and are supported by evidence.

For the reasons above it is therefore considered that the change of use of land from an employment use to an alternative non-employment use is acceptable in principle, subject to there being a need for the proposed use that will support sustainable local communities.

- Development in the Countryside

Policy H1 of the Thanet Local Plan states that residential development on non-allocated sites will be permitted only on previously developed land within the existing built-up confines. The application site lies outside of the village confines, meaning that the proposal is contrary to Policy H1 of the Thanet Local Plan. However, the site has been allocated as a housing site within the Draft Thanet Local Plan Preferred Options Consultation document, and whilst this currently has limited weight, the evidence supports the allocation of this site for housing in both suitability and deliverability terms.

Policy CC1 states that 'within the countryside, new development will not be permitted unless there is a need for the development that overrides the need to protect the countryside'.

There is a current need for housing within Thanet. The NPPF states in para 49 that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. In determining whether the development of the site is acceptable, the need for housing in the district will therefore need to be balanced against other issues such as the loss of employment land, impact on the countryside, sustainability of the site, character and appearance of the proposed development, and highway safety.

Whilst the site is located within Cliffsend Village, where there are few facilities and services, the Council's housing strategy for the future includes making modest provision at rural settlements to meet identified need for affordable homes and to provide locational choice, and therefore a number of village sites have been allocated within the Draft Thanet Local Plan Preferred Options Consultation document. The application site is one of those allocated as a result of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, which looks at the suitability and availability of sites, and on the basis of this allocation it is considered that the proposed development would amount to sustainable development, subject to the introduction of highway improvements to improve pedestrian accessibility around the site.

- Community Facilities

The application includes a proposal for a community building to be located to the centre of the site, with easy access from Canterbury Road West. It will serve the future occupants of the site, but will also be available for use by existing occupants within the village. The existing village hall and shop within Cliffsend is located to the south of the village, and is not easily accessible by the less mobile residents living to the north of the village. The planning agent has advised that through their public consultation they identified groups that use the hall who commented that they are constrained by space and availability, and as such there is a need for an additional community facility. It is proposed that the new community building will offer a shared flexible space that can be used for classes, clubs and any other activities required by the community, and will incorporate a new small retail unit to meet the needs of the local catchment area. The building and retail unit will be managed on site in conjunction with the extra care facility.

Policy CF1 of the Thanet Local Plan states that 'planning permission will be granted for new community facilities if the proposals are not contrary to other local plan policies and the community use and location are demonstrated as appropriate'. Furthermore, paragraphs 28 and 70 of the NPPF advises that decisions should plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local shops and meeting places) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments, especially in villages where such a proposal would help to support the rural economy.

The principle of the proposed community building and shop is therefore considered to be acceptable in policy terms, but would also be of particular benefit to this specific site proposal that contains a large number of units to be occupied by the elderly. The provision of a community building and shop that could be used daily by the future residents will provide an opportunity for them to retain their independence and meet with other residents within the village, and as a result is considered to significantly improve the sustainability of the proposed development. Without the provision of the community building the sustainability of the development is significantly affected, and as such there is a requirement for the community building to be provided via the legal agreement, which the agent has agreed to.

Size and Type of Housing

There is a need for a mix in the size and type of housing, with Policy H8 of the Thanet Local Plan stating that 'on sites where 10 or more residential units are proposed, the council will require a mix of dwelling sizes and types to meet a range of community needs'. In addition, paragraph 50 of the NPPF advises that local planning authorities 'deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities'. Current evidence from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) suggests that there is a shortage of larger family homes of three bedrooms or more, as well as a solid demand for smaller homes to house the increasing number of older single people.

Policy H07 contained within the Draft Thanet Local Plan Preferred Options Consultation document advises that it is the Council's intention to approve applications that provide good quality accommodation that is needed to support the housing and care requirements of Thanet's community (including provision of facilities and services which will support independent living).

Although this could not be required through this planning permission, the applicant has indicated that he intends to provide 25no. family houses of 3 and 4 bedrooms, 16no. retirement cottages, 15no. bungalows (mostly 2-bed units but larger in size, 75Sqm to 81sqm, to accommodate special pieces of furniture), and 56no. Extra Care units. The retirement cottages and bungalows are to be fitted with assistive technology, allowing them

to be linked to the on site care and support operator for the delivery of personal and domiciliary care.

