

Marden Garden Community - Planning Performance Agreement (PPA)  
2nd Member Briefing 28 January 2021 at 11:30- 13:00

Attending

Cllr Denis Spooner

Cllr Keith Adkinson

Cllr Steve Munford

Cllr Lottie Parfitt Reid

Cllr Paul Wilby

Cllr Bryan Vizzard

Cllr Ashley Kimmance

Cllr John Perry

Cllr Wendy Young

Cllr David Burton (Ward Councillor)

Rob Jarman (MBC)

Marion Geary (MBC)

James Lehane (KCC)

David Moseley (DM) (Countryside-CPPLC)

Paul Vicary (DevComms)

Chris Hawkins (CH) DHA

Paul Lulham (PL) DHA

It was clarified that this Briefing is part of a planning application Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) and that the Briefing was subject to FOI/EIR requests and notes would be taken. Presentational material was distributed beforehand for the purposes of illustrating some of the detail that may accompany any future planning application. At the Briefing, the powerpoint of the Presentational material was displayed.

The Briefing focussed mainly on revisions to the proposals at Marden made post the 1st PPA Member Briefing in September 2020.

DM: Advised that the Land Use Plan has been revised in light of the findings of the Stantec Review, discussions with MBC Officers and clarification from KCC regarding meeting education needs. The revised land use plan was presented with an explanation that it provided an opportunity to create up to 2,016 jobs. The employment land area has been increased to 6.4ha (was 5ha).

The scheme includes a local centre, a primary school and a pre-school. The primary school has been relocated in the latest draft master plan and is situated immediately adjacent to the Local Centre. It is intended that the scheme will continue to evolve ahead of a planning application being submitted.

Additional land in the SE corner adjacent to Maidstone Road has been included in the latest Masterplan of the Garden Community and has been secured under option by Countryside Properties. This was suggested as a benefit in the Stantec report for enhancing non-vehicle connectivity between Marden Village and the Garden Community. This land would provide pedestrian and cycle links as well as additional accessible open space.

Reference was made to the Assessment of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) submitted to MBC in December 2020 and the methodology. Biodiversity net gain at +29.3% exceeds that to be required in the draft local plan review, which is expected to be

20%. A range of habitat enhancement measures are proposed including bat bricks and retained hedgerows and hedgehog gaps would all be included. Aware that BNG must be enhancement.

CH: The range of housing numbers are 1750 to 2000. The final number will depend on the design approach and the level of C2 (Care) uses that may be included within the development.

PL advised of the further transport modelling undertaken and submitted to MBC in December 2020. PL explained the revised access strategy. This includes segmentation of the site into 4 areas A, B, C and D for the purposes of principal vehicular access to these parcels. PL confirmed that the developers agreed to fund the deficit in the costs of increasing capacity at Linton Crossroads and that they consider that committed KCC junction improvements on the A229 corridor offer sufficient capacity mitigation. It was further noted that the Linton Crossroads improvements have been contributed to by some housing developments in Boughton Monchelsea (as well as some in Coxheath).

PL: Any transport analysis of B2163 will depend on the rest of the Local Plan Review coming forward such as development on Heath Rd either side of the crossroads. It was agreed that road should not be a rat run (eg long queues on Heath Rd to avoid Sutton Road) and the primary aim of the developers is have North-South strategic roads improved.

CH referenced CPPLC response to the issues raised at the Sept 2020 Briefing. This included providing opportunity for Homes for Ex Military Personnel. CH advised that there were opportunities for some self-build element as other districts have introduced, which would be feasible because each parcel will be serviced by Countryside. CPPLC are reviewing the inclusion of Cooperative Housing, if that were to be delivered, it would be in a consolidated area to enable sharing community facilities.

KCC have advised that a secondary school is not being sought on-site but contributions would be sought towards enhancing capacity off-site. In response to concerns that KCC may be behind the curve regarding need for secondary school places (i.e. New Line Learning and Cornwallis are at capacity): due to growth of academy schools, KCC has a difficult job to time delivery. Advised that existing Secondary schools are accessible via sustainable means, such as the train to Paddock Wood and by existing bus services to Maidstone. At Paddock Wood there is already a secondary school and possibly a new one relating to development at Tunbridge Wells at strategic level. The proposals include further enhancements to bus provision, which also looks towards Paddock Wood as well as Maidstone.

CH: Noted suggestion that a SEN (Special Educational Needs) unit could be needed within the Borough plus they have a higher level of employment ratio.

CH: In terms of leisure, it was highlighted that there is a cricket/hockey club nearby within Marden partially funded by CPPLC. On site will be a new community hall, sports playing fields. The developers are happy to consider suggested ideas such as public rights of way enhancements which will include the joining up of the network. On wider green areas of the land, a Trust likely to take over communal open space areas with ongoing management and maintenance.

Surface Water Drainage will be via SUDs including wet suds and swales.

DM: Advised that it is anticipated that by 2025 it will be mandatory for all homes to have electric vehicle charging points. Notwithstanding this, CPPLC are looking to include such provision on all new houses at Marden. Probable that each dwelling with an on-plot parking space would have charging facilities 'built-in' to the home so ready upon occupation. Where there is communal parking, this often requires a more bespoke approach (such as communal charging points that can take payment and can be managed).

CH: There is no fixed timetable to submit the application. DHA's representations to the Local Plan Review have raised concern over the supply of housing land and highlighted the need to increase supply to meet full housing need. At present, the Local Plan Review is considered by DHA and Countryside to be unsound. Notwithstanding that, whilst there is continued support for Maidstone's decision to advance Garden Communities, the 2 selected Garden Communities within Reg 18b need to be available, viable and deliverable and the developer's representations to the Local Plan Review question that. Marden GC was found to be available, viable and deliverable. Their view is that inclusion of Marden would help address this shortfall in housing. In addition, it would help reduce the risk of the Local Plan being found unsound should other Garden Communities either fall away or not deliver as anticipated.

CH: There has been an ongoing dialogue with Network Rail and South Eastern: there is agreement in principle for the improvements to the existing station bridge and the erection of a new bridge adjacent to it, which would afford ramped access.

CH: In response to foul water problems, stated that the impact of development on the Stodmarsh creates significant issue to the North East of the Borough (Lenham/Lenham Heath) for foul drainage solutions. They have been in discussions with Southern Water Services: they know foul drainage capacity is an important issue.

PL: The transport assessment is realistic regarding travel choices based on the 2011 Census and does not assume significant modal shift away from the car.

KCC Highways Comments:

- Pre-Application advice discussions are ongoing.

- No definitive conclusions can be made as to the transport impacts and deliverability of these proposals at this time because the evidence base is still under development and discussions continue.
- Based on the evidence that has been provided so far, and on KCC assessments of that evidence, the following observations can be made:
  - o Modelling of junction capacity impacts and mitigation proposals demonstrate that there do not appear to be any “showstopper” issues at this point. It appears that the impacts of the site could be sufficiently mitigated and not represent a “significant” impact on road capacity.
  - o Some of the proposed offsite highway improvements could represent material road safety gains.
  - o Despite the above two points, further development of the evidence base and proposals is required.

To conclude, the developer noted Member comments in relation to the following:

- scope for upgrades the A229 are limited within Maidstone itself. Improving Linton Crossroads in itself may not be enough.
- Marden Railway Station is congested
- Building the new bridge will be problematic as involves Network Rail.
- Paddock Wood could be expanding by 5000 houses so that may fill its own schools.
- Concerns about safety of using Pattenden Lane as a means of access to part of the development
- Employment must respond to qualitative need bearing in mind the village is far from the motorways. Some allocated employment land in Pattenden Lane next to the station has not been taken up yet.
- If there were a SEN element to the school it would result in a lot of taxi traffic.