

REFERENCE NO - 24/501383/ADJ

APPLICATION PROPOSAL

Adjoining Authority Consultation by Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council for:

Outline planning application with all matters reserved (except for access) for development of land to west of Hermitage Lane and East of Kiln Barn Road comprised of a residential-led development including affordable housing; a new village centre including a primary school; ancillary commercial, community and employment floorspace; strategic open space, parkland, child play provision and sustainable drainage infrastructure; new access points and associated transport infrastructure.

ADDRESS Land East of Kiln Barn Road and West of Hermitage Lane, Aylesford, ME16 9NT

RECOMMENDATION – RAISE OBJECTIONS

SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- The proposed application together with committed development yet to come forward in the local area would result in a severe cumulative impact upon traffic congestion at the A26/Fountain Lane junction in Maidstone Borough which is not proposed to be mitigated contrary to paragraphs 114(d) and 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- The application fails to identify the necessary mitigation at the Junction 6 of the M20 (north and south) to prevent a severe cumulative impact upon traffic congestion in Maidstone Borough contrary to paragraphs 108(a), 114(d) and 115 of the NPPF.
- The application fails to assess the impact of traffic at junctions within Maidstone Borough along the A20 and A26 contrary to paragraph 108(a) of the NPPF.
- The air quality assessment fails to assess sensitive locations within Maidstone Borough being the A26/Fountain Lane junction and the gyratory system over the River Medway near Maidstone Town Centre. The application has also failed to demonstrate the development would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the North Downs Woodland SAC within Maidstone alone or in-combination with other relevant development contrary to paragraph 180(a) of the NPPF.
- The development must provide, or provide a financial contribution towards, the proposed cycling route from Hermitage Lane south of Maidstone Hospital to Maidstone town centre as set out in the Maidstone Walking and Cycling Assessment (2018). It must also provide a shared footway/cycleway on Hermitage Lane southwards to connect with the proposed footway/cycleway along the eastern side of Hermitage Lane. Without this the proposals would fail to ensure a sustainable development that promotes walking and cycling which reduces the pressure on local roads and junctions in or near to Maidstone Borough contrary to paragraphs 108(c), 114(a) and 116(a) of the NPPF.
- The development must provide for a significant increase in bus service provision and frequency to and from Maidstone Town Centre and improvements to Barming train station as stated in the application. Without this the proposals would fail to ensure a sustainable development that promotes public transport use which reduces the pressure on local roads and junctions in or near to Maidstone Borough contrary to paragraphs 108(c), 114(a) and 116(a) of the NPPF.
- It has not been demonstrated whether the development would provide adequate open space including sports pitches to meet the needs of the new residents to ensure there is no pressure on sports provision within Maidstone Borough. Should this not be the case, financial contributions should be made to Maidstone Borough Council to mitigate the impact. In the absence of this the proposals would fail to enable and support healthy lifestyles contrary to paragraphs 96(c) and 102 of the NPPF.

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE		
The Head of Development Management has required the application to be reported to Planning Committee as it is considered to be a controversial application due to the scale of the development, likely high level of local interest, and the potential impacts on Maidstone.		
WARD N/A	PARISH COUNCIL N/A	APPLICANT The East Malling Trust AGENT Savills
CASE OFFICER: Richard Timms	VALIDATION DATE: N/A	DECISION DUE DATE: N/A
ADVERTISED AS A DEPARTURE: N/A		

MAIN REPORT

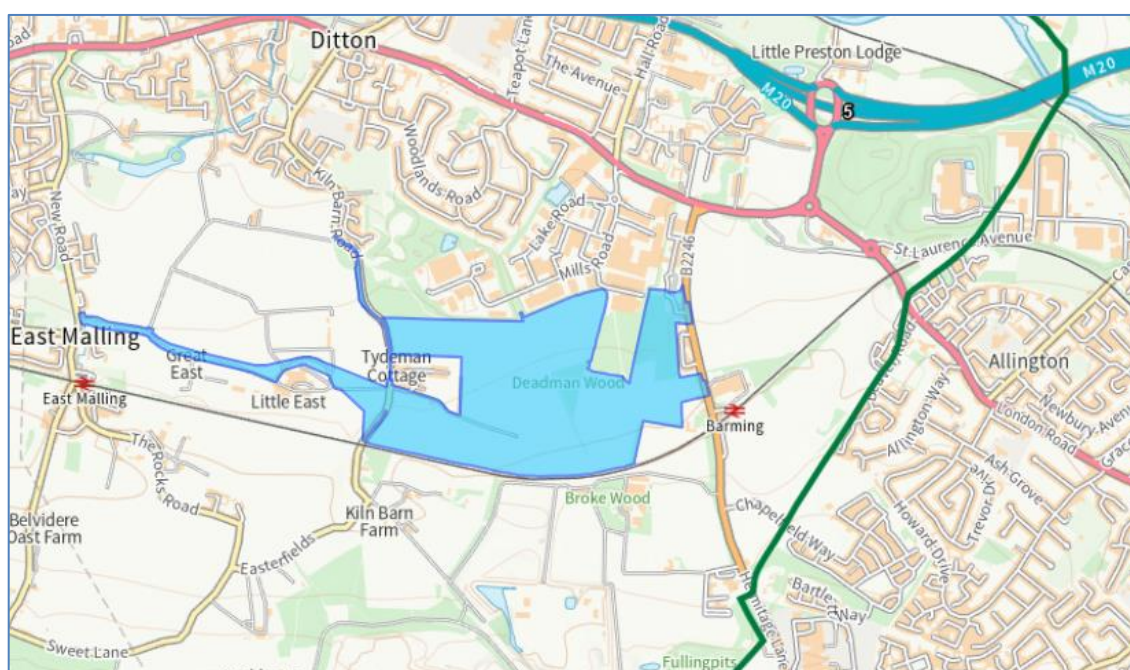
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.01 This application is a consultation by Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council (TMBC) on an outline planning application within their Borough. TMBC consulted Maidstone Council (MBC) on 27th March 2024 seeking any views by 17th April. Officers wrote to TMBC within this timeframe to inform them that our decision would be made by Planning Committee and we would send our formal response as soon as possible.

1.02 MBC are consulted for their views and this should be focussed on potential impacts upon the Borough rather than general views upon the planning application. Officers are therefore recommending the response MBC should send to TMBC for them to consider in reaching a decision on their application.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF SITE

2.01 The site (coloured blue below) is located to the west of Hermitage Lane near Barming train station and immediately north of the Maidstone East to London railway line as shown here. The green line is the Borough boundary.



- 2.02 The site area is 79.5ha and mainly comprises agricultural fields with a small area of ancient woodland. There are existing public rights of way (PROW) including a bridle way that cross the site. There are hedgerows surrounding the majority of the site and the land is generally level.
- 2.03 The site is not allocated for development in TMBC who are working on a new Local Plan that went out to the first stage of high level consultation (Regulation 18) in September 2022. The consultation did not include specific site allocations, however, all but one of the five spatial strategy options include a focus of development within the area in and around the application site. The latest timetable on the TMBC website states that the second stage of consultation is planned for July 2024, publication of the draft Local Plan in December 2024, and submission of the Plan for examination in April 2025.

3.0 PROPOSAL

- 3.01 MBC is being consulted on an outline application with all matters reserved apart from access for the following main elements as taken from the Planning Statement:

- Up to 1,300 dwellings.
- Two-form entry primary school.
- Local centre with community uses.
- Central formal open space and other areas of open green spaces.
- Potential for care accommodation.
- Sustainable movement corridor through the residential element of the site and linking to East Malling with a bus, pedestrian and cycle link.
- 10% biodiversity net gain.

- 3.02 Access details are being considered at this stage and the following points of access are proposed:

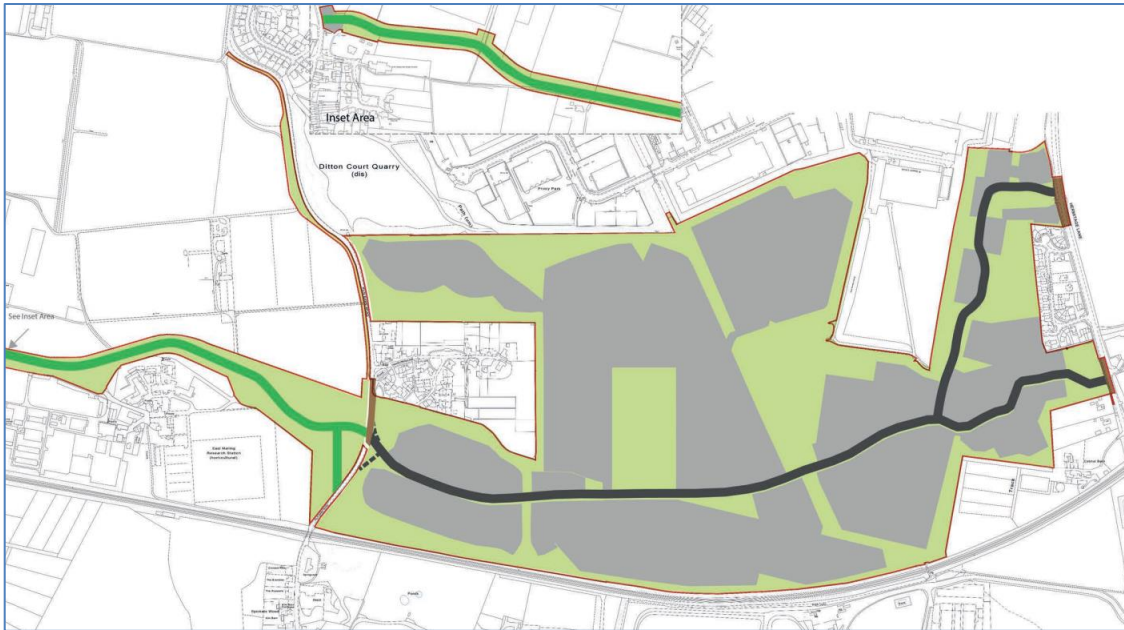
Hermitage Lane – Northern Access: New vehicular access point proposed to Hermitage Lane through upgrading and realigning Richard Corben Way. It would link to the new roundabout that will be delivered as part of the 'White Post Fields' development which is under construction to the east.

Hermitage Lane – Southern Access: New secondary access to Hermitage Lane proposed in the southeast corner of the site to the north of Barming Station. It will provide vehicular access to the site but also include a dedicated cycle and pedestrian footway that will link into a "sustainable movement corridor" across the site from east to west.

Kiln Barn Road: New junction with Kiln Barn Road with a staggered crossroads and priority proposed for buses, pedestrians and cyclists.

New Road – Western Access: This will run west of Kiln Barn Road across the East Malling Estate using and enhancing the existing internal estate road. It is proposed this section will restrict general vehicular traffic and provide an onward east-west connection for buses and active travel modes only.

- 3.03 The 'Access and Circulation Parameter Plan' is shown below with Hermitage Lane on the east side and Kiln Barn Lane near the centre:



3.04 The Illustrative Masterplan is shown below:



3.05 The applicant sets out an indicative phasing strategy stating, *"It is anticipated that the scheme would be delivered in seven phases with delivery commencing from 2026 onwards. This is contingent on securing planning permission from TMBC. It is anticipated that delivery will be approximately 100-150 dwellings per annum, across a 10-13 year period."*

4.0 POLICY AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The application falls within TMBC and so the Council's Local Plan Review is not relevant.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

5.0 LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

5.01 **Local Residents:** Representations on the application need to be made to TMBC but 2 representations have been received raising the following (summarised) points:

- Too much development in the immediate area and infrastructure is not keeping up to support it.
- Too much traffic.
- Loss of green spaces.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

(MBC does not carry out consultations with statutory consultees as the planning application falls within TMBC but some of the consultee responses on the TMBC application are referenced in the assessment where relevant. Views from MBC Spatial Policy and Parks and Open Spaces have been sought)

6.01 **MBC Spatial Policy** have provided advice. In summary they have outlined schemes within MBC's Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Integrated Transport Strategy which may be affected by the development (education, health, transportation, social and community, public transport); and have summarised MBC's responses to TMBC consultations on their draft Local Plan(s) from 2018 and 2022 where key issues in this location were considered to relate to traffic/congestion and the need for junction improvements, air quality, and public transport.