KCC's draft accommodation strategy for adult social care has been published and identifies a need within Thanet for 278 Extra Care units up to the year 2021, confirming that there is a need for the proposed Extra Care facility within Thanet. The Commissioning Manager at KCC has been consulted and has advised that there is a growing need for the specific type of accommodation being offered as part of the proposal, and that it helps to provide older people with positive housing choices that are more likely to encourage older people to move out of their existing home, helping to tackle wider housing issues such as under-occupancy. They confirm that they are supportive of the proposed development, which offers a unique range of housing choices, and which responds to and will contribute to many desired health and social care outcomes in Thanet. This provision within the proposal is in principle acceptable, in so far as it would address a need.

The agent has agreed that 15% of units will be lifetime homes and wheelchair housing.

The size and type of units to be provided is therefore considered to be acceptable, and in accordance with Policy H8 of the Thanet Local Plan, and the requirements of the NPPF.

Affordable Housing

The Cliffsend Housing Needs Survey, which was published in April 2013, identifies where there is a shortfall in affordable housing provision within the Parish. There was only a 29% response rate to the survey; however, from the responses received a need for up to 8 affordable homes was identified. This consisted of 6 social rented units (3 x 1-bed, 2 x 2-bed, 1 x 3-bed) and 2 shared ownership units (1 x 2-bed and 1 x 3-bed). A need for one retirement home/sheltered housing unit was also identified.

Policy H14 of the Thanet Local Plan requires that 30% affordable housing is provided for sites of development for 15 units or more. The proposal includes the provision of 17no. Extra Care units and 17 dwellings as affordable housing, which meets the minimum 30% requirement. The size of units to be provided as affordable are proportionate to the overall number, and consist of a mix of 1, 2 and 3-4 bed accommodation. Whilst the layout of the development is not being agreed at this stage, the agent has agreed to the "pepper potting" of the affordable units across the site, and the provision of 70% affordable rent units and 30% shared ownership units. The Senior Strategic Housing Officer has no objections to the proposal as it will meet the housing need for the village, and provide additional affordable housing for the district, but she has recommended that Thanet District Council be given 100% nomination rights to the units to households on the Housing Register, as priority would normally be given to local residents of the parish. This would then cascade down to residents from the other parishes before cascading again to other households on the housing register.

The affordable housing provision forms part of the legal agreement, with the number and type of affordable units, along with nomination rights for Thanet District Council agreed. Further details of location and phasing are to be submitted as part of the reserved matters application.

Character and Appearance

The application is in outline form only, with the layout, scale and appearance reserved for future consideration. However, an illustrative layout and elevation plan has been submitted as part of the application, which shows the possible siting and height of units. The site falls

within the countryside, but is previously developed land, given its current employment use. There is open land adjacent and opposite the site, and therefore long views of the development will be possible from surrounding roads. Given its prominent location at the entrance to Cliffsend Village, a sympathetic development that appears in keeping with the rural character of the village is essential.

The site has varied levels, with the front tier of the site level with the road, and the rear tier approximately 7m higher, but the agent has confirmed that no part of the development will exceed the height of the existing oil storage tanks, which are located on the middle tier of the site and are the equivalent height of a 2-storey dwelling. The units located on the rear tier of the site at the highest level are shown on the illustrative plan as bungalows, preventing any dominating appearance.

The illustrative layout plan shows the location of the extra care building within the south east corner of the site, adjacent to existing development, and whilst the building is quite wide, it has a staggered elevation, with part of the frontage building setback by approximately 5m, and the remainder of the building extending back into the site, and set away from both side elevations. The building is 2-storey in height with rooms within the roof, and the illustrative elevations suggest that the building would be clad with dark weatherboarding and pantile tiles to give a rural barn appearance. Overall, whilst the building will appear significantly larger than typical building types within Cliffsend, this size is necessary to suit its use as an extra care facility, and it is considered that enough has been done in relation to its layout, height, design and materials to break up the overall appearance and scale of the building, and create a development that can be positively integrated into this rural village. The illustrative layout and elevation plan therefore prove that there is an acceptable solution that would enable a 56no. Extra Care facility to appear in keeping with the rural character of the village.

The indicative layout plan shows that there would be a mix in the type of dwellings to be provided, which will include a few terrace blocks, but also semi-detached and detached dwellings. The semi-detached and detached are mainly located to the front and western side of the site, and are 2-storey in height, and will therefore appear in keeping with the street-scene and surrounding development. The terrace blocks are located mainly to the rear, and include bungalows, cottages and larger family dwellings. Whilst the presence of terraced dwellings are less common within the village, the illustrative perspectives suggest that their design could appear in keeping with the rural character of the village if a stable/barn design is again used, along with the dark weatherboarding. The terraces are also not particularly wide, with only three or four dwellings making up most of the blocks, and they are integrated with the semi-detached and detached dwellings.

To the front of the site a row of two terraces lie parallel to the proposed community building, which is setback into the site behind the open space. This provides a unique layout, with the modern community building sited at the head of the open space, giving it an accessible appearance. The terrace dwellings are located side on to the road, so it is essential that the end unit is designed to front the road, and terrace units are of a good quality design that compliments the appearance of the community building.

A variety of open space and areas of landscaping are provided around the site, and the illustrative plans suggest that there will be the planting of semi-mature trees, along with other areas of soft landscaping, especially along the front boundary adjacent to the extra care building.

Overall, the number of units proposed is considered to be acceptable, as the illustrative plans show that they can be accommodated on the site without a detrimental impact to visual amenities, and the potential design and layout of the proposed development for the

erection of the proposed number of dwellings is generally considered to be in keeping with the rural character of the village. The impact on the character and appearance of the area and surrounding countryside is therefore considered to be acceptable.

Living Conditions

The application is in outline form only; however, based on the indicative layout plan, the proposed development has a minimum distance of 28m to any adjacent neighbouring property to the east, and a minimum distance of 19m to any neighbouring property opposite the site to the south, and is therefore unlikely to impact upon neighbouring light or outlook. Loss of privacy is also unlikely to be a concern at these distances, however a full assessment of the impact will take place through the reserved matters applications when the design and layout of buildings, including window locations, are available.

Highway Safety

As part of the application a Transport Statement has been submitted, which concludes that whilst there will be a small increase in trips generated by the proposal, they will be small in number and spread evenly throughout the day, and can therefore be considered to have no material effect on the operation of the local highway network. In addition, the statement advises that traffic levels on Canterbury Road West are now significantly lower than 10 years ago as a result of changed traffic conditions, and the proposed use will generate a much smaller proportion of HGV traffic when compared to the existing use. The Development Planner at KCC Highways and Transportation is of the opinion that the Transport Statement satisfactorily demonstrates that the proposed development will not generate an overbearing additional demand when compared to the worst case extant uses on the site.

The agent has confirmed his intention for the road leading into the application site to be privately owned, and as such KCC have raised no concerns with the indicative layout plan, which accommodates areas of shared surfacing. Appropriate sightlines of 2.4m x 43m have been indicated on the proposed highway plan, and so in principle there are no objections to the proposed access.

Off-street parking has been identified on the indicative layout plan in the form of 18no. spaces for the retirement cottages, 16no. spaces for the bungalows, 48no. spaces for the 25no. family dwellings, and 44no. spaces for the 56no. Extra Care units. Some layby parking has been provided to the front of the site. Whilst the number of parking spaces provided for the Extra Care Facility is lower, the facility maintains a level of care along with other communal facilities within the building, and is therefore unlikely to require the same level of parking provision as a normal C3 use, as many of the occupants are unlikely to own a car. As such an occupancy condition restricting the use of the Extra Care units to over 55's only is deemed appropriate in this instance. KCC highways team have also commented that the indicative layout shows a shortfall of car parking spaces for the dwellings, but they believe that it is possible for a sufficient amount of parking to be provided through minor alterations to the layout, or the provision of an alternative layout, at the reserved matters stage.

Improved pedestrian links are proposed as part of the application in order to improve connectivity with the village and pedestrian safety, and improve the sustainability of the site. A new 1.8m wide footpath is proposed along the southern boundary of the site to connect to the existing footpath adjacent to the site, and an uncontrolled pedestrian crossing point is proposed to the front of the south east corner of the site. In addition, two new bus stops are proposed, one to either side of Canterbury Road West, in order to improve public transport links for the future occupiers of the site. A Road Safety Audit Report has been submitted,

which has assessed the safety of the proposed scheme. The recommendations from the audit have been used in the amendment of the plans, which KCC consider to be acceptable.

Vehicle tracking plans have been submitted to prove that both refuse and emergency vehicles are able to enter and turn within the site, however, this is based on the indicative layout plan, and so further details will be required at the reserved matters stage.

The proposed accesses and highway alterations are acceptable in principle, and as such the impact on highway safety is considered to be acceptable, subject to a condition requiring the highway works to be carried out prior to the commencement of development.

Play Space

Policy SR5 of the Thanet Local Plan requires that for development of 50 units or more, local play area provision on the basis of 0.7 hectares per 1000 population will be required in the form of 36% equipped play area and 64% informal play space. Due to the occupancy restrictions on the extra care facility, play space is only required for the 56no. dwellings, in the form of 980sqm. The indicative layout plans suggest that there is space on the site to accommodate the full 980sqm, with a large area provided to the front of the community building, and a further large open space to the west of the site, fronted by development. In addition, every property is provided with a rear garden and so has doorstep play space. The agent has agreed to the provision of an equipped play area on site, details of which will be provided at the reserved matters stage, but which is to be maintained by a site management company, as confirmed within the legal agreement. The proposal therefore complies with Policy SR5 of the Thanet Local Plan.

Archaeology

The site lies within an area which has high potential for prehistoric and later settlement and burial sites. There is an Iron Age settlement known to the west and this settlement activity may continue along the ridge. Further prehistoric or later remains may survive on site although there may have been substantial disturbance from the industrial use of the site. The site was used as an oil storage depot during the 1940s probably serving Manston Airport. There may be some structures of historic interest associated with the early 20th century industrial complex. In view of the archaeological potential, the Senior Archaeological Officer at KCC recommends a condition requiring the implementation of archaeological field evaluation works.

Flood Risk

The site lies within Flood Zone 1, and a Flood Risk Statement has been submitted as part of the application that concludes that there are few potential flood risks to the development site, and whilst the conversion of land that is currently permeable into hard area is likely to increase flood risk elsewhere, it is likely that the risks and impact can be managed to an appropriate level with the adoption of mitigation measures.

Southern Water have commented that there is inadequate capacity in the local sewerage network to accommodate the proposed storm flows, and as such they recommend that a localised solution is used, such as soakaways or direct connection to the watercourse.

The site topographical survey indicates that surface water runoff from parts of the current site is drained via gravity into an existing brick culvert, which then discharges downstream into Pegwell Bay. A reduction in the runoff rate to the culvert, which is currently unrestricted,

is required, and it is proposed as part of the application that attenuation should be in the form of below-ground storage in geo-cellular units, placed beneath areas of permeable paving. Pollution prevention is proposed by way of the proposed permeable paving in the parking area and the use of trapped gullies in the highway.

The Flood Risk Project Officer at KCC has commented that whilst they are generally happy with the surface water management principles outlined within the submitted Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Management Strategy, confirmation of the connectivity of the brick culvert to the receiving tidal water body is still required at the detailed design stage (along with details of its ownership). Additionally, the developer is encouraged to consider open, above ground attenuation features in preference to the depicted subterranean geocellular storage tanks (though swales etc), as not only would open features provide an additional stage of treatment to improve the quality of the water leaving the site, but they would also improve the site's ecological potential and its ability to accommodate exceedance flows. Safeguarding conditions requiring further details are therefore recommended.

Drainage

Southern Water have confirmed that there is currently adequate capacity in the local sewerage network to accommodate the foul flow required by the development, and therefore only require a safeguarding condition that requests details of the proposed means of foul sewerage disposal as part of the reserved matters application.

Manston Kent International Airport

The site lies within Noise Exposure Category C, where Policy EP7 states that planning permission will not be granted unless the site lies within the confines of a substantially built-up area, and that conditions can be imposed to ensure an adequate level of protection against noise. The site lies on the edge of Cliffsend Village, a large built-up area, and is previously developed land. It is a site that would form a natural expansion to the settlement and for the reasons set out elsewhere in this report, and is in principle considered appropriate for housing. It is therefore considered that this site could be considered as an exception subject to conditions that would ensure an adequate level of protection against noise.

An acoustic appraisal of aircraft noise has been submitted as part of the application. The Environmental Health team have been consulted and have commented that they are satisfied with the methodology and assessment, and concur with the conclusions. The measurements were undertaken in October 2012 prior to the airport closure and before the traffic calming measures along Canterbury Road were fully completed. The assessment takes into account the airport Masterplan predictions, a precautionary 63dB contour, and also worst case traffic noise. Therefore provided that mitigation suitable for a site falling within NEC C is fully implemented Environmental Health have no objection to the proposal whether Manston remains an airport or not. A condition is therefore required seeking details of the mitigation measures proposed to be submitted as part of the reserved matters application.

Community Facilities

KCC have been consulted and have advised that in order to accommodate the additional children housed by the proposed development, they require a primary school contribution of £4,000 per unit (excluding any age restricted housing) towards the construction of Phase 1 of the new primary school at St. Georges School. They also require a financial contribution of

£5377.77 towards library book stock at Ramsgate Library, to mitigate the impact of the new borrowers from the proposed development. The agent has agreed to both contributions, which are to be included within the legal agreement.

SPA Mitigation

Assessing the impact of the proposed development upon both the Thanet Coast and Sandwich Bay Special Protection Area (SPA), and Sandwich Bay and Hacklinge Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which is a legal requirement under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. Recent planning applications for new residential development in Thanet have given rise to concerns from both Natural England (NE) and Kent Wildlife Trust (KWT) regarding the potential for increased recreational pressure upon Thanet's protected coastline (SPA and SSSI), as a result of population increases. The existing evidence indicates that new housing development in Thanet has the potential to increase the recreational impacts upon the SPA, as a result of increased population and therefore visitors to the coast. This in turn may be having an adverse impact on the species for which the SPA has been designated. The major concern is that of disturbance to over-wintering birds, particularly their ability to feed, and consequently, adverse effects on their breeding performance. Natural England has also raised concern regarding the impact upon the SSSI (which covers the primarily the same area), and particularly disturbance to summer birds. Due to the geographical nature of the District, all new housing developments in Thanet are located in close proximity to the coast, and residents have easy unrestricted access to the majority of the coastline which is subject to the SPA and SSSI designations. It is therefore considered that any new housing development in the District has the potential to increase recreational pressure at the coast. The evidence suggests that the actual level of impact from individual developments when considered alone may not be significant, however, when considered in-combination, with all housing developments proposed in the District, a significant effect upon the SPA cannot be ruled out. Taking into account the precautionary principle, it is therefore considered that there is potential for a likely in-combination significant effect, which needs to be mitigated in order for development proposals to be considered acceptable. It has been calculated and agreed by Natural England that a financial contribution of £184 per dwelling is adequate towards the funding of a part-time warden, to be secured in-perpetuity. The agent has agreed to this contribution, which is to be included within the legal agreement.

Conclusion

The application site is allocated employment land and falls outside of the village confines, but the proposed development is for housing for which there is a need within Thanet. There is an over-supply of employment land within Thanet, and following an assessment of existing employment sites this site is no longer considered suitable. Within the Draft Thanet Local Plan Preferred Options Consultation document, the application site has been allocated for housing, however, little weight can be given to this document at this time.

The proposal includes the provision of an extra care Facility, for which there is a need, and 56no. dwellings, 30% of which are proposed to be affordable housing. The sustainability of the site has been assessed to be acceptable through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, and is further improved through a number of proposed highway works, which improve pedestrian connectivity and proximity to public transport, as well as the provision of a community building on site.

The illustrative plans show how a development of this size could appear in keeping with the rural character of the village, and given that the site is already previously developed land

containing employment buildings, the need for housing is considered to outweigh the visual impact on the countryside in this instance.

Overall, the need for the development, which is considered to be a sustainable form of development, is considered to outweigh the loss of the employment land and the impact on the countryside, and as such it is recommended that members defer and delegate the application to the Head of Built Environment Defer to approve subject to the making of an agreement under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as set out in this report and subject to the following safeguarding conditions:

Case Officer
Emma Fibbens