

2.8 REFERENCE NO - 16/508492/REM			
APPLICATION PROPOSAL			
Application for approval of reserved matters pursuant to planning permission SW/08/1127 for provision of public open space adjacent to Sheppey Way, and landscaping details.			
ADDRESS Coleshall Farm, Ferry Road, Iwade, ME9 8QY.			
RECOMMENDATION Grant			
SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION			
The application seeks approval of reserved matters for the provision of public open space on the Coleshall Farm residential development. Local objections are noted but, further to receipt of an amended drawing, it is not considered that there would be any serious amenity concerns arising from the proposals, and officers believe this to be a good scheme with substantial benefits for the village as a whole.			
REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE			
Parish Council objection.			
WARD Bobbing, Iwade And Lower Halstow	PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL Iwade	APPLICANT Persimmon Homes South East	
DECISION DUE DATE 14/04/17	PUBLICITY EXPIRY DATE 17/02/17		
RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY (including appeals and relevant history on adjoining sites):			
App No	Proposal	Decision	Date
15/508514/FULL	Demolition of existing building and erection of 6 No. 4-bed detached houses and 2 No. 3-bed semi-detached houses with garaging, access and landscaping.	Approved	06.01.17
Full permission for a small extension to the wider estate on land occupied by former agricultural buildings, adjacent to the stream.			
15/505910/REM	Approval of Reserved Matters including details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for the erection of 86 dwellings pursuant to outline application SW/08/1127	Approved	05.11.15
Reserved matters approval for the erection of 86 dwellings on land to the north of the spine road, further to grant of the original outline permission as below.			
14/504557/REM	Reserved Matters permission including details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for the erection of 43 dwellings pursuant to outline application SW/08/1127	Approved	16.03.15
Reserved matters approval for the erection of 43 dwellings on land immediately to the north of the current application site, further to grant of the original outline permission as below.			
SW/11/1537	Approval of all reserved matters, pursuant to outline permission SW/08/1127, for erection of	Approved	08.03.12

	187 dwellings on part of the site.		
Reserved matters consent for erection of the largest area of the Coleshall Farm estate, including the new sports pitches and play area adjacent to School Lane.			
SW/08/1127	Outline planning permission for development of housing, employment up to 3000sqm, public open space and pavilion (up to 110sqm), with access from School Lane and Sheppey Way, including roads, cycle paths, footpaths, stream crossings, landscaping and ancillary works.	Approved	06.06.11
This application granted outline permission for development of the wider Coleshall Farm site, including the parcel of land subject to the current application. The decision notice is appended to this report. Para. 2.1 of the S106 requires provision of the Public Open Space prior to occupation of the 280 th dwelling on site, which is approaching.			

MAIN REPORT

1.0 DESCRIPTION OF SITE

- 1.01 Application site is a vacant parcel of land at the northeastern corner of the wider Coleshall Farm residential development, immediately west of Sheppey Way, and south of the Iwade medical centre and 5 to 13 Monins Road.
- 1.02 The land has, until now, been used as a storage and utility area in association with the neighbouring construction works. As such it contains various stockpiles of materials, equipment, a number of soil bunds, and various other associated temporary trappings. It extends to approximately 1.2ha, and measures approximately 128m x 98m.
- 1.03 The land is allocated under SW/08/1127, and also reserved by the associated S106 agreement, as public open space to serve the new residential development.

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.01 This application seeks approval of reserved matters, pursuant to the original outline permission (SW/08/1127), for provision of public open space.
- 2.02 The site will remain largely open in the centre with tree planting (total 37, with a mix of Lime, flowering Cherry, Alder, and Hornbeam), and areas of longer grass and bulb planting around the perimeter. A post and rail fence will be erected along the Sheppey Way boundary (and an area of existing planting adjacent to the medical centre will be retained), a low knee-rail style fence erected along the internal estate boundaries, and a new native species defensive hedge is to be planted along the rear boundaries of the dwellings on Monins Road. Two formal pedestrian access points and one vehicle access point (with secure removable bollards to prevent unauthorised access) are shown from the spine road.
- 2.03 Members should note the intention here is to provide open informal recreation space rather than formal recreation areas / sports pitches, as have been provided at the School Lane end of the site.

3.0 SUMMARY INFORMATION

	Existing
Site area	1.2ha
Site area for recreation ground (at School Lane end)	1.4ha (inc 400sqm LEAP)

4.0 PLANNING CONSTRAINTS

- 4.01 The site is within an area of Potential Archaeological Importance, but as very limited ground works are required this is not a significant concern.

5.0 POLICY AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.01 A particular consideration is that this open space is required under the terms of the outline planning permission for the wider estate, ref. SW/08/1127. The S106 agreement accompanying that permission requires this area to be provided before occupation of the 280th dwelling.
- 5.02 In terms of the development plan, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) both encourage creating healthy, inclusive communities with opportunities for recreation and interaction. Para. 70 of the NPPF encourages Councils to *“plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities...and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.”* Para. 73 continues to note that access to open spaces and recreation opportunities *“can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.”*
- 5.03 The adopted Swale Borough Local Plan 2008, at policy C3, requires provision of both informal open space (*“casual kick-about areas”*) and formal sports pitches. This is supported and echoed by policy DM17 of the emerging Local Plan, Bearing Fruits 2031.
- 5.04 Policy E1 of the 2008 Plan and DM14 of the emerging Plan aim to ensure that all developments are of an appropriate scale, design, and appearance, and do not give rise to any serious amenity concerns.

6.0 LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

- 6.01 Two letters of objection received from local residents, raising the following summarised concerns:
- A close-boarded fence should be provided along the northern site boundary with the dwellings on Monins Road in the interest of security;
 - No vehicle parking provision will add to local parking congestion;
 - Limited pedestrian access;
 - Measures to prevent vehicle access *“seem weak;”*
 - Planting scheme *“seems to offer very little to encourage the nurture of wildlife”;*
 - The landscaping drawing referred to in the submission has not been provided; and
 - *“The application makes no reference to the site's ultimate ownership, permitted usage or enforcement. Please can this be clarified.”*

7.0 CONSULTATIONS

7.01 Iwade Parish Council objects:

“The Parish Council is disappointed that no consideration has been given to the privacy and security of the six properties (the existing 1.2m post and wire fencing does not provide this) on Monins Road that adjoin the site's northern boundary (including Iwade Health Centre). A 1.8m close-boarded fence exists between the site and the only property constructed by the developer that adjoins it. It is reasonable to assume that this was deemed appropriate by the developer for the privacy and security of this property at 2 Grass Emerald Crescent; the Parish Council believes the same courtesy should be extended to the Monins Road properties that adjoin the site.

Concern over vehicle parking for those visiting this 'public open space'. With the ease of access directly to this site across its already damaged existing 1.2m post and wire fence, Iwade Heath Centre's car park will be an obvious choice for visitors parking cars. This car park is already insufficient for the Heath Centre's parking needs, resulting in overflow parking on Monins and adjacent roads, that regularly causes blocked vehicular access as a result. We therefore believe it essential that the boundary between the site and Iwade Health Centre be secured to discourage direct access, the use of this car park and adjacent residential roads for parking by visitors to the site.

Pedestrian access to the site is very limited. Visitors walking to this 'public open space' from the direction of Iwade village centre must currently walk to the first available pedestrian access on Peach Blossom Drive. As such, it is highly likely that they will try to gain access either via the site's currently unsecured boundary with Iwade Heath Centre or by climbing the 1.2m high timber post and rail fence proposed along the site's boundary with Sheppey Way. To prevent this consideration needs to be given to a pedestrian access point located to the south of the retained existing hedgerow, to coincide with the vehicle calming chicane on Sheppey Way.

Measures to prevent unauthorised vehicle access to the site seem weak. The proposed fencing is easily demountable, particularly the 0.6m timber knee-rail fencing proposed along the site's boundary with Peach Blossom Drive and Grass Emerald Crescent.

The proposed planting scheme seems to offer very little to encourage the nurture of wildlife on the site; wild flower, mixed shrub and small tree planting along the site's northern boundary would encourage wildlife and would act as a buffer to provide some additional security and privacy to the adjoining properties.”

7.02 The Council's Greenspaces manager initially raised some issues for further investigation, including provision of sturdy boundary treatments; provision of a vehicle access; strengthening the hedgerow planting along the northern boundary with residential properties; design of the pedestrian accesses; increased tree planting; provision of bulb or wildflower planting to introduce seasonal colour; and rubbish / dog waste bin provision. Further to receipt of the amended layout he has no objections, but has requested a minor alteration to the extent of the long grass areas to facilitate mowing. This is discussed further below.

7.03 I await comments from KCC Highways and Transportation, and will update Members at the meeting.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PLANS

8.01 The historic applications noted above are particularly relevant.

9.0 APPRAISAL

9.01 As noted at 5.01 above the provision of this open space is a particular requirement of the original outline permission. It will also bring considerable benefits to the village in terms of enhanced recreation opportunities and landscape improvement, and I therefore consider it acceptable in principle.

9.02 Members should note that an amended drawing has been received further to officer's and the Greenspaces Manager's comments. This, in my opinion, shows a vastly improved scheme over the original drawing (which showed a largely open grass area with regimented trees along the perimeter) and is as described at section 2 above.

9.03 The amended scheme shows areas of longer grass, bulb planting, and mixed native species trees in a loose arrangement around the site perimeter. This will, in my opinion, result (after a bedding in period) in a very attractive park of similar layout and appearance to the Faversham recreation ground – Members may know of that park, and be aware of the bulb planting and longer grass along the site frontage, and mature native trees along the edges, which together provide a variety of different habitats for wildlife and character areas for the public. Lime, flowering Cherry, Alder, and Hornbeam trees are proposed, which are all native species and grow to be large, impressive trees. These will provide colour, shade, and varied wildlife habitats, and I have informally discussed the planting scheme with the Council's Tree Consultant, who did not raise any concerns.

9.04 I note concerns in regards to site security for the dwellings along Monins Road, but do not consider a close-boarded fence to be the best solution. Such a fence would be incongruous, in my opinion, and open to vandalism and disrepair. Officers have negotiated with the developer to provide a double thickness native species hedge in this area instead, including thick, thorny and flowering species (such as Dog Rose, Blackthorn / Sloe, Holly, and Dogwood) that should present an effective barrier to everything but wildlife. Residents may choose to erect a fence behind this, on their own land. I would also note that security is likely be no worse than at present while the area is part of a building site and largely unsecured.

9.05 I also note but do not share concerns in respect of vehicle parking. This is an area of informal open space that will most likely attract local people, dog walkers, and children, and not formal sports provision that would attract a large number of people (like football pitches on a Saturday morning, for example). Visitors are therefore unlikely to commute here by car. I would again refer Members to the Faversham recreation ground, and also the Albany recreation ground in Sittingbourne, which only attract a need for parking when formal sports matches are scheduled. In this particular instance though the formal sports pitches are at the other side of the estate, adjacent to School Lane, with dedicated parking and access.

9.06 I also disagree with concerns that pedestrian access is limited. There is a pedestrian footpath on both sides of the spine road through the estate, and a pedestrian footpath along Sheppey Way that links the site to the rest of the village.

9.07 Overall, and further to receipt of the amended drawing, I consider this to be a good scheme that will provide a very attractive, usable outdoor space for all residents of Iwade. Once matured the proposed trees, hedgerow, and bulb planting will bring colour, visual interest, and wildlife to the area; will considerably soften the visual impact of the new housing estate in views from Sheppey Way; and will provide a safe play space for local children. All residents, and especially those with dwellings facing onto the open space, stand to benefit from this scheme.

10.0 CONCLUSION

10.01 The application seeks approval of reserved matters for the provision of public open space on the Coleshall Farm residential development. I note local objections but, further to receipt of the amended drawing, I do not consider that there would be any serious amenity concerns arising from the proposals, and consider this to be a good scheme with substantial benefits for Iwade as a whole.

10.02 Taking all of the above into account I recommend that planning permission should be granted.

11.0 RECOMMENDATION – GRANT Subject to the following conditions:

1. The development shall be carried out in accordance with drawing 412_DR_001.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt.

2. All planting as shown on drawing no 412_DR_001 shall be carried out within the next available planting season following the approval of this application. Any trees or shrubs removed, dying, being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased within five years of planting shall be replaced with trees or shrubs of such size and species as may be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure planting settles in properly, and in the interest of amenity.

3. All new trees to be planted shall be protected by suitable fencing in accordance with details to be submitted and agreed by the Local Planning Authority prior to planting.

Reason: To ensure planting settles in properly, and in the interest of amenity.

The Council's approach to this application:

In accordance with paragraphs 186 and 187 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Council takes a positive and proactive approach to development proposals focused on solutions. We work with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by:

Offering pre-application advice.

Where possible, suggesting solutions to secure a successful outcome.

As appropriate, updating applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application.

In this instance the applicant/agent was advised of minor changes required to the application and these were agreed, and the application was considered by the Planning Committee where the applicant/agent had the opportunity to speak to the Committee and promote the application.

NB For full details of all papers submitted with this application please refer to the relevant Public Access pages on the council's website.
The conditions set out in the report may be subject to such reasonable change as is necessary to ensure accuracy and enforceability.