6.02 **MBC Parks and Open Spaces:** *"Although the whole site falls outside of our borough it could be reasoned, that as the main entrance to the development leads onto Hermitage Lane, residents may choose to access facilities in Maidstone rather than Tonbridge and Malling if facilities were unavailable on site. We can't do the usual open space requirement and off site financial contribution calculations, as the data isn't available for existing provision and resident numbers, but I have made some comments below.*

...Most of the open space standards we would expect within MBC may have been met, although there are numerical discrepancies between the two documents. Allotments and a community orchard are provided but there is no measurement provided.

However, it is not clear with regards to sports provision. The Design and Access Statement refers to 'playing fields' and 'informal playing pitches'. The document indicates that provision would meet T&M requirements because there are Outdoor Sports Facilities (20 min. drive) - off site access to K-Sports Centre, Station Road. If residents are prepared to drive off-site, they may choose to drive to sites in Maidstone including Barming Heath, or Gatland Lane Recreation Ground, for local sports pitches or to Mote Park, for a larger sports hub. The additional pressure on these sites could be mitigated by an off-site open space contribution from the proposed development. However, the D&A Statement also suggests there will be

community access to the new primary school and their junior pitches, which may mean the sports requirement will be met on site."

7.0 APPRAISAL

7.01 As outlined above, MBC have been consulted on the application by TMBC and the response should focus on potential impacts upon the Borough rather than general views on the planning application. Officers consider the main issues effecting MBC to be traffic and congestion, air quality, and infrastructure.

Traffic and Congestion

7.02 At the time of writing this report the Local Highway authority (Kent County Council) are yet to respond to TMBC on the application.

7.03 National Highways whose remit is the strategic road network (SRN) have responded and recommend planning permission is not granted stating they cannot determine whether the development would have unacceptable impact on the safety, reliability and/or operational efficiency of the SRN due to a lack of information.

7.04 In summary, the applicants transport evidence predicts the traffic impacts on 17 junctions. Existing junctions that have been assessed within or affecting traffic within Maidstone are considered to be as follows:

- A20/St Laurence Avenue (Poppyfields Roundabout)
- A20/Coldharbour Lane (Coldharbour Roundabout)
- A20/Hermitage Lane
- A26/Red Hill/Bow Lane (Wateringbury Crossroads)
- A26/Fountain Lane/Farleigh Lane
- M20 J5
- M20 J6 (N) (Cobtree Roundabout)
- M20 J6 (S) (Running Horse Roundabout)

7.05 Although these junctions are considered appropriate, officers consider traffic impacts would occur further towards Maidstone so junctions along the A20 and A26 should also be assessed and so this represents an objection as set out in the reasons at the end of the report.

7.06 Mitigation is proposed or suggested for the following junctions only:

- A20/Hermitage Lane - (reconfiguration to provide more capacity on some arms)
- M20 J5 - (signals on three of the four arms to increase capacity)
- M20 J6 - (financial contribution (tbc) to be used towards a scheme)
- Wateringbury Crossroads - (increased entry lanes on two arms)

7.07 Of these it is noted that for the M20 Junction 6 the applicant's assessment shows that the north and south roundabout junctions will be well over capacity in 2037, with the applicant considering the development would have a marginal impact. Reference is made to the situation being complex due to various potential mitigation schemes by KCC and from other planning applications and because of this it is stated, *"it is considered extremely difficult to identify a specific scheme for mitigating the junction as the context of the junction's operations is subject to change. It is therefore proposed to mitigate the impact of the development through a proportional financial contribution (tbc), which can then be attributed to the most appropriate scheme coming forward."*

- 7.08 It is considered the application should identify the specific necessary mitigation for the development and that without this the proposals have not properly addressed their traffic impacts contrary to paragraphs 108(a), 114(d) and 115 of the NPPF and this should form an objection.
- 7.09 For the Wateringbury Crossroads, the applicant considers mitigation is unlikely to be required because the access road from the scheme in this direction is not proposed to be open to all traffic, but if it was states, *"to provide further confidence that the junction could be mitigated if needed, it is understood that a scheme to mitigate the junction was previously identified and developed to detailed design stage.The scheme was ultimately not delivered due to costs associated with required utilities diversions."*
- 7.10 This leaves two junctions in/affecting Maidstone where mitigation is not proposed/suggested.
- 7.11 The A20/St Laurence Avenue (Poppyfields Roundabout) is shown to operate within capacity in the forecast year of 2037 so objections are not raised in this respect.
- 7.12 However, the Fountain Lane junction is predicted to have 3 arms at around 120% capacity in the AM peak, and between 121% to 134% in the PM peak in the worst case scenario. This will involve queuing of between 59 to 72 vehicles in the AM and 66 to 107 in the PM. The applicant predicts that this junction will be over capacity at a similar level even without the proposed development (in 2037) and considers the development will make no or a minimal increase. On this basis no mitigation is proposed.
- 7.13 Whilst it is difficult to understand how a development of up to 1,300 dwellings and a two-form entry primary school off Hermitage Lane will make no impact at the Fountain Lane junction, officers will have to defer to the Highways Authorities on whether the applicant's evidence is reliable.
- 7.14 However, the predictions for the Fountain Lane junction in 2037 include 'committed development' traffic which is not yet on the network including notably the 'White Post Field' development (840 houses). As such there is a cumulative impact of the proposal together with other development that would occur at the junction. In this context it is considered the residual cumulative impacts on the capacity of the Fountain Lane junction, which includes the proposed development, would be 'severe'. This is contrary to paragraph 115 of the NPPF. With the junction being over capacity to the degree predicted it is considered that mitigation is necessary for the development to be acceptable.
- 7.15 The latest Joint Transport Board (JTB) meeting (13/02/24) provided an update on KCC's proposed junction improvement scheme. In summary, it was advised that some safety and design matters require further consideration and that once a formal conclusion has been reached on the suitability of the dual roundabout scheme next steps will be communicated to local councillors and the JTB. MBC's Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2022) estimates the costs of the junction improvement to be £3.5m.
- 7.16 Financial contributions towards this junction were secured by MBC from allocated Local Plan 2017 housing sites H1(2) - East of Hermitage (500 houses) and H1(3) - West of Hermitage Lane (250 houses) in the region of £330,000 and also by TMBC from the 'White Post Field' development (840 houses) at the north end of Hermitage Lane. This is £1,300,000 but can be used either towards a new roundabout at the A20/Mills Road/Hall Road junction or Fountain Lane. Officers are not aware of any

other significant funding and on this basis, there is a funding shortfall for KCC's junction improvement.

- 7.17 It would therefore be appropriate and consistent for TMBC to require a financial contribution towards capacity improvements at the junction. However, the applicant is not proposing any mitigation and on this basis and due to a severe cumulative impact at this junction contrary to paragraph 114(d) and 115 of the NPPF, it is considered that MBC should raise objections to the application.
- 7.18 Whilst it is difficult to understand how a development of up to 1,300 dwellings and a two-form entry primary school off Hermitage Lane will make no impact at the Fountain Lane junction, officers will have to defer to the Highways Authorities on whether the applicant's evidence is reliable.
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- 7.22 It would therefore be appropriate and consistent for TMBC to require a financial contribution towards capacity improvements at the junction. However, the applicant is not proposing any mitigation and on this basis and due to a severe cumulative impact at this junction contrary to paragraph 114(d) and 115 of the NPPF, it is considered that MBC should raise objections to the application.

Air Quality

- 7.23 The application provides an air quality assessment within the Environmental Statement. In summary it predicts that impacts on air quality would be negligible in terms of human health and below the relevant limits. It also predicts the impact upon the North Downs Woodland Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which falls within MBC, would be 'insignificant'. In general, mitigation is proposed in the form of a Travel Plan; walking and cycling infrastructure (which is outlined in more detail below); electric cycle hire scheme; public transport incentives; and EV charging.

- 7.24 In reaching these conclusions a number of 'sensitive receptors' have been selected by the applicant. As stated by the applicant, guidance suggests that all locations 'where members of the public are regularly present' should be considered. These are also based on the predictions of where traffic would route.
- 7.25 It is notable these only include 5 locations within MBC being Hermitage Lane by Maidstone Hospital, Lamberhurst Road north of the A20, Sandling Farm south of the M20, and Chartham Road/Tollgate Way east of the A229 Bluebell Hill. It is considered there will be impacts at the Fountain Lane junction which already experiences high traffic levels and the gyratory system over the River Medway in Maidstone Town Centre which again experiences high traffic levels. It is considered these sensitive locations should also be assessed and an objection should be raised on this basis.
- 7.26 In terms of the North Downs Woodland SAC which is within 200m of the A229 Bluebell Hill, this is designated for its beech and yew woodland, and semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland. The potential for impacts from the development are air pollution from traffic close to the SAC. Whilst the applicant predicts the development would have a negligible impact, it is noted that the Local Plan Review (LPR) at paragraph 7.146 states,
- "The Local Plan Review makes provision for a new garden community at Lidsing, where the impact of new development on the integrity of the North Downs Woodlands SAC requires careful consideration. Provided that the air pollution mitigation specified by Policy LPRSP4(B) is delivered then adverse effects on the SAC due to air quality from the plan as a whole, alone or in-combination, can be ruled out. In the event that the Lidsing garden community is not delivered, the Council will agree a proposed approach with Natural England, and no further development contributing to an increase in traffic to roads within 200m of the SAC (A229, A249 or Boxley Road) will be permitted until mitigation has been agreed, unless applicants can demonstrate that they will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the SAC, alone or in-combination."*
- 7.27 Firstly, the proposal should consider its cumulative impact with other development and in terms of impact upon the SAC it is considered this should include the Lidsing Garden Settlement. Secondly, the LPR states that even if Lidsing doesn't come forward there would need to be mitigation that increases traffic on the A229, which this proposal would.
- 7.28 On this basis it is considered the proposals have not demonstrated they would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the SAC alone or in-combination with other relevant development and this should form an objection.

Public Transport

- 7.29 In respect of buses the application states,

"The intended bus strategy for the site envisages a significant increase in bus service provision and frequency.

.....Initial discussions have been undertaken with two of the existing bus operators in the area: Arriva and Nu-Venture in addition to KCC's Public Transport team. It is evident from these discussions that there is willingness to provide additional services utilising the proposed SMC (corridor) within the development subject to demand.

....During initial discussions with KCC's Public Transport team it was agreed that the most appropriate way forward would be for the development to provide a proportionate financial contribution towards bus service improvements in the area

surrounding the site. The specific routes and service frequencies will be determined by KCC at the appropriate time, however, for the purposes of this TA it has been reasonably assumed that there will be an increase in peak hour services which will provide increased opportunities for travel by bus between the site and surrounding key employment and/or education hubs. In particular, it is anticipated that service provision to/from Maidstone, Kings Hill and along the A20 corridor will be markedly improved."

7.30 In respect of trains the application states,

"Rail is considered to form a key component of the overarching transport strategy for the site given the proximity of the site to Barming Station....

....Access to Barming Station will be significantly improved through the implementation of the SMC (corridor), a new toucan crossing on Hermitage Lane and shared footway/cycleway facilities leading to the station.

Within the station itself it is intended to improve interchange facilities and potentially access to the London-bound platform, which is not currently step free.

....it is noted that TMBC are independently pursuing engagement with Southeastern regarding improvements at the station and have identified a number of measures which are being pursued. These measures include:

- Access improvements for active modes.*
- Provision of secure and convenient cycle parking.*
- Improved bus interchange.*
- Platform access improvements.*

It is anticipated at this stage that the development will provide a proportionate financial contribution towards improvements at Barming station, to be implemented by Southeastern as appropriate."

7.31 These public transport measures are essential for a scheme of this scale to ensure a sustainable development that promotes public transport use and reduces the pressure on local roads and junctions in or near to Maidstone Borough in accordance with paragraphs 108(c), 114(a) and 116(a) of the NPPF.

Walking and Cycling

7.32 For walking and in summary, it is proposed to surface and light existing public rights of way within and around the site and provide new crossings including a toucan crossing on Hermitage Lane near Barming station. These measures are considered necessary to promote walking in accordance with paragraphs 108(c), 114(a) and 116(a) of the NPPF.

7.33 For cycling and in summary, it is proposed to provide an east to west dedicated cycle route through the site, upgrade the existing public footpaths to bridleways with new surfacing and lighting, and to provide a shared footway/cycleway on Hermitage Lane south to connect with the proposed footway/cycleway along the eastern side of Hermitage Lane being provided by KCC. These measures are considered necessary. However, the Maidstone Walking and Cycling Assessment (2018) outlines options to provide a cycling route from Hermitage Lane south of the hospital to the town centre with the necessary improvements outlined. It is considered the proposals should provide these improvements or a financial contribution towards them to promote cycling to and from Maidstone town centre to promote cycling and reduce the pressure on local roads and junctions in or near to Maidstone Borough in accordance with paragraphs 108(c), 114(a) and 116(a) of the NPPF.

Infrastructure

Open Space

- 7.34 The application sets out that there would be approximately 15.8 hectares of public open space including areas of parkland with a central community park of around 2.5 hectares and a mix of neighbourhood equipped areas of play (NEAP), locally equipped areas of play (LEAP), local areas of play (LAP), and multi-use games areas (MUGA). The illustrative masterplan shows 1 NEAP, 6 LEAP's, and 2 LAP's. There is mention of allotments and a community orchard, informal playing pitches, and community access to the primary school including junior pitches.
- 7.35 The MBC Parks and Open Spaces Team have provided comments generally saying the scheme could meet MBC open space standards if the development was within MBC but it is not clear on sports provision. It is considered a development of this scale should provide sports pitches to meet the needs of the new residents and avoid any pressure on sports provision within MBC.

Education, Healthcare and Other Community Services

- 7.36 Kent County Council are yet to respond to TMBC on the application but will make their requests for financial contributions to mitigate the impact of the development upon primary, secondary and SEND education; community learning; children's services; libraries; and adult social care. KCC are the relevant infrastructure provider for these services so are considered best placed to determine the mitigation necessary for the development.
- 7.37 The NHS have requested £1,166,256 to mitigate the impact of the development towards "*reconfiguration and/or extension of existing general practice or other healthcare premises covering the area of development or new premises for general practice or healthcare services provided in the community in line with the healthcare Estates and Infrastructure Strategy for the area.*" They refer to the development falling within the current practice boundaries of Aylesford Medical Practice, Blackthorn Medical Practice, Watlingbury Surgery and The Medical Centre Group. The NHS are the relevant healthcare infrastructure provider so are considered best placed to determine the mitigation necessary for the development.

8.0 CONCLUSION

- 8.01 It is considered that objections/comments should be made on the following matters:
- 8.02 Severe cumulative impacts on the capacity and congestion at the A26/Fountain Lane junction in Maidstone Borough for which no mitigation is proposed contrary to paragraphs 114(d) and 115 of the NPPF.
- 8.03 Failure to identify necessary mitigation at the Junction 6 of the M20 (north and south) in Maidstone Borough contrary to paragraphs 108(a), 114(d) and 115 of the NPPF.
- 8.04 Lack of assessment of the impact of traffic on junctions within Maidstone Borough along the A20 and A26 contrary to paragraph 108(a) of the NPPF.
- 8.05 Failure of the air quality assessment to assess sensitive locations within Maidstone Borough being the A26/Fountain Lane junction and the gyratory system over the River Medway near Maidstone Town Centre.

- 8.06 Failure of the application to demonstrate the development would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the North Downs Woodland SAC alone or in-combination with other relevant development contrary to paragraph 180(a) of the NPPF.
- 8.07 Lack of provision of, or a financial contribution towards, the proposed cycling route from Hermitage Lane south of Maidstone Hospital to Maidstone town centre as set out in the Maidstone Walking and Cycling Assessment (2018). The development must also provide a shared footway/cycleway on Hermitage Lane southwards to connect with the proposed footway/cycleway along the eastern side of Hermitage Lane. Without this the proposals would fail to ensure a sustainable development that promotes walking and cycling which reduces the pressure on local roads and junctions in or near to Maidstone Borough contrary to paragraphs 108(c), 114(a) and 116(a) of the NPPF.
- 8.08 The development must provide for a significant increase in bus service provision and frequency to and from Maidstone Town Centre and improvements to Barming train station as stated in the application. Without this the proposals would fail to ensure a sustainable development that promotes public transport use which reduces the pressure on local roads and junctions in or near to Maidstone Borough contrary to paragraphs 108(c), 114(a) and 116(a) of the NPPF.
- 8.09 The development must provide adequate open space including sports pitches to meet the needs of the new residents to ensure there is no pressure on sports provision within Maidstone Borough. Should this not be the case, financial contributions should be made to Maidstone Borough Council to mitigate the impact. In the absence of this the proposals would fail to enable and support healthy lifestyles contrary to paragraphs 96(c) and 102 of the NPPF.

9.0 RECOMMENDATION

RAISE OBJECTIONS for the following reasons with delegated authority to the Head of Development Management to be able to settle or amend any objections in line with the matters set out in the recommendation and as resolved by the Planning Committee:

1. The proposed application together with committed development yet to come forward in the local area would result in a severe cumulative impact upon traffic congestion at the A26/Fountain Lane junction in Maidstone Borough. It is therefore necessary for mitigation to be provided whereas nothing is proposed by the applicant. On this basis the proposals would cumulatively have a significant impact on this junction in terms of capacity and congestion resulting in a severe impact which would not be mitigated, contrary to paragraphs 114(d) and 115 of the NPPF.
2. The application fails to identify the necessary mitigation at the Junction 6 of the M20 (north and south) to prevent a severe cumulative impact upon traffic congestion in Maidstone Borough contrary to paragraphs 108(a), 114(d) and 115 of the NPPF.
3. The Transport Assessment should assess the impact of traffic at the following junctions within Maidstone Borough including the provision of any necessary mitigation:
 - a) A20/Beaver Road/Bunyard Way
 - b) A20/Castle Road
 - c) A20/Grace Avenue/Poplar Grove
 - d) A20/Queens Road
 - e) A26/Queens Road/Fant Lane

In the absence of this information it is considered the transport impacts of the development have not been fully assessed contrary to paragraph 108(a) of the NPPF.

4. The air quality assessment fails to assess sensitive locations within Maidstone Borough being the A26/Fountain Lane junction and the gyratory system over the River Medway near Maidstone Town Centre. The application has also failed to demonstrate the development would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the North Downs Woodland SAC alone or in-combination with other relevant development contrary to paragraph 180(a) of the NPPF.
5. The development must provide, or provide a financial contribution towards, the proposed cycling route from Hermitage Lane south of Maidstone Hospital to Maidstone town centre as set out in the Maidstone Walking and Cycling Assessment (2018). It must also provide a shared footway/cycleway on Hermitage Lane southwards to connect with the proposed footway/cycleway along the eastern side of Hermitage Lane. Without this the proposals would fail to ensure a sustainable development that promotes walking and cycling which reduces the pressure on local roads and junctions in or near to Maidstone Borough contrary to paragraphs 108(c), 114(a) and 116(a) of the NPPF.
6. The development must provide for a significant increase in bus service provision and frequency to and from Maidstone Town Centre and improvements to Barming train station as stated in the application. Without this the proposals would fail to ensure a sustainable development that promotes public transport use which reduces the pressure on local roads and junctions in or near to Maidstone Borough contrary to paragraphs 108(c), 114(a) and 116(a) of the NPPF.
7. The development must provide adequate open space including sports pitches to meet the needs of the new residents to ensure there is no pressure on sports provision within Maidstone Borough. Should this not be the case, financial contributions should be made to Maidstone Borough Council to mitigate the impact. In the absence of this the proposals would fail to enable and support healthy lifestyles contrary to paragraphs 96(c) and 102 of the NPPF.