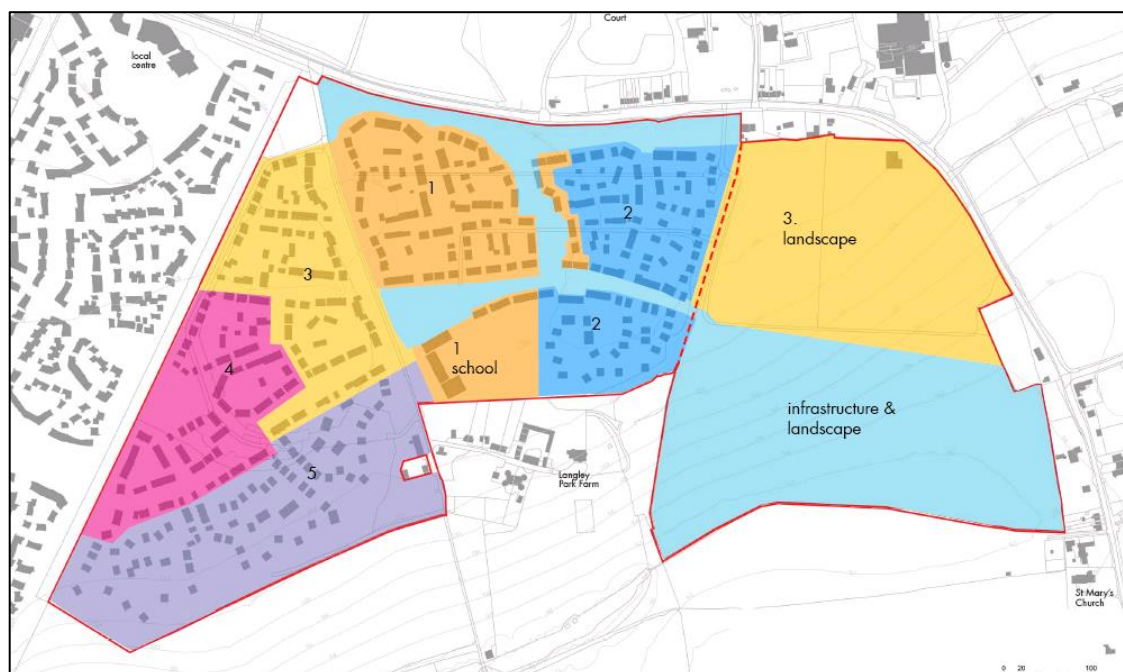


REFERENCE NO - 19/503395/REM			
APPLICATION PROPOSAL			
Approval of Reserved Matters of phase 1 of outline planning permission 15/509015/OUT, for the erection of 173 dwellings, and associated highways works and landscaping. (Appearance, landscaping, layout and scale being sought).			
ADDRESS Land South Of Sutton Road, Langley, Kent			
SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION – (APPROVE SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site forms part of the wider housing allocation for 800 houses in the Local Plan under policy H1(10), and benefits from outline planning permission. • The proposals comply with the relevant criterion under policy H1(10), other relevant policies within the Local Plan, and parameters of the outline permission. • The development is considered to be of a high quality in terms of its design, layout, materials, and landscaping. • Permission is therefore recommended. 			
REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE			
Langley Parish Council wish to see the application refused and reported to Planning Committee for the reasons set out below.			
WARD Park Wood	PARISH COUNCIL Langley	APPLICANT Countryside Properties AGENT DHA Planning	
DECISION DUE DATE 06/12/19		PUBLICITY EXPIRY DATE 20/09/19	
RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY			
App No	Proposal	Decision	Date
15/509015	Outline application for residential development (up to 800 houses), together with non-residential uses (including potentially A1, A3, A4, D1(a), D1(b), or B1, up to 0.4 ha of land reserved for C2 (residential care), the reservation of 2.1 ha of land for primary education (use class D1), public open space in the form of natural green space, allotments, play facilities and informal open space together with landscaping, parking, footpath and cycle links and the necessary servicing, drainage and the provision of necessary utilities infrastructure, with all matters reserved for future consideration with the exception of access.	APPROVED	18.04.18

18/505429	Reserved matters for the associated infrastructure pursuant to outline application 15/509015.	APPROVED	19.11.19
19/503614	Approval of Reserved Matters of appearance, landscaping layout and scale for the erection of four dwellings (that will be used as a temporary sales area) following the approval of outline planning permission ref. 15/509015.	PENDING	

1.0 DESCRIPTION OF SITE

1.01 The application relates to the housing associated with Phase 1 of the approved development of 800 houses. Phase 1 is within the northwest corner of the wider site and fronts Sutton Road with the private access way to the Langley Park Farm hamlet to the west. A separate 'infrastructure and landscape' application has been approved including structural landscaping across the frontage with Sutton Road, the roundabout access, and main spine road into the site. Phase 1 would be set inside the structural landscaping and accessed off the main spine road as can be seen on the Phasing Plan below.



Phasing Plan

2.0 PROPOSAL

2.01 The application seeks permission for the reserved matters of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for 173 dwellings with roads linking off the main spine road. A mix of detached, semi-detached, and terrace houses, and some apartment blocks are proposed with 2, 3, and 3.5 storey heights.

The layout and design will be discussed in more detail in the assessment below.

3.0 POLICY AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Maidstone Borough Local Plan (2011-2031): SS1, SP1, SP3, SP19, SP20, SP23, H1, ID1, H1(10), DM1, DM2, DM3, DM6, DM8, DM12, DM19, DM21, DM23
- Kent Waste and Minerals Plan 2016
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)
- MBC Air Quality Planning Guidance (2018)
- MBC Public Art Guidance (2018)

4.0 LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

4.01 **Local Residents:** 2 representations received raising the following (summarised) points:

- Frontage houses should not be 3 storeys.
- Does not blend in with existing housing or countryside.
- Style should reflect traditional Kentish rural buildings.
- Impervious surfaces.
- Lack of green space.
- Traffic and congestion.

4.02 **Langley Parish Council:** Raise the following (summarised) points:

"Langley Parish Council acknowledges the height parameter plan agreed under reference 15/509015, however, we would still wish to uphold our objections especially in relation to the urban design."

- Strongly object to three storey houses fronting the development along the main road as they houses create an oppressive 'urban feel' and therefore becomes an extension of Maidstone and not that of going into rural Langley.
- If this three storey frontage is allowed it is likely to follow along the length of the A274
- A more 'rural Kentish' design be applied to the housing (white weather boarding, Kent peg tiles (or similar), ragstone wall features).
- The 'diaper' criss cross pattern is not in keeping with the countryside.
- Apartment block 138-158 has an overbearing impact on the site.
- The overall design and layout is very urban.
- The tree planting schemes in the development are commendable, but there is a lack of green pockets of open public space for play areas/meeting points and to sustainably encourage wildlife.
- The vast amount of hard standing throughout the development does little to soften this feel concern in respect of rain water absorption and its subsequent disposal.
- To summarise, we would wish to see the height of the houses reduced to an absolute maximum of 2 1/2 storeys generally, reducing to 2 storeys along the frontage, to minimise visual impact.

5.0 CONSULTATIONS

(Please note that summaries of consultation responses are set out below with the response discussed in more detail in the main report where considered necessary)

5.01 **Historic England:** No comments and defer to Conservation Officer.

5.02 **Conservation Officer:** No objections. *"This phase has little impact in terms of conservation issues. The site is remote from St Mary's church Langley and will not have a harmful impact on Langley Park Farm. There is no reason to raise any objection on conservation grounds."*

5.03 **Highways England:** No objections.

5.04 **Natural England:** No comments to make.

5.05 **Environment Agency:** No comments to make.

5.06 **KCC Highways:** No objections.

5.07 **KCC PROW:** No objections.

5.08 **KCC Lead Local Flood Authority:** No objections.

5.09 **KCC Ecology:** No objections.

5.10 **KCC Archaeology:** No objections.

5.11 **MBC Environmental Health:** No objections.

6.0 APPRAISAL

6.01 The principle of housing development at the site has been accepted under the outline consent and the site is allocated in the Local Plan for housing under policy H1(10). The key issues to consider are the following:

- Design, layout, scale, landscaping and compliance with the site allocation policy and outline permission.
- Highways, ecology and other matters.

Design & Layout

6.02 The site allocation policy does not have any criterion specifically relevant to the layout in Phase 1. The outline permission was accompanied by five Parameter Plans relating to density, heights, strategic landscaping, access/movement, and land use. These Parameters Plans were accepted at the outline stage and secured under condition 41. Reference to these plans will be made where relevant.

- 6.03 The layout is made up of a number of perimeter blocks of housing with different character areas. Along the frontage, the housing is set well back (34m) from Sutton Road as there is an area of strategic landscaping in front which has been approved under the separate 'infrastructure' reserved matters application. Here the housing is in blocks of 2 or 3 properties at three storeys so as to create a strong building line which addresses Sutton Road and overlooks the pathways within the strategic landscaping. Views of these buildings would be broken by the strategic landscaping area which varies in height and it's planting. Similar buildings would continue alongside the roundabout and into the site along the east boundary where housing fronts the main spine road that was approved under the 'infrastructure' application. In the southeast corner three storey apartments and townhouses would front the spine road providing a higher density and creating a sense of arrival as advocated by 'Maidstone Building for Life 12'. Along the south boundary would be a strong line of terrace and semi-detached houses that would front a large green approved under the 'infrastructure' application.
- 6.04 Within the development would be a small central 'square' where the two main internal roads meet, which is created through the off-setting buildings lines to open up the space, the use of different surface materials, and additional space to provide for tree planting. This creates a wayfinding feature and sense of arrival in the centre of this phase as advocated by 'Maidstone Building for Life 12'. The density lowers towards the west edge with detached properties and a more rural character created by narrower shared surface roads that would have 'softer' surfaces and more room for landscaping referred to as 'rural lanes'. Development is also set back from the west boundary to allow space for landscaping which adds to the rural character. There would be two 'Mews' character areas at the southern end together with the apartment blocks which are characterised by tight building angles, hard surfaces and enclosure, creating a tighter urban character. The internal roads would not be adopted which allows for more varied surface materials and shared surface streets as advocated by 'Maidstone Building for Life 12'.
- 6.05 More generally, the layout provides strong street scenes with houses addressing all roads, and buildings turning corners with architectural detailing and/or windows. Buildings are positioned to provide end stops to views within the layout, for example, the apartments which address the main spine road, and the terrace row at the west side of the central square. The layout ensures good vehicular, pedestrian, and cycle connectivity to the main spine road and strategic areas of open space, along with future phases of the development to the west in accordance with policy DM1 of the Local Plan.
- 6.06 The approved density Parameter Plan allows for a mix of densities across this Phase ranging from 30 dwellings per hectare (dph) in the northern part, and up to 40dph across the southern part. The average density is slightly above this at 42dph but is not significantly greater nor does it result in a harmful development. In the northern and western parts of the site with lower density, buildings are set back from the roads with landscaped

front gardens so that parking is not dominant. The southern part is denser with an urban character so more use of hard surfacing.

- 6.07 The Parish Council comment that there is a lack of green public space within this Phase. Strategic open space has been approved along the site frontage with Sutton Road adjacent to this Phase and a large 'village green' is approved immediately to the south. This Phase needs to be viewed in the context of these areas which would provide sufficient open space in close proximity to Phase 1.
- 6.08 In terms of parking, the provision generally lines up with the adopted standards. The scheme provides a total of 237 (excluding garages and car ports), and 43 visitor spaces. There is tandem parking proposed for some of the 4 bedroom properties but this allows more space for landscaping and an overprovision of visitors parking has been provided to deal with any overspill parking. Overall, I consider the approach here strikes the right balance between adequate provision and securing an attractive layout as per policy DM23.
- 6.09 Overall, the layout is considered to be of high quality creating a number of clear character areas, well defined and quality streets and spaces, good connectivity and legibility, as advocated by 'Maidstone Building for Life 12' policy DM1 of the Local Plan.

Appearance & Scale

- 6.10 The site policy has no specific requirements for appearance and scale but policy DM1 seeks high quality design and positive responses to local character. Condition 39 of the outline permission limits heights to those shown on the approved 'Building Heights Parameter Plan', which allows for 3 storey heights across the entire site and 3.5 storeys in the southeast corner.
- 6.11 The proposed buildings are mainly of a more contemporary style than say the more 'traditional' and common housing styles found in the recent developments to the west on Sutton Road, and indeed on many other housing estates. This is through simple and uncluttered buildings with the use of strong gables that front onto streets as a recurring theme, in rows of houses to emphasise the gables and create rhythm. This creates a distinctive character as advocated by 'Maidstone Building for Life 12'.
- 6.12 The finish of the buildings would be crisp with minimal facias to emphasise the gables and create clean lines to the roofs. A key to achieving this is to ensure that any paraphernalia such as meter boxes and guttering is positioned to limit its impact which can be secured by condition. Detailed brickwork features around and between windows to break up elevations would be used including diaper patterned brickwork, hit and miss raised brickwork, and striped brickwork to provide interest. Additional brickwork features have been negotiated on more prominent buildings and will be secured by condition. To ensure quality detailing and finishes a condition will be attached to require specific details of windows, guttering, gable verges, facias, soffits, porches, and brickwork.

- 6.13 The apartment blocks would also use the strong gables to create rhythm to the buildings and their height and massing would be broken up with the use of diaper pattern brickwork, projecting bays, fenestration and juliet balconies. Additional diaper brickwork has been negotiated on the apartments to provide further interest and will be secured by condition.
- 6.14 More traditional styles are proposed on the western side where the density is lower and gables are side on rather than fronting streets. Black composite weatherboarding would be used here to provide a softer, more 'rural' appearance.
- 6.15 Materials would include a range of contrasting stock bricks for the main parts of the buildings, soldier courses, feature panels, and diaper work, and whilst of a more contemporary style, clay tiles and quality semi-composite slate to the roofs would be used to provide vernacular materials. These would be formally approved via samples under condition 17 of the outline consent.
- 6.16 Langley Parish Council does not consider the design and appearance is in keeping with the countryside, is too urban, and should be more 'rural Kentish'. The wider site is within the defined urban area of Maidstone (not the countryside), Phase 1 adjoins existing development, and the outline permission allows for higher density in this part of the site. As such, this phase does not form a transition with the countryside and so a more contemporary and urban style is entirely acceptable. I would also suggest that provided a design is of sufficient quality in itself, and is not within a strongly protected area such as a Conservation Area, there is no need to slavishly follow a pastiche.
- 6.17 The building heights range from 3 storey houses along the Sutton Road frontage, 3 to 3.5 storeys for the apartments in the southeast corner, and 2 storeys on the western edge. Within the site there is a mix of 2 and 3 storey heights. Importantly, 3 storey heights (up to 13m) have been accepted in principle by the Local Planning Authority across the entire site when the outline permission was approved with the 'Building Heights Parameter Plan'. This also allows for 3.5 storeys (up to 13.5m) in the southeast corner where the apartments are proposed. The proposals are within these parameters.
- 6.18 Langley Parish Council, whilst acknowledging the approved Parameter Plan, objects to 3 storey houses along Sutton Road and anything above 2.5 storeys. Notwithstanding the fact that these are allowed under the outline permission, the buildings fronting Sutton Road would be set well back from the road (34m) with strategic landscaping in front. As such the heights (around 11m) would be entirely appropriate and in proportion with the width of Sutton Road, and the distance from it. The taller apartment blocks (13.3m) would be facing onto the main spine road which, with landscaping and public realm, would vary in width from 30-40m. This width to height ratio would be suitable to accommodate the taller buildings here without being oppressive. The apartments themselves would be broken up through variations in roof heights, projections, recesses and materials. The variation

in heights also provides interest and character as advocated by policy DM1 of the Local Plan and 'Maidstone Building for Life 12'.

6.19 Overall, I consider the appearance and scale of the buildings to be to a high standard and in accordance policy DM1 of the Local Plan.

Surfacing & Boundary Treatments

6.20 Surfacing would reflect the different character areas. The central square would have block paving with a hoggin surface, the north and west edges would have grey block paving, the 'rural lanes' would have buff coloured paving, and one of the 'mews' areas would be block paved. Parts of the central road would use tarmac but the scheme would in the main have block paving of varying colours. Exposed boundary treatments would be brick walling but some more prominent along the main spine road and west boundary would be ragstone. Houses and gardens would be laid out to ensure sufficient privacy and outlook and the development. Overall, I consider these details would provide a high quality appearance to the development in accordance with policy DM1 of the Local Plan.

Landscaping & Ecology

6.21 The landscaping scheme also reflects the character areas with tight groups of ornamental trees around the central square to provide a clear focal point; an avenue of trees along the north/south central road to provide architectural interest and a formal avenue; flowering native trees within grass verges, hedges, and wildflower planting are used within the 'rural lanes' to the west; and the use of specimen trees (pear, hawthorn, cherry) to create green 'pinch points' within the more urban 'mews' areas. Front gardens feature a mix of shrubs, trees and hedging. The species are largely native but some ornamental species are used, to tie in with the design concept. The principles of the landscaping would create a high quality environment and the precise planting specifications and plant schedules would be provided under condition 4 of the outline consent.

6.22 KCC Ecology advises that the proposals align with the parameters at outline stage and therefore the ecological appraisals at the time. The applicant has submitted a review and update of existing survey data which outlines changes from the previous survey results being a tree with bat roost potential along the western boundary (which will be retained), and a potential badger sett within the middle of the Phase 1 site, although surveys have yet to be completed to find out whether it is active. Whilst no proposals have been put forward for a replacement badger sett, KCC Ecology are satisfied this information is not required as part of this application because there is sufficient space to create a sett within the wider site, if necessary. Enhancements within Phase 1 would include swift bricks and bat boxes integral to buildings, and wildlife friendly gullies, which is suitable.

Highways

6.23 The vast majority of this phase will not be adopted by the Highways Authority, however, KCC have provided advice on the layout which has been subject to an independent Stage 1 Safety Audit. The phase involves large amounts of shared surface roads, and through review with KCC, speed attenuation measures and increased visibility has been provided. KCC have confirmed they have no objections to the proposed road layout.

Other Matters

Affordable Housing

6.24 Affordable housing would be provided at 30% of which 65% would be affordable rent and 35% shared ownership. This tenure split was accepted at the outline stage and is confirmed in the legal agreement. The unit sizes are generally in accordance with the current need. The housing would be provided in two clusters in the southeast corner and on the western edge which is acceptable.

Surface Water Drainage

6.25 The strategy to deal with surface water from Phase 1 is via the 'strategic' drainage system for the wider site. This scheme involves intercepting water where it falls by means such as permeable paving, runoff then conveyed to a series of swales and retention areas which act to slow down the rate of runoff, and then finally to the wetland area in the south east corner of the wider site as approved under the 'infrastructure' application, where it is managed through a series of three water storage features and discharges to the Loose Stream. In Phase 1, street-based source control features such as permeable paving would be used with surface water collected in a pipe system where it will be conveyed to the wetland area in the south east corner. The fine details of the SUDs schemes (pipe sizes etc.) will be approved under condition 33 of the outline consent.

Renewables

6.26 Condition 30 of the outline consent requires that 10% renewable energy production is achieved over the entire site. For Phase 1 this will be through PV panels on the apartments, and this would be discharged separately under the condition. Condition 36 requires charging points for dwellings with dedicated off-street parking so would ensure these are provided on this phase.

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.01 For the above reasons the layout, appearance and landscaping proposals are considered to be acceptable and provide a high quality development in accordance with site policy H1(10), and other relevant policies within the Local Plan. The scale of the development is acceptable and in accordance with the height Parameter Plan already approved under the outline consent. Permission is therefore recommended subject to the following conditions.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION subject to the following conditions with delegated powers for the Head of Planning to be able to settle or amend any necessary planning conditions in line with the matters set out in the recommendation and as resolved by the Planning Committee.

Conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the most recent revised plans as shown on the Drawing Register received on 15/11/19.

Reason: In the interest of visual and residential amenity and to clarify which plans have been approved.

2. No development above slab level shall take place until details in the form of large scale drawings (at a scale of 1:20 or 1:50) of the following matters have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority:
 - a) Details of fenestration, cills, and recesses/reveals (in the form of large scale drawings (at a scale of 1:20 or 1:50)).
 - b) Details of gable verges, facias and soffits to be minimal in size to reflect the approve plans (in the form of large scale drawings (at a scale of 1:20 or 1:50)).
 - c) Details of porch overhangs (materials, junctions, supports).
 - d) Details of balconies (materials and fixings).
 - e) Details of gutters and downpipes (materials) and their locations, which shall be positioned to limited their visibility from public vantage points.

Reason: To ensure a high quality design and finish.

3. No development above slab level shall take place until a sample panel of the ragstone for the walling has been constructed for inspection on site and has been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Details of the mortar mix for the walling shall be submitted to and approved in writing. Such details as approved shall be fully implemented on site.

Reason: To ensure a high quality design.

4. No development above slab level shall take place until details of additional hit and miss raised brickwork panels on prominent buildings, and additional diaper brickwork on the apartment blocks have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure a high quality design.

5. The approved details of the vehicle and cycle parking/turning areas shall be completed before the commencement of the use of the land or buildings hereby permitted and shall thereafter be kept available for such use. No development, whether permitted by the Town and Country Planning (General

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Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order, with or without modification) or not, shall be carried out on the areas indicated or in such a position as to preclude vehicular access to them;

Reason: Development without adequate parking/turning provision is likely to lead to parking inconvenient to other road users and in the interests of road safety.