

PLANNING APPLICATION: 21/504879/FULL

In response to further comments received from Cllr Munford the following is provided to supplement the published officer report.

- Paragraph 3.02 of the Committee report sets out the most relevant parts of Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan policy PWP4 for the proposal. This policy has been considered in the assessment of this application, but to clarify please see specific references to this policy (underlined text) below followed by the officer response:

Positive and appropriate provision for new housing development for Boughton Monchelsea parish, and as required by the Maidstone Local Plan, is made as follows:

B Development may be supported on other windfall sites & through conversions where:
(i) It is in line with policies RH1 and RH6 of this plan in particular, is small scale and of high quality and in keeping with its location

RESPONSE: The Committee report establishes the proposal does not accord with policy RH1 as it is for new residential development south of Heath Road. Policies RH2 to RH5 are not relevant to this proposal as the application is not for affordable housing and does not relate to a housing allocation site. As set out in paragraph 6.21 of the report, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with policy RH6 (Design of new housing development); and it is small scale and of high quality, in keeping with its location.

(ii) AND results in significant benefits to the parish in resolving community issues identified in the Plan such as specific identifiable housing needs OR

RESPONSE: In terms of the identified 'community issues' the 'Introduction to the Parish Wide Policies' (page 38 of Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan) states:

Development should address identified local issues around drainage and internet connectivity, and contribute to the provision of facilities to support the growing population socially and environmentally, as well as protecting and where possible enhancing local biodiversity and rural character and reducing the use of non-renewable energy in order to help meet national carbon reduction commitments.

The 'Visual impact' section of the report sets out why it is considered the proposal would protect the rural character of the area. Furthermore, recommended conditions would seek to ensure satisfactory drainage on the site; seek to protect and enhance local biodiversity; and seek for the development to incorporate decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources of energy. Furthermore, there is an ongoing general need to provide new housing in appropriate areas, as this site is considered to be.

(iii) It constitutes enabling development contributing to the retention and sustainability of heritage and/or community assets OR

RESPONSE: The proposal does not constitute enabling development contributing to the retention and sustainability of heritage and/or community assets.

(iv) It is within the Boughton Village development boundary

RESPONSE: Application site is not within the Boughton Village development boundary.

C In other circumstances, and particularly where development would result in the coalescence of hamlets within the parish, development will not be supported.

RESPONSE: Proposal would not result in the coalescence of hamlets within the parish.

In conclusion, the proposal does not wholly meet the criteria of policy PWP4 and so the application is a Departure from Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan policies PWP4 and RH1. However, for the reasons set out in the Committee report, the proposal is not considered to cause harm that warrants refusal.

- Paragraphs 6.03 to 6.05 addresses the location of the application site. To image below shows the application site and the nearest bus stops.



Bus stops A and B are within 70m of the application site, and the timetables for these bus stops are below:

(A) EAST BOUND (Mon-Fri - School days only):

TIME	SERVICE	DESTINATION
15:04	642	Sutton Rd (Morrisons) and Shepway
16:29	59	Grafty Green, Kings Head

(B) WEST BOUND (Mon-Fri & School days only):

TIME	SERVICE	DESTINATION
07:23	89	Maidstone, Oakwood Park
07:41	59	Maidstone, King St

Further to this, there are bus stops near Boughton Monchelsea's village hall that are some 630m from the application site (marked 'C' on above image) that are largely accessed by pavement. The service from here (no.59) largely runs between Grafty Green and Sutton Road (Morrisons), with between 5 and 7 services a day in both directions (Mon-Sat). There are also bus services, accessed largely by pavement, in and out of Maidstone from the Linton crossroads, less than 1km to the west of the site.

As a useful guide, the: '***GUIDELINES FOR PROVIDING FOR JOURNEYS ON FOOT***' published by the Institution of Highways and Transportation suggests the following acceptable walking distances for common facilities:

	COMMUTING/SCHOOL (m)	ELSEWHERE (m)
Desirable	500	400
Acceptable	1000	800
Preferred maximum	2000	1200

The referred to surrounding bus stops are within these advised distances.

It also remains that a shop/post office in Church Street is some 800m to the north-east of the site; a petrol station with convenience store is some 500m to the west of the site; Coxheath district centre is some 2.2km to the west of the site; and the site is a short distance from allocated housing sites in Boughton Monchelsea where siting

sustainability would have been a key consideration. Please also note that there are three schools within 800m of the application site.

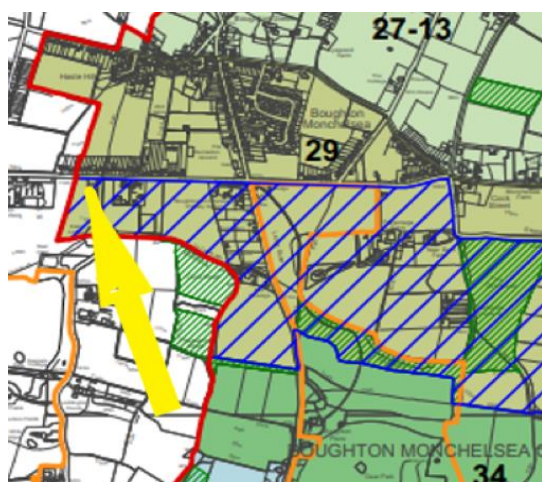
With the assessment in the Committee report and the above considered, it remains the view that the proposal would not provide housing in an unsustainable location, where future occupants would be over reliant on the private motor car.

- Paragraph 3.05 of the Committee report discusses the Council's Landscape Character Assessment and Capacity Study. In this respect, Councillor Munford has referred to appendix B sheet 1 of the Priority Local Landscape assessment carried out by Colvin and Moggridge, Boughton Monchelsea Priority Local Landscape (2019) and has commented as follows:

"This landscape assessment is included within the NHP (Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan) as underpinning evidence. from which policies are developed and examined for compliance

- *A much more significant discrepancy affects the boundary between Landscape Character type 29 Boughton Monchelsea to Chart Sutton plateau and type 34 Linton Greensand Ridge. At present, the blue hatched zone shown on the plan is included within character type 29 but its character is dramatically at odds with MBC's description for that type.*
- *Colvin and Moggridge consider that the landscape within the hatched zone is much more accurately aligned with landscape type 34 than with type 29, and consequently, it would be better re-classified as sub-type of 34, entitled 34-1 Linton and Boughton Parkland Plateau:*

NHP was found to be compliant".



Paragraph 3.05 of the officer report states: *"The Maidstone Landscape Character Assessment (2012 amended 2013) identifies the application site as falling within the Boughton Monchelsea to Chart Sutton Plateau (Area 29). The landscape guideline for this area is to 'IMPROVE'. The Council's Landscape Capacity Study: Sensitivity Assessment (Jan 2015) states that the Boughton Monchelsea to Chart Sutton Plateau has the overall landscape sensitivity as 'LOW'".* Whilst paragraph 3.05 of the officer report is still considered relevant, please note the following for clarification purposes.

As set out in the Maidstone Landscape Character Assessment, the guidelines for Linton Greensand Ridge (Area 34) are to 'CONSERVE'; and the Landscape Capacity Study: Sensitivity Assessment states that the Linton Greensand Ridge has a 'HIGH' overall landscape sensitivity. Either way, the Committee report sets out why the proposal is considered to be acceptable in landscape impact terms and this view remains unchanged. As set out in paragraph 6.20 of the Committee report, the application site does not fall within the Boughton Monchelsea Neighbourhood Plan designated Priority Landscape.

THE RECOMMENDATION REMAINS UNCHANGED