

Hannah Gunner
Medway Council
Gun Wharf
Dock Road
Chatham
Kent ME4 4TR

04 December 2020

Dear Hannah

SUBMISSION OF AMENDMENTS TO FULL PLANNING APPLICATION REF MC/20/1478
LAND AT UPNOR ROAD, UPPER UPNOR, MEDWAY
ESQUIRE DEVELOPMENTS

Further to our ongoing discussions in respect of the above site, please find attached amended information for your consideration prior to the determination of the application. The amendments include:

- Amended layout to include the provision of a Children's Nursery and resulting in the loss of 3No. dwellings;
- Additional drawings providing elevational and floor plans of the Nursery Building;
- Amended Drawings reflecting the change in plot numbers;
- Letter of intent from The Montessori Group re. Nursery justification and business case;
- Amended highway access drawings showing improved radii to turn left out of the site, road widening and passing points for vehicles on Upnor Road;
- Arboricultural Report surveying proposed access and off site Public Rights of Way improvement areas;
- Updated Landscape Strategy detailing the off-site enhancements to restore the wider Hogmarsh Valley and detailing the proposed replacement planting and associated hard and soft works to the entrance;
- Updated Landscape and Visual Appraisal reflecting ongoing discussions;
- Further information on PRoW improvements and potential low level lighting specification.

As a result of the above amendments, the Description of Development has been amended and now reads:

Erection of 72No. residential dwellings including 18x affordable housing and erection of Children's Nursery (Use Class E(f)) associated car parking and infrastructure; new landscaping and public open spaces including new public rights of way and new bus stop; sustainable urban drainage system and associated earthworks and a new vehicular access from Upnor Road.

In terms of specific details:

Provision of a Children's Nursery

The addition of a Children's Nursery at the southern part of the site is considered to address an identified need for additional nursery places in the local area. The layout has been amended to demonstrate how a single storey building of approximately

2,000sqft can be accommodated within the site. A total of 3 No. dwellings have been lost to accommodate the Nursery building and parking area.

The single storey building is considered to be appropriate in this location and offers an appropriate design that matches the proposed high quality residential element.

A letter of intent from the Montessori Group is enclosed which confirms their expression of interest in the site and location and confirming the business case and justified need. As you will be aware, Esquire Developments is delivering a Nursery in nearby Cliffe Woods.

We have assessed the proposed new use and loss of dwellings in the context of any changes to the likely trip rates and can confirm that the Nursery would increase the number of trips by approximately 6 in the am peak and 5 in the pm peak and a total of 20 vehicles over a 12 hr period. This is not deemed materially significant to affect the findings of the submitted Transport Statement.

Period	Arrivals	Departures	Total
0800-0900	+4	+1	+6
1700-1800	+2	+3	+5
0700-1900	+10	+10	+20

As a consequence of the reduction in dwellings from 75 to 72, the affordable housing proposed has also been reduced to 18 dwellings (from 19 dwellings) to reflect the policy compliant 25% requirement.

The amended/new drawings now submitted are shown in the drawing schedule below.

Highways

Following ongoing discussions with the Highways department and notwithstanding the findings of an independent Road Safety Audit confirming the proposed site access is safe, we have sought to enhance further the access proposals.

We have increased the radii for vehicles turning left from the site as well as increase the width of Upnor Road to the west of the access to 5.5m for a short section to provide additional highway safety. We also widen Upnor road to the west to provide for a passing bay. These upgrades are benefits that serve the wider community and have been identified in a number of consultