

## Page 116 Consultations

### Bearsted and Thurnham Society

A further representation has been submitted from the Bearsted and Thurnham Society that was addressed to members of the committee.

#### 1. Relationship to the Maidstone Urban Boundary

- The representation questions the relevance of Local Plan policy SS1 to sites outside but close to the designated settlement boundaries.

1.1 The relevance of policy SS1 to the location of the application site is set out at paragraphs 6.02 and 6.03 of the main officer report.

1.2 The supporting text to policy SS1 of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan (October 2017) is highlighted which states "*The town of Maidstone cannot accommodate all of the growth that is required on existing urban sites, and the most sustainable locations for additional planned development are at the edge of the urban area, expanding the boundary of the settlement in these locations*" (paragraph 4.23). It is accepted that the application site is an unallocated site in the countryside, however it benefits from the proximity to the urban boundary. *Appeal Inspectors have recognised (inc. Land adj. to West View Staplehurst 19/504275/out decision 19 June 2020) that sites can be considered sustainable in these locations.*

- The representation refers to 'urban creep', setting a precedent, residential amenity and only developing housing on allocated housing sites.

1.3 Each planning application is considered on its merits and the application site whilst in the countryside is bordered by existing built development on over three sides. The need to meet a 5 year land supply is a rolling requirement and so it is not possible to rely on allocated housing sites to meet future need. Residential amenity is considered at paragraphs 6.27 to 6.30 of the main report.

#### 2. Sustainability of the location

2.1 The application site is a 3 minute walk from the Maidstone Urban Boundary and so shares the sustainability benefits of land in this area. A comparison of the walking times and distances provided by the Bearsted and Thurnham Society against those given by Google Maps and Travelline Southeast is provided in the table below.

2.2 The information confirms that there is a supermarket, medical centre, bus stops and a pub within 10-12 minutes, or between 0.6 and 0.9 miles from the application site. The relevant maps are at the end of this update. The document Planning for Walking (The Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation, 2015) provides the following guidance on walking distances "Most people will only walk if their destination is less than a mile away. Land use patterns most conducive to walking are thus mixed in use and resemble patchworks of "walkable neighbourhoods", with a typical catchment of around 800m, or a 10 minute walk" (CIHT, 2015, p.29).

2.3 The principle of the proposed development is acceptable due to the close relationship of the site to the urban area and the access to facilities, services and public transport that the urban area offers. Condition 15 (page 128) requires the submission of

measures to encourage use of public transport, walking and cycling, condition 16 requires the installation of electric vehicle charging points.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Bearsted &amp; Thurnham Society</b>	<b>Google Maps</b>	<b>Traveline Southeast</b>
Tesco Supermarket	1.09km 14.5 mins	0.97km / 0.6 miles 12 mins	10mins
Railway Station	1.54km 20.5 mins	1.45km / 0.9 miles 17mins	17mins
Grove Green Medical Centre	1.09km 14.5 mins	0.97km / 0.6 miles 11 mins	12 mins
Village Shops	1.67km 22 mins	1.45km / 0.9 miles 18 mins	18mins
Bus stops	1.68km 22.5km (Sandy Lane)	0.97km / 0.6 miles 12 mins (outside Tesco)	10mins
Grove Green Early Bird Pub	–	0.97km / 0.6 miles 12 mins	10mins
Grove Green Post Office and Newsgent	–	0.97km / 0.6 miles 12 mins	10mins

2.4 The differences from the earlier applications are set out after the reasons for refusal on pages 114 to 116 of the agenda. The differences between the refused scheme and the current proposal include the following

- Number of units reduced from 7 houses to 5 houses
- Layout of the site revised from the linear arrangement (that was referred to in the refusal reasons) to dwellings arranged around a central landscaped area.
- The orientation of the dwellings revised so that they don't face towards existing properties in Hockers Lane.
- The proposed houses have been relocated further towards the lower part of the site and away from Apple Tree House that is on the higher ground. The ground levels and the refused 7 unit scheme are shown in the diagram after paragraph 6.16 of the main report.
- The current proposed layout shown after paragraph 6.20 of the main report shows improvements to the layout to ensure that it is more spacious and allowing significantly more landscaping.
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**Cllr Harwood**

3. Further comments have been received from Cllr Harwood as set out below in the underlined text.

- *This report relates to an unallocated site in open countryside, where a high standard of design is required to enable renewable energy policy to be overridden. Solar pv would presumably be most appropriate here.*

3.1 The submitted Design and Access Statement advises "The houses will be constructed to a high level for sustainability by using renewable sustainable energy source.

*Whilst the envelope of the building will prevent heat loss and maintain the internal temperature and also provide shading from the sun. The energy efficiency would be far greater than the standards to provide large energy savings and the use of alternative energy source”.*

3.2 In support of this statement, the applicant has submitted revised plans showing PV panels of the south west facing roof slopes. An additional planning condition to secure this renewable energy is recommended and has been agreed by the applicant.

- *Highlight sustainable urban drainage and the fact that the application site is within 50m of confirmed Great Crested Newt breeding ponds. I suggest that a wet all year round Suds pond is appropriate in this location.*

3.3 Condition 12 (p127 of the agenda) asks for the submission and approval of a sustainable urban drainage system. In addition to this the applicant has submitted a revised plan showing the provision of a wet SUDs pond as part of the development

*The proposed condition in relation to bat boxes requires work, in that it must specify integral bat and bird nesting boxes. Anything bolted to trees or buildings will not survive.*

3.4 An amended condition is recommended (condition 20) seeking integral bat boxes

*The landscape sensitivity of this site in the foreground of the AONB means that considerable care will need to go into the detailed landscaping scheme. This will need to comprise appropriate native tree and shrub understorey planting. This will have to be located within landscape buffers to protect the planting from immediate removal by the new householders (as is observed time and again right across the Borough). A fenced perimeter planting area hosting the Suds feature would work.*

3.5 Conditions 10 and 11 on page 127 of the agenda require the submission, approval and implementation of a landscaping scheme.

3.6 The applicant has submitted an additional plan showing the future private areas of the site and those that will be managed as part of a service charge. The managed areas of the site include buffer areas along the boundary with the golf course. An amendment to the landscaping condition is recommended to ensure that these areas are retained as buffer areas.

Condition 2 page 126 of the agenda

Amend as follows (underlined):

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 3163 - 004A Elevations and cross sections, 3163 - 005 Rev A Cross sections, 3163 - 008B Plot 1 elevations and floor plans, 3163 - 013 Proposed Street Scenes, 3163 - 014 Sections, 3163-10B plots 3-5 elevations and floor plans, 3163 - 007D Location Plan, 3163 - 009C Plot 2 elevations and floor plans, 3163 - 011B Site Plan, 3163-016 Ownership Plan, 3163 - 012 B Block plan, 3163 - 015 B Block plan layout, Bat Emergence Survey, Extended phase 1 habitat survey

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

Condition 10 page 127 of the agenda

Amend as follows (underlined):

The development hereby approved shall not commence above slab level until a landscape scheme designed in accordance with the principles of the Council's landscape character guidance has been submitted to and approved in writing by the

local planning authority. The scheme shall show all existing trees, hedges and blocks of landscaping on, and immediately adjacent to, the site and indicate whether they are to be retained or removed and include a planting specification, a programme of implementation and a [5] year management plan and shall include suitable trees for the replacement of those that are due to be removed (with an advanced nursery stock specimen) and wildlife-friendly planting. The details shall show measures to ensure that the landscape buffer areas on the boundary are retained for the lifetime of the development Reason: In the interests of landscape, visual impact and amenity of the area and to ensure a satisfactory appearance to the development.

Condition 20 Page 129 of the agenda

Amend as follows(underlined):

Prior to the end of the first planting season following occupation of the approved development ecological enhancements shall be in place (including installation of **integral** bat boxes on the elevations of the new building ~~and/or within mature trees along the site boundaries~~) that are in accordance with details that have previously been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority with the measures retained for the lifetime of the development

Reason: In the interest of ecology and biodiversity.

Additional condition 21 page 129

The development shall not commence above slab level until details of how renewable or low-carbon sources of energy will be incorporated into the development hereby approved to provide at least 10% of total annual energy requirements of the development, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The approved details shall be installed prior to first occupation and maintained thereafter;

Reason: To ensure an energy efficient form of development. Details are required prior to commencement as these methods may impact or influence the overall appearance of development.

- Traveline Southeast - Route to Tesco

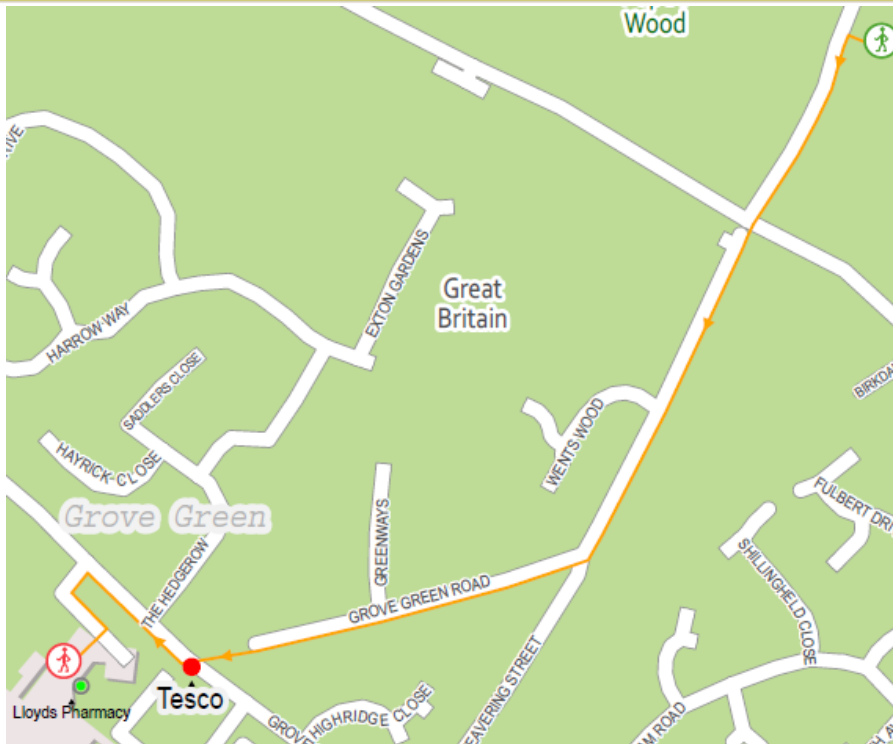
Details Print All

Option 1 Print Route Map 

 1135 Grove Green, ME14 5JY  
Walk about 10 mins to  
1145 Grove Green, ME14 5TQ Local Map 

Local Map 

back to top ▲



- Google Maps - Route to Tesco



- Traveline Southeast - Route to Bearsted Railway Station

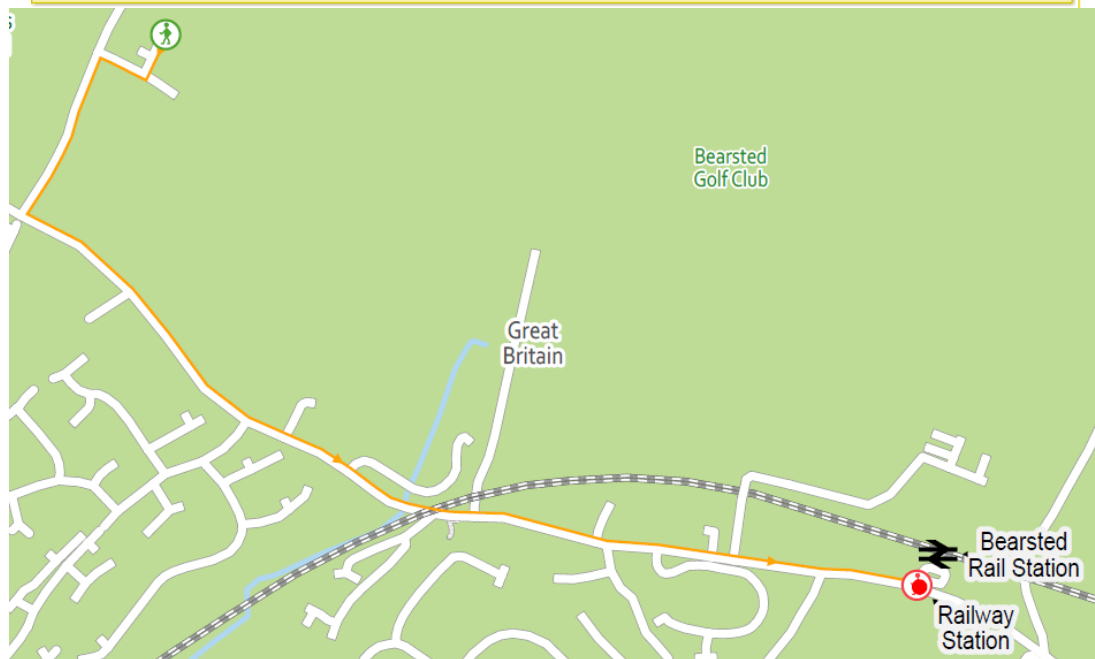
Option 1

1135 Thurnham, 1 Popes Wood

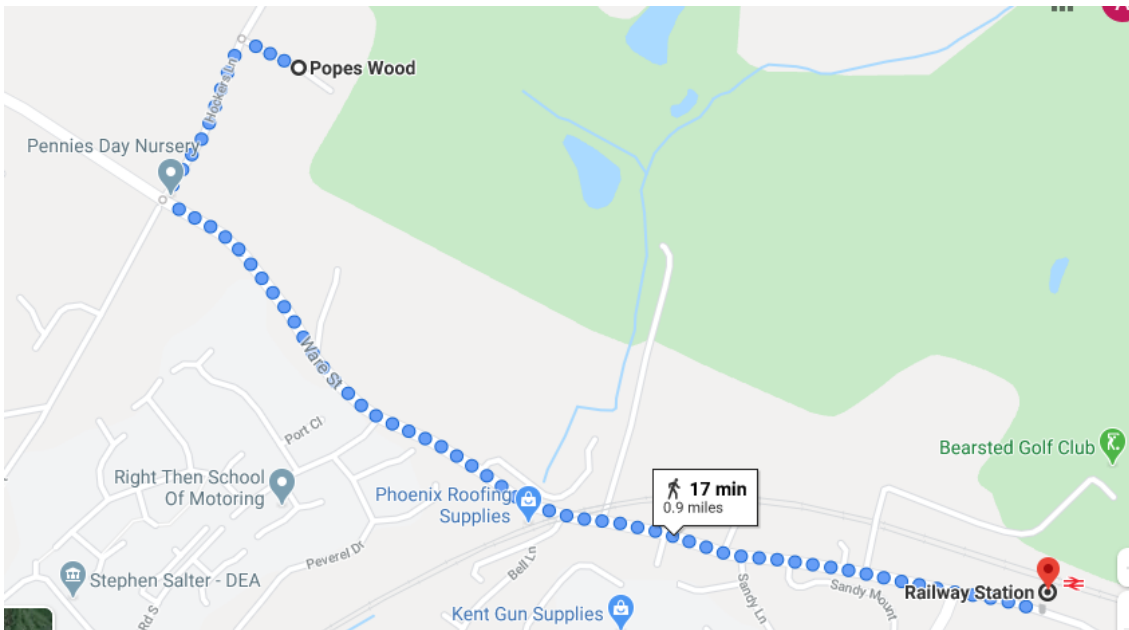
Walk about 17 mins to

1152 Bearsted, Railway Station

Print    Route Map    Local Map    Local Map    back to top



- Google Maps - Route to Bearsted Railway Station



- Traveline Southeast - Route to Grove Green Medical Centre

Option 1

1135 Thurnham, 1 Popes Wood

Walk about 12 mins to

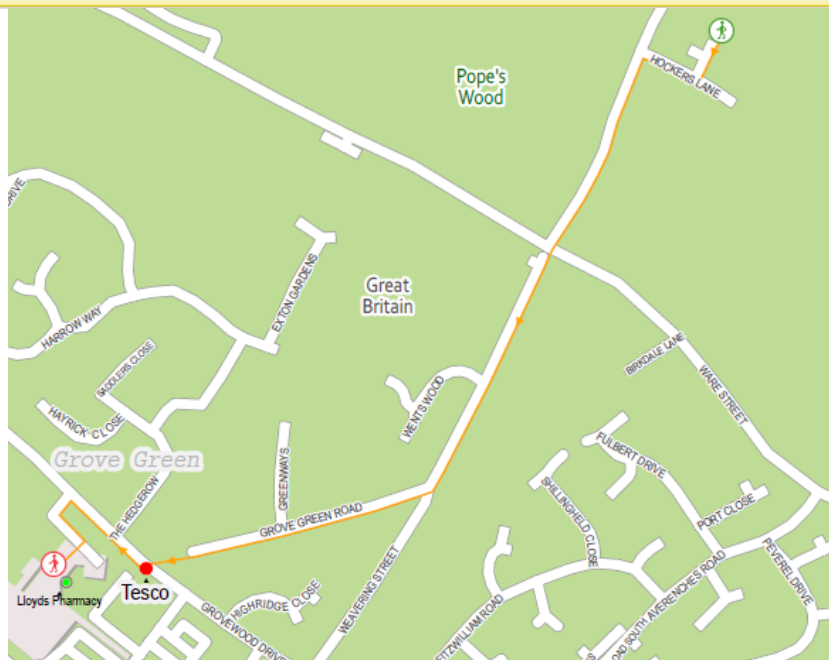
1147 Grove Green, ME14 5TQ

Print Route Map

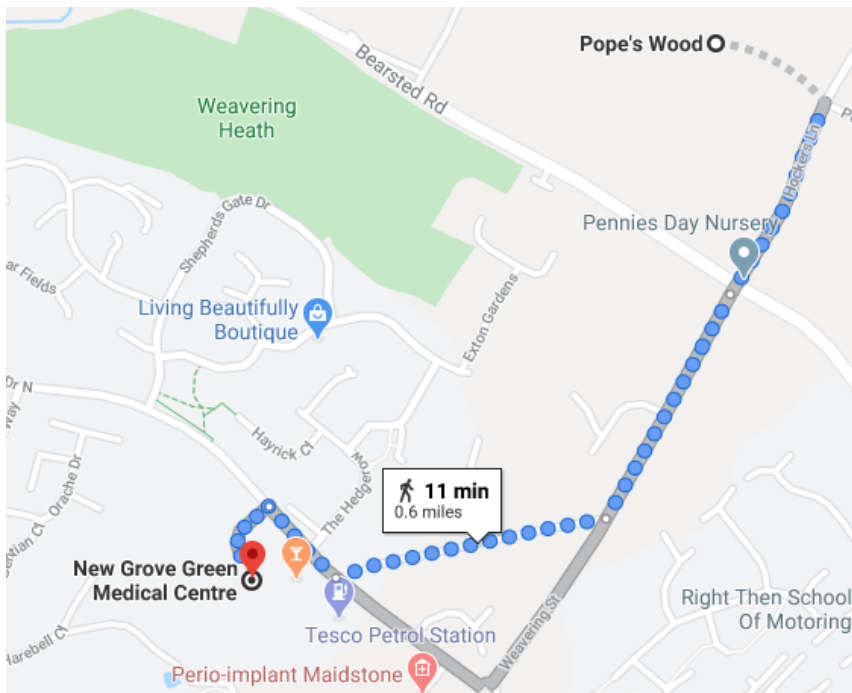
Local Map

Local Map

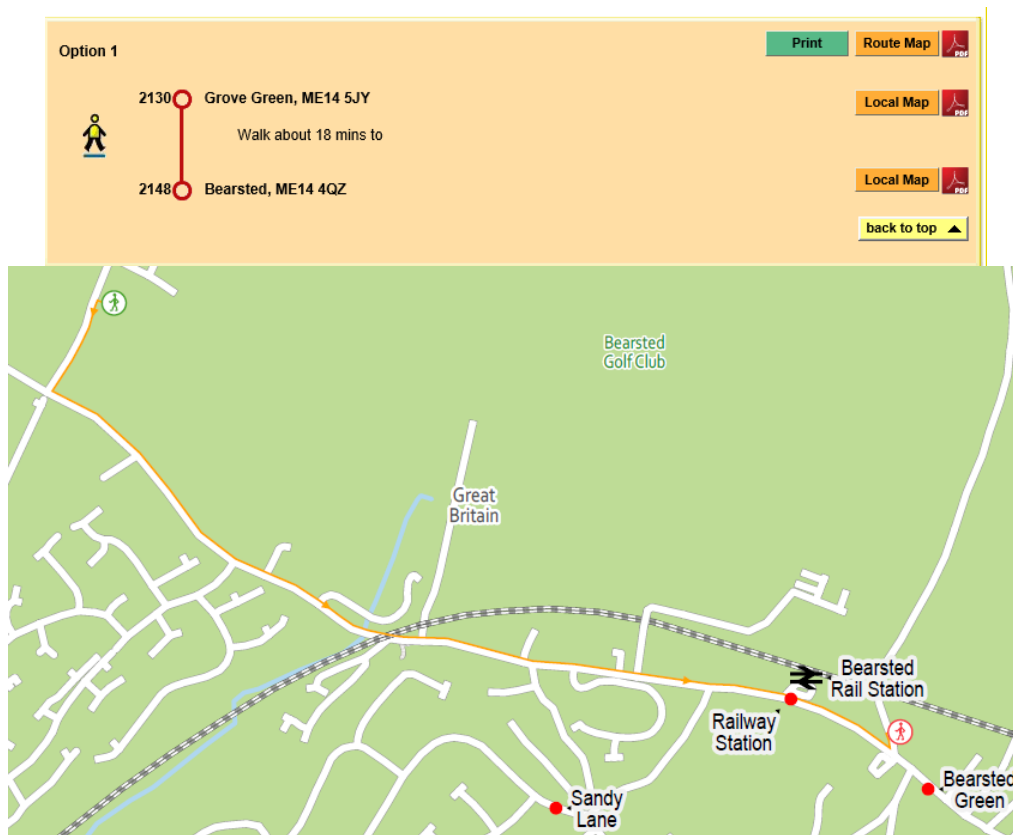
back to top



- Google Maps - Route to Grove Green Medical Centre



- Traveline Southeast - Route to 'village shops'



- Google Maps Route to 'village shops'



