

2.2 REFERENCE NO - 15/510505/FULL			
APPLICATION PROPOSAL Construction of a new community centre with adjoining changing room facilities and associated landscaping works			
ADDRESS Land North East Of Barley House Great Easthall Way Sittingbourne Kent ME10 3TF			
RECOMMENDATION Approve, subject to the comments of Southern Water Services and the resolution of the ecology issue raised by KCC Ecology (closing date 14/3/16)			
SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION The proposal would provide a dedicated community centre within the wider Great Easthall housing development which would be appropriately sited, of an acceptable design and would not impact unacceptably on either residential or highway amenities.			
REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE The application has been submitted by Swale Borough Council			
WARD Murston	PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL	APPLICANT Swale Borough Council AGENT BBM Sustainable Design	
DECISION DUE DATE 09/03/16	PUBLICITY EXPIRY DATE 09/03/16		
RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY (including appeals and relevant history on adjoining sites):			
App No	Proposal	Decision	Date
SW/02/1180	Residential development, employment development, open space and supporting facilities	Approved	16/07/2004
This application granted outline planning permission for development at Great Easthall. Members will be aware that, since the grant of the outline permission as summarised above there have been numerous approvals of reserved matters for housing and development of the wider site has been underway for a number of years, and approximately 500 dwellings have been completed to-date out of an eventual total of approximately 800 dwellings.			

MAIN REPORT

1.0 DESCRIPTION OF SITE

- 1.01 The application site currently comprises an area of undeveloped land close to the north eastern boundary of the wider Great East Hall residential development. The shape of the site is broadly rectangular measuring approximately 60m x 55m. The site is bounded to the west, south west and south by Great Easthall Way with undeveloped land immediately to the north and east.
- 1.02 The plot is a largely flat open grassed area with a raised bund, approximately 0.5m – 1m in height close to the boundary with Great Easthall Way. There are a number of small trees and shrubs along the outer perimeter of the site.
- 1.03 Residential dwellings face the site to the south (Barley House and No.s 2, 4 and 6 Great Easthall Way).
- 1.04 The masterplan for the site (approved pursuant to SW/02/1180) envisages Neighbourhood Centre uses on the land, including the provision of a Community Hall.

2.0 PROPOSAL

- 2.01 This application seeks planning permission for the erection of a community centre building and associated vehicle access, parking and landscaping.
- 2.02 The proposed community centre comprises a single storey building located towards the south east of the application site. Access is proposed from Great Easthall Way to the west with parking provision in the north of the site. An area of soft landscaping is proposed to the west of the proposed community centre.
- 2.03 The building will be comprised of two separate areas with a staggered elevation and varying roof heights. The larger section will be comprised of a main hall, foyer and associated w.c. and storage facilities. The smaller section will be comprised of sports changing facilities. A canopy covering a section of the terrace and the cycle storage area is proposed on the western side of the building.
- 2.04 The building measures approximately 34m in width (including the covered canopy area) and ranges between 13m and 11.5m in depth due to the staggered frontage proposed. The building is largely flat roofed and measures between 3.5m and 4.2m in height. Two timber clad roof dormers are proposed which add a further 3m in height on top of the flat roof. The building will have a meadow grass roof.
- 2.05 The external walls of the building will be wrapped in vertical cladding of coppiced sweet chestnut. This will range between 4.4m and 5m in height and as such will form a parapet.

3.0 PLANNING CONSTRAINTS

4.0 POLICY AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.01 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) seeks to support and encourage prosperous and healthy communities. Paragraph 70 states that planning authorities should act positively in regards to *“provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.”*
- 4.02 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) also supports community development and the provision of new community services and facilities in general.
- 4.03 Policy C1 of the adopted Swale Borough Local Plan 2008 states the following:
“The Borough Council will grant planning permission for new or improved community services and facilities. Additionally, where proposals would meet an identified local need in an accessible location, it will permit development proposals that will help maximise the use of existing public and private community services and facilities, including those that would make them available for wider public use, in locations where shortfalls in local public provision could be met.”
- 4.04 Policies E1, E19 and T3 are also relevant to this application.

5.0 LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

- 5.01 The application has been advertised by way of letter to immediate neighbours and display of a site notice close to the application site. No responses have been received.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 6.01 **KCC Highways and Transportation** raised no objection subject to conditions relating to on site details of parking for site personnel / operatives / visitors; provision for construction vehicles; precautions to guard against mud on the highway; access details; the retention of the parking space and turning areas; and that the use shall not be commenced before adequate space for cycle storage has been laid out.
- 6.02 The Council's **Environmental Protection Team Leader** raised no objection subject to conditions relating to construction hours. Further to this I have verbally discussed the hours of use of the premises and have included these as a condition.
- 6.03 **Natural England** *"advises your authority that the proposal, if undertaken in strict accordance with the details submitted, is not likely to have a significant effect on the interest features for which The Swale SPA/Ramsar has been classified. In addition Natural England is satisfied that the proposed development.... will not damage or destroy the interest features for which The Swale SSSI has been notified."*
- 6.04 **KCC SUDs** recommend that if the Local Planning Authority is minded to grant permission then conditions relating to a sustainable surface water drainage scheme will be required.
- 6.05 **KCC Public Rights of Way Officer** raised no objection, noting that PROW ZU16 passes *"...adjacent to the site to the south"*.
- 6.06 **KCC Ecology** state that *"Due to the size of the proposed development site, the fact that the boundaries will be maintained and by reviewing existing survey data from the adjacent planning applications we agree that there is no requirement for a specific bat activity survey or breeding bird survey to be carried out as part of this planning application."*

However the proposed development will result in a loss of suitable reptile habitat and as such there is a need for a reptile survey to be carried out. As the survey was carried out in July 2015 it's disappointing that the reptile survey was not carried out last year.

As detailed above the presence of protected species are a material consideration within the planning system and all surveys should be carried out prior to determination of the planning application. Until the surveys are carried out SBC have no understanding if reptiles are present and if they are present there is a need for the following to be considered:

- What the population size is*
- What size of receptor site is required*
- Can the reptiles be retained within the proposed development site of if an offsite receptor site is required.*

We advise SBC that the recommended survey must be carried out prior to determination of the planning application."

I have forwarded these details to the agent and am awaiting a response which I will send onto KCC Ecology. I will update Members accordingly at the meeting regarding this issue.

Further to the above, details relating to lighting and further to the reptile survey, details relating to ecological enhancements have been requested by KCC Ecology.

- 6.07 **Southern Water** – I am currently awaiting a response and will update Members at the meeting.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PLANS

- 7.01 Application papers and correspondence relating to application reference 15/510505/FULL.

8.0 APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

- 8.01 The provision of a community centre to serve the wider Great Easthall housing development formed part of the adopted Development Brief Review for the site and has long been envisaged as forming part of the wider estate. The application is also in compliance with Policy C1 of the adopted Swale Borough Local Plan 2008 and the aims of the NPPF. I therefore consider, that subject to compliance with other relevant Development Management policies, that the proposal is acceptable in principle.

Visual Impact

- 8.02 The proposal now being considered has been subject to detailed pre application advice whereby the Council's Design and Conservation Consultant commented on the scheme before formal submission of the application. The staggered elevation, vertical cladding, green roof and prominent roof structures will all combine to add variety and interest to the building and the result in my view will be the creation of a building of acceptable design.
- 8.03 On site planting and landscaping is proposed and an indicative landscaping plan has been submitted with the application. When approaching the existing housing development along Great Easthall Way the site is prominently located. Boundary planting is proposed in addition to on site landscaping and much of the success of the integration of the community centre into this landscape will be a well considered landscape scheme. Due to this, the landscaping condition suggested below will ensure that a robust and appropriate landscaping scheme is implemented in order to best integrate the community centre into its environment.

Residential Amenity

- 8.04 The closest residential properties to the application site are those situated on the opposite side of Great Easthall Way. These properties are between 27m – 30m away from the proposed community centre. Due to this distance and the height of the community centre I believe that the proposal would not be unacceptably overbearing for these residents. I have also discussed the issue of hours of use with the Council's Environmental Protection Manager. To attempt to ensure that the

potential impact upon residential amenities is not unacceptable, I have recommended a relevant condition below.

Other Matters

- 9.04 I have consulted with KCC Highway, KCC SUDs, KCC Public Rights of Way Officer and Natural England who have all raised no objection to the application. Various conditions have been recommended if the Council is minded to approve the application. I have included all these conditions below and therefore consider that the proposal would be acceptable in relation to the above.
- 9.05 KCC Ecology were also consulted and requested that a reptile survey is carried out prior to determination of the planning application. I have forwarded these details onto the agent and am awaiting a response. Once received I will forward onto KCC Ecology and will update Members of the Biodiversity Officer's further comments at the meeting. Details regarding any possible future lighting have been included by way of a condition however, details of ecological enhancements have been recommended once the reptile survey has been completed. Due to this, I have made reference to any further conditions that are required (see condition 19) and again, will update Members at the meeting as to the exact wording of these conditions.

9.0 CONCLUSION

- 9.01 In overall terms, taking into account the above assessment and subject to outstanding issues relating to ecology, I believe that the proposal would provide a dedicated community centre within the wider Great Easthall housing development which would be appropriately sited, of an acceptable design and would not impact unacceptably on either residential or highway amenities. I recommend that planning permission be granted.

10.0 RECOMMENDATION – GRANT Subject to the comments of Southern Water Services and the resolution of the ecology issue as raised by KCC Ecology and to the following conditions:

- 1) The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date on which the permission is granted.

Reason: In pursuance of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2) The development hereby permitted shall take place in complete compliance with the following drawings: P-001 A and P-002 A (received 15/2/2016) and P-100, Rev A; P-101, P-102 and P-103 (received 12th January 2016); and 616853/CIV/001 A and /CIV/004.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning

- 3) Prior to the commencement of development, details of the external finishing materials to be used on the development hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity and to ensure that such matters are agreed before work is commenced.

- 4) Prior to the works commencing on site details of parking for site personnel / operatives / visitors shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter shall be provided and retained throughout the construction of the development. The approved parking shall be provided prior to the commencement of the development.

Reason: To ensure provision of adequate off-street parking for vehicles in the interests of highway safety and to protect the amenities of local residents.

- 5) During construction provision shall be made on the site, to accommodate operatives' and construction vehicles loading, off-loading or turning on the site to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that vehicles can be parked or manoeuvred off the highway in the interests of highway safety.

- 6) As an initial operation on site, adequate precautions shall be taken during the progress of the works to guard against the deposit of mud and similar substances on the public highway in accordance with proposals to be submitted to, and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and road safety.

- 7) The access details shown on the approved plans shall be completed to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of any other works authorised by this permission, the occupation of any buildings hereby approved, the use of the site being commenced, and the access shall thereafter be maintained.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

- 8) The area shown on the submitted layout as vehicle parking and turning space shall be provided, surfaced and drained to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority before the use is commenced or the premises occupied, and shall be retained for the use of the occupiers of, and visitors to, the premises, and no permanent development, whether or not permitted by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order), shall be carried out on that area of land so shown or in such a position as to preclude vehicular access to this reserved parking space.

Reason: Development without provision of adequate accommodation for the parking of vehicles is likely to lead to parking inconvenient to other road users and be detrimental to highway safety and amenity.

- 9) No building shall be occupied or the approved use commenced until space has been laid out within the site in accordance with the submitted details for cycles to be securely sheltered and stored.

Reason: To ensure the provision and retention of adequate off-street parking facilities for cycles in the interests of sustainable development and promoting cycle visits.

- 10) No development shall take place until full details of both hard and soft landscape works, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include existing trees, shrubs and other features, planting schedules of plants (including for the 'green roof'), noting species (which

shall be native species and of a type that will encourage wildlife and biodiversity,), plant sizes and numbers where appropriate, means of enclosure, hard surfacing materials, and an implementation programme.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area and encouraging wildlife and biodiversity, and to ensure that such matters are agreed before work is commenced.

- 11) All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The works shall be carried out prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with the programme agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area.

- 12) Upon completion of the approved landscaping scheme, any trees or shrubs that are 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, and within whatever planting season is agreed.

Reasons: In the interests of the visual amenities of the area.

- 13) Development shall not begin until a detailed sustainable surface water drainage scheme for the site has been submitted to (and approved in writing by) the local planning authority. The detailed drainage scheme shall demonstrate that the surface water generated by this development (for all rainfall durations and intensities up to and including the climate change adjusted critical 100yr storm) can be accommodated and disposed of without increase to on or off site flood risk. Any discharge to the public surface water sewer shall be agreed in advance in writing with the local planning authority and Southern Water.

Reason: To ensure that the principles of sustainable drainage are incorporated into this proposal.

- 14) 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.

Reason: To ensure ongoing efficacy of the drainage provisions.

- 15) The use of the premises hereby approved shall be restricted to the hours of 7am to 10pm Sundays to Thursdays (inclusive); and 7am to midnight on Fridays and Saturdays.

Reason: In the interests of the residential amenities of the area.

- 16) No floodlighting, security lighting or other external lighting shall be installed or operated at the site, other than in accordance with details that have first been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include:
- A statement of why lighting is required, the proposed frequency of the use and the hours of illumination.
 - A site plan showing the area to be lit relative to the surrounding area, indicating parking or access arrangements where appropriate, and highlighting any significant existing or proposed landscape or boundary features.
 - Details of the number, location and height of the lighting columns or other fixtures.
 - The type, number, mounting height and alignment of the luminaries.
 - The beam angles and upwards waste light ratio for each light.
 - An isolux diagram showing the predicted illuminance levels at critical locations on the boundary of the site and where the site abuts residential properties.

Reasons: In the interests of visual amenity and the residential amenities of occupiers of nearby dwellings.

- 17) No external storage of parts, equipment, raw materials or products shall take place within the site.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

- 18) The premises shall be used for the purpose of a public hall and sports changing facilities and for no other purpose, including any other purposes in Class D1 of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended).

Reason: In the interests of residential amenities.

- 19) Any other conditions recommended by consultees.

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 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.