

**A01**

**OL/TH/17/0314**

**PROPOSAL:** Outline application for the erection of up to 6No. dwellings including access

**LOCATION:** Land East Side Of Summer Road St Nicholas At Wade BIRCHINGTON Kent

**WARD:** Thanet Villages

**AGENT:** Ms N Coles

**APPLICANT:** Tenley Properties

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approve

Subject to the following 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 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).

3 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).

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 The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the submitted drawing numbered 072-SK-009 received 9 March 2017.

**GROUND:**

To secure the proper development of the area.

6 The details to be submitted in pursuant of condition 1 above shall include buildings that do not exceed two storey in height.

**GROUND:**

In the interests of the visual amenities of the area and to safeguard the special character and appearance and setting of the nearby heritage assets in accordance with advice contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

7 Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, the applicant, or their agents or successors in title, shall secure the implementation of a watching brief to be undertaken by an archaeologist approved by the Local Planning Authority so that the excavation is observed and items of interest and finds are recorded. The watching brief shall be in accordance with a written programme and specification, 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 National Planning Policy Framework.

8 Provision and maintenance of 43metres x 2.4metres x 43metres visibility splays at the access with no obstructions over 0.9 metres above carriageway level within the splays, prior to use of the site commencing.

**GROUND:**

In the interest of highway safety.

9 Provision of the new footway link along the southern boundary of the site to join the existing footway in Summer Road. The new footway must be at least 1.8 metres wide and formed of a bound material.

**GROUND:**

In the interest of pedestrian and highway safety.

10 Provision of the vehicle pull in area / lay by as outlined in the submitted drawings. The proposed lay by will need to be at least 2.5 metres wide to ensure drivers can safely pull in off of the public highway.

**GROUND:**

In the interest of highway safety.

11 The development hereby approved shall incorporate a bound surface material for the first 5 metres of the access from the edge of the highway.

**GROUND:**

In the interests of highway safety.

12 Details to be submitted in pursuant of condition 1 above for landscaping shall include the recommendations contained within the Corylus Ecology Report dated January 2016.

**GROUND:**

In order to provide opportunities to incorporate features into the design which are beneficial to wildlife, in accordance with paragraph 118 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

13 The details to be submitted in pursuant of condition 1 above shall show no excavation, mounding or tree planting within 4 metres of the public water main.

**GROUND:**

To protect drainage apparatus and protect the public sewer.

14 The details to be submitted in pursuant of condition 1 above shall show no development or new tree planting within 3 metres of either side of the centreline of the public combined sewer.

**GROUND:**

To protect drainage apparatus and protect the public sewer.

**INFORMATIVES**

Please be aware that obtaining planning permission and complying with building regulations are separate matters - please contact building control on 01843 577522 for advice on building regulations

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure, prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, that all necessary highway approvals and consents where required are obtained and that the limits of highway boundary are clearly established in order to avoid any enforcement action being by the Highway Authority. The applicant must also ensure that the details shown on the approved plans agree in every aspect with those approved under such legislation and common law. It is therefore important for the applicant to contact KCC Highway and Transportation to progress this aspect of the works prior to commencement on site

The applicant is advised that separate prior approval is required from Kent Highway Services for the new vehicle crossing/removal of the existing vehicle crossing/works within the highway and in this regard they should contact KHS on 08458 247800

Planning permission does not convey any approval for construction of the required vehicular crossing, or any other works within the highway for which a statutory licence must be obtained. Applicants should contact Kent County Council - Highways and Transportation

(web: [www.kent.gov.uk/roads\\_and\\_transport.aspx](http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads_and_transport.aspx) or telephone: 03000418181) in order to obtain the necessary Application Pack.

A formal application for connection to the public sewerage system is required in order to service this development. Please contact Southern Water, Southern House, Sparrowgrove, Otterbourne, Hampshire SO21 2SW (Tel: 0330 303 0119) or [www.southernwater.co.uk](http://www.southernwater.co.uk).

All existing infrastructure, including protective coatings and cathodic protection, should be protected during the course of construction works.

No new soakaways should be located within 5 metres of a public sewer and water mains.

### SITE, LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The site lies outside the village confines of St Nicholas-at-Wade, as established by the Thanet Local Plan proposals map.

The site relates to a triangular shaped piece of land of approximately 0.2 hectares situated to the north east of Summer Road. The site is currently used for grazing horses and its boundaries are marked by post and wire fencing. The site fronts Summer Road and extends to the properties at the southern end of Summer Road with the narrow end of the site joining the junction with Down Barton Road between No.2 Jubilee Cottages and No.1 Prospect Place.

### RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

F/TH/12/0704 - Change of use from Agricultural Land, to land for the keeping of horses and erection of stable block, sand school together with formation of vehicular access from Summer Road. Refused 26.10.2012.

An Appeal was dismissed on 19 March 2012 for the F/TH/12/0704 application. The Inspector commented on the site being below the size required by the British Horse Society for the number of horses and therefore an over intensification of use. The stable block was some distance from the nearest residential dwelling and the Inspector raised concerns that its scale and design had a residential appearance. As such the building had the appearance of an isolated structure in the countryside.

F/TH/12/0350 - Change of use from Agricultural Land, to land for the keeping of horses and erection of stable block, sand school together with formation of vehicular access from Summer Road. Refused 29.06.2012

### PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The application is in outline form with all matters reserved except for access and is for the erection of 6 No. dwellings. The illustrative layout plan shows the location of 6 dwellings arranged as three pairs of semi-detached properties, fronting Summer Road. Access to the site is off Summer Road by way of a private drive with a turning head at the southern end. Parking is shown for each property and a pull in/layby area for vehicle parking is shown at

the entrance to Summer Road where the road narrows. In addition a new footpath is shown linking the existing footpath alongside properties at the southern end of Summer Road to the footpath at the Down Barton Road junction.

### DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICIES

Thanet Local Plan (2006)

CC1 - Development in the Countryside (urban and rural confines)

CC2 - Landscape Character Areas

D1 - Design Principles

D2 - Landscaping

H1- Housing

H4 - Windfall Sites

SR5 - Play space

TR12 - Cycling

TR16 - Car Parking Provision

### NOTIFICATIONS

Neighbouring residents have been notified, a site notice displayed and an advert placed in the Thanet Extra. Seven letters of objection have been received raising the following concerns:

- \* The dwellings are outside the village confines
- \* The need for housing in the village does not outweigh the impact on the surrounding countryside
- \* Extra dwellings will add to the already strained services such as over-subscribed primary school and the Summer Road water pumping station.
- \* The junction of Summer Road/Down Barton Road is small and can cause a blind spot to traffic turning from the junction.
- \* The junction is used as a turning point and there is insufficient width for two vehicles to pass.
- \* School children use this road to walk to and from school in Down Barton Road and this development will create additional traffic flow.
- \* Additional traffic created will cause increased noise and disturbance along narrow village roads and past the busy school.
- \* Impact on the safety of horses - would be unable to find suitable grazing areas for 4 horses.
- \* Increased traffic would be harmful to horse riders.
- \* This will lead to loss of countryside and grazing areas.
- \* This development could result in the whole of Down Barton and the other side of Summer Road being built on.
- \* Increased strain on utilities.
- \* Visual impact in an area of outstanding views.
- \* The development is not right for the area.
- \* Increased demand on already strained drainage in the village.

\* Island Ridge, Alikaba and Stevens have their water pipes running across land east of Summer Road, the stop cocks for the water pipes are located at the end of this land on Down Barton Road.

**St Nicholas-at-Wade & Sarre Parish Council** object to the proposal for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development is on a field previously used for keeping horses outside the village confines and therefore breaches the existing and emerging Local Plan. A previous smaller scheme on the same site was refused for the same reason.
2. St Nicholas-at-Wade's housing allocation in the emerging Local Plan has already potentially been exceeded by proposed developments in Manor Road and The Length so this application is deemed to be excessive and unnecessary.
3. The impact of extra vehicular traffic in the area. Summer Road and Down Barton Road are both narrow 'no through roads' which have existing traffic and parking problems, especially when children from the nearby school are being dropped off or picked up.
4. The impact on services such as drainage and electricity which are currently not always reliable.

### CONSULTATIONS

**Kent Highway Services** raise no objection, making the following comment:

The provision of 6 new residential units is highly unlikely to lead to a material increase in vehicle movements at this site. The application proposes to improve existing sustainable travel links, by way of providing a new footway, as such I am satisfied that there are no adverse impacts in relation to the public highway. The proposed new footway link will need to be at least 1.8 metres wide, and formed of a bound material.

Provided the following requirements are secured by condition, then I would raise no objection on behalf of the local highway authority:-

- 1.) Provision of the new footway link along the southern boundary of the site to join the existing footway in Summer Road. The new footway must be at least 1.8 metres wide and formed of a bound material.
- 2.) Provision of the vehicle pull in area / lay by as outlined in the submitted drawings. The proposed lay by will need to be at least 2.5 metres wide to ensure drivers can safely pull in off of the public highway.
- 3.) Provision and maintenance of 43metres x 2.4metres x 43metres visibility splays at the access with no obstructions over 0.9 metres above carriageway level within the splays, prior to use of the site commencing.

4.) Use of a bound surface for at least the first 5 metres of the access from the edge of the highway, to prevent deposition of material on the carriageway.

**INFORMATIVE:** It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure, before the development hereby approved is commenced, that all necessary highway approvals and consents where required are obtained and that the limits of highway boundary are clearly established in order to avoid any enforcement action being taken by the Highway Authority.

Across the county there are pieces of land next to private homes and gardens that do not look like roads or pavements but are actually part of the road. This is called 'highway land'. Some of this land is owned by The Kent County Council (KCC) whilst some are owned by third party owners. Irrespective of the ownership, this land may have 'highway rights' over the topsoil.

Information about how to clarify the highway boundary can be found at <http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/what-we-look-after/highway-land>.

The applicant must also ensure that the details shown on the approved plans agree in every aspect with those approved under such legislation and common law. It is therefore important for the applicant to contact KCC Highways and Transportation to progress this aspect of the works prior to commencement on site.

Planning permission does not convey any approval for construction of the required vehicular crossing, or any other works within the highway for which a statutory licence must be obtained.

Applicants should contact Kent County Council - Highways and Transportation (web: [www.kent.gov.uk/roads\\_and\\_transport.aspx](http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads_and_transport.aspx) or telephone: 03000 418181) in order to obtain the necessary Application Pack.

**Southern Water** raise no objection but request the applicant contact them to discuss connection to the public sewer.

**KCC Biodiversity Officer** is satisfied that due to the current management of the proposed development site, the site has limited potential to contain protected/notable species and no specific species surveys are required. The recommendations within the ecology report ensuring proposed lighting does not negatively impact any bats should be incorporated into the lighting scheme for the development. The application provides opportunities to incorporate features into the design which are beneficial to wildlife. The recommendations in the ecology report should be incorporated into any landscaping scheme, in accordance with paragraph 118 of the NPPF 2opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around development should be encouraged."

**Kent County Council Development Contributions Officer** comments that 6 dwellings falls below the Government threshold for seeking contributions, unless the development is more than 1000sqm floorspace.

St Nicholas at Wade CE Primary has traditionally taken a considerable proportion of its intake from Birchington. It has been over-subscribed over many years although for this coming September 2017 Year R intake both Birchington CE Primary and St Nicholas at Wade CE primary have capacity for their Year R at this point. KCC have very recently expanded Birchington Primary as a strategic provision to take account of the increased pupil population in Birchington itself.

KCC have also requested a school site linked to the planned strategic housing development for Birchington.

In theory the school should be able to deal with pupils coming from a small development (6 houses generates 1.68 new Primary pupils based upon KCC adopted pupil product ratio of 0.28 per new house) although the school's admissions criteria will prioritise sibling links above distance from the school.

**Environmental Health** raise no objections to the application.

## COMMENTS

The application is brought before Members as a departure to policy H1 of the Thanet Local Plan, as the site is located outside the confines of the village, within the open countryside.

The application is also brought before Members at the request of Councillor Ken Gregory to allow for the consideration of the traffic implications, whether it is an overdevelopment of the site, and the impact on the surrounding properties.

## **Principle**

The application site lies within an area designated as countryside as defined by the Thanet Local Plan and is therefore contrary to Policy H1 of the Thanet Local Plan, which requires that new residential development should be on previously developed land within the urban confines.

However it has been determined that the Council does not currently have a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites as required by paragraph 49 of the NPPF. For residential development, this means that planning applications for housing should be considered in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework's presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 14). This is because local policies (including defined development boundaries) relating to the supply of housing are no longer considered up to date (paragraph 49). Paragraph 14 of the NPPF states that where relevant local policies are out-of-date, planning permission should be granted unless; any adverse impacts of doing so would "significantly and demonstrably" outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies of the NPPF taken as a whole; or specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.

Policy CC1 of the Thanet Local Plan 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 need for housing within Thanet, however, the need for



housing has to be balanced against the impact on the countryside and the sustainability of the site.

Policy CC2 relates to the Landscape Character Area and this site lies within the Wantsum Channel North Shore Area where the policy states development will only be permitted that would not damage the setting of the Wantsum Channel. This landscape is very open with few features and from the upper slopes it affords extensive views across the whole of the former Wantsum Channel to the slopes on the opposite banks and in many places to the sea. The former shoreline provides St Nicholas with its unique setting.

### *Sustainability*

In March and April this year the Planning Inspector has upheld two appeals for development within the countryside and these decisions have relevance to this proposal.

Erection of a two-storey dwelling on land adjacent to 151 Monkton Road, Minster (F/TH/16/0788 - Appeal Ref APP/Z2260/W/16/3162744) determined 31 March 2017.

This site 'lies well outside the built up village confines of both Monkton and Minster as defined by the Thanet Local Plan (2006) and consequently in the countryside for planning policy purposes. The villages of Monkton and Minster both offer a good range of services and facilities. Monkton has a village hall, church, primary school and recreation ground whilst Minster has an even wider range of facilities with some shops, post office, primary school and a railway station. The appeal site is within 2km of most of these facilities and not far from the built-up confines of either village; it is not therefore an isolated location.' (paragraph 5).

'The proposal would consolidate the existing group of residential properties adjacent to the appeal site which lies in the countryside between the two villages. It would incrementally extend the ribbon development on the northern side of the road. .... The houses would be seen together as a single, integrated scheme.' (paragraph 7).

'There is a clearly defined boundary between the site and the agricultural field.....The proposal would be seen as rounding off the existing group of properties rather than an encroachment into the remaining open countryside between the two villages. (paragraph 8).

'The proposal would result in a sustainable form of development having regard to development plan policy and the character and appearance of the area.' Although the proposal would conflict to some extent with Policies CC1 and H1 of the TLP, in the absence of a five year housing land supply these policies can only be afforded limited weight. There would be no material conflict with Policy D1 of the TLP which requires new development to respect the character and appearance of the surrounding area, particularly in scale, massing, rhythm and use of materials appropriate to the locality.' (paragraph 10).

The Inspector concluded that 'the proposal would provide an additional dwelling with important social and economic benefits for the area and make a small but useful contribution to the housing land supply shortfall in the district.' 'The adverse environmental impacts of the proposal are minimal and these are significantly and demonstrably outweighed by the

benefits. The presumption in favour of sustainable development therefore applies in this case.' (paragraph 15).

Erection of 36 dwellings with construction of new access from Monkton Road (OL/TH/16/0654 - Appeal Ref: APP/Z2260/W/16/3164748) determined 3 April 2017.

This site is grazing paddocks adjacent to the built up confines of Minster and close to the village centre with its wide range of services and facilities including shops, doctor's surgery, primary school and railway station. 'As such there is no dispute that the site is a sustainable location for new housing.' (paragraph 10)

It should be noted that the Draft Local Plan proposes housing sites in Manor Road. Whilst the Summer Road site is much smaller and has not been included in the current housing allocation its sustainability in terms of location would be similar.

St Nicholas offers a range of services and facilities having a village hall, church, primary school, general store with post office and a recreation ground. The site is within easy walking distance of these facilities and is immediately adjacent to the edge of the built up confines of the village. There is a limited bus service (Monday to Saturday) which stops in The Length, outside the post office, and a more regular bus service that runs between Canterbury and Thanet with stops on the main Canterbury Road, as such future occupiers would not be wholly reliant on the private car.

Having regard to the above the site has a good range of services and is considered to be a sustainable location, taking account of the criteria within the comments of the Planning Inspector in the recent appeal decisions.

### **Character and Appearance**

The site lies outside the built up village confines of St Nicholas-at-Wade as defined by the Thanet Local Plan 2006 and consequently in the countryside for planning policy purposes. The site is currently open grazing land for horses and provides a break in the built form and provides clear separation between the main village and the more sporadic development that continues along Summer Road and toward Down Barton Farm. The development within the village confines is linear street frontage development characterised by predominantly two-storey semi-detached and terraced dwellings.

The application site is a triangular piece of open land with dwellings adjacent to the site in Down Barton Road and Summer Road. There are 10 properties at the southern end of Summer Road at the far end of the site and a pair of dwellings directly opposite the site. To the north east of the site are the Jubilee Cottages in Down Barton Road, which are the last properties within the defined area of the village confines. Further terraced dwellings lie to the south west of the site along Down Barton Road. The site therefore consists of an open area of land set between built development and which currently provides a gap where the village confines end and the open countryside begins.

The junction of Summer Road and Down Barton Road has a distinctly rural character as there is no footpath at this point and no road markings, and the land provides views across

the open land between the existing village development and the dwellings in Summer Road. The applicant argues that the proposal represents an infill development and consolidates the existing pattern of development rather than make an incursion of development into the open countryside.

The proposal would consolidate the existing group of residential properties which are located in the countryside beyond the village confines. The houses would be seen as infill development between existing properties and be seen within the context of the existing houses in Summer Road to the south and properties fronting Down Barton Road to the west. The proposed dwellings would share a slip road access off Summer Road and would be seen together as a single integrated scheme.

The Appeal decision on land adjacent to 151 Monkton Road was for a site that was not adjacent to the village confines and, unlike the current application, was a fair distance from the village boundary. In deciding the appeal the Inspector commented on the location of the site saying 'There is a clearly defined boundary between the site and the agricultural field.....The proposal would be seen as rounding off the existing group of properties rather than an encroachment into the remaining open countryside between the two villages. (paragraph 8).

There is a clearly defined boundary between the application site and the agricultural field to the east which would be unaffected. The proposal would therefore be seen as rounding off the existing group of properties rather than an encroachment into the open countryside. The site is unique in this respect and its development would not therefore set a precedent for other development in the countryside.

With regards to Policy CC2 the proposed development would not result in the loss of long views or open views to the sea that this policy aims to protect. Whilst the site is currently open land longer views of the site are screen by two storey properties in Down Barton Road and Summer Road. The Landscape Appraisal, submitted with the application, sets out views from various locations demonstrating how views of the site are seen against the backdrop of existing properties and would not impact on long views or open views towards the sea. The proposal therefore accords with the aims of Policy CC2.

The application is in outline form and is for consideration of access only at this stage. The applicant has submitted illustrative drawings of dwellings that would be sited to allow for a private drive leading off of Summer Road and providing a shared turning head. The slip road is shown having a buffer of landscaping between it and Summer Road, and further landscaping is shown on its southern edge between the site and the first properties in Summer Road (Nos 1 and 2). Landscaping is also provided along the rear boundary of the site with a larger area of planting shown at the junction with Down Barton Road, providing screening between the site and the rear gardens of Jubilee Cottages in Down Barton Road.

The design of the dwellings would be considered through a future reserved matters application. The illustrative siting and design of the proposed two storey dwellings is not considered to be harmful to the character and appearance of the area as it is considered that these dwellings would appear as infill development between existing development, rather

than creating further built form intruding into the open countryside and would not would not impact on long views or open views towards the sea.

As such, the visual impact upon the countryside is considered to be, on balance, acceptable.

### **Living Conditions**

Only illustrative drawings of the proposed dwellings have been submitted at this stage as only access is being considered through this application. The illustrative layout plan of the dwellings indicates that the properties would front Summer Road and landscaping is shown providing screening between the existing properties to the east of Summer Road and the Jubilee Cottages in Down Barton Road. Screening is shown between the slip road and Summer Road, providing screening to properties on the south side of Summer Road. The location of windows can be controlled at the detailed design stage to prevent unacceptable overlooking or loss of privacy.

There would be a certain amount of activity associated with the current use of the site from people looking after the horses.

The illustrative drawing shows the dwellings set away from neighbouring residential dwellings with substantial landscaping to the common boundaries. I consider the separation distance of the development is unlikely to result in direct overlooking or loss of privacy and any potential for loss of amenity can be controlled through sensitive design of the dwellings and placement of windows, which would be considered as part of a future reserved matters application.

### **Highway Safety**

Concern has been expressed that Summer Road is not suitable for further dwellings and the junction with Down Barton Road is poor and suffers from congestion.

Kent Highway Services have been consulted and they raise no objection to the proposal, commenting that the provision of 6 new residential units is highly unlikely to lead to a material increase in vehicle movements at this site. The application proposes to improve existing sustainable travel links, by way of providing a new footway, along the Summer Road boundary of the site that would join the existing footpath with the footpath in Down Barton Road.

The proposed development would provide two off-street parking spaces for each dwelling, including 2 additional spaces in the lay-by. The private drive would enable residential occupiers and visitors to leave Summer Road and should therefore not contribute to congestion. The parking provided is to the satisfaction of Kent Highways. There would be ample space within the development for the safe storage of bicycles. The proposal therefore accords with the aims of Thanet Local Plan policies TR12 and TR16.

The parking provided meets with Kent Highway Parking Standards and the layout would provide a safe means of access and egress to the site and as such I do not consider the proposal would adversely impact upon highway safety.

## **Drainage**

Occupiers of properties at the far end of Summer Road raised concerns that their water supply ran under the application site and the proposal might disrupt their connection. Southern Water have been consulted and they raise no objection to the proposal subject to conditions. They have submitted a plan of the Southern Water records showing the approximate position of the public water distribution main within the site and combined sewer in the immediate vicinity of the site. This map indicates services run along the edge of Summer Road and to the rear of garden boundaries of properties in Summer Road. It is therefore unlikely that the water supply and drainage would be an issue as a result of development on this land.

## **Other Matters**

Concern has been expressed that the school is over-subscribed. Further to Kent County Council's Development Contributions Officer's comments it would appear that the need generated by 6 new dwellings would not have a significant impact on the capacity of the school.

With regards to concerns that this proposal would result in the loss of grazing land, there are no specific policies within the Local Plan that would protect the use of the land for grazing. Furthermore, the site is surrounded by countryside and as such there would be opportunities for other potential grazing land sites.

## **Conclusion**

Whilst the site lies within the countryside as identified by the Local Plan, the authority does not have a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites. Accordingly the proposal must be viewed in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the tests of paragraph 14 of the NPPF.

The proposal seeks outline permission with only access being determined at this stage. Kent Highways raise no objection in principle to the proposal. The illustrative layout plan demonstrates that six dwellings could be accommodated comfortably within the site without having a detrimental impact on the character of the area or the countryside. Neighbour amenity issues will be addressed more fully at reserved matters stage, but there are considered to be no principle concerns on neighbouring amenity. The proposed development would consolidate the existing group of residential properties, rounding off the settlement rather than being an encroachment into the open countryside. This site cannot be considered to be an isolated location, the adverse environmental impacts of the proposal are minimal and these are significantly and demonstrably outweighed by the benefits.

In light of the above, it is considered that the need for the development outweighs the need to protect the countryside in this instance, and overall is considered to be a sustainable form of development. It is therefore recommended that Members approve the proposal, as an acceptable departure to Thanet Local Plan Policy H1, subject to safeguarding planning conditions.

**Case Officer**  
Rosemary Bullivant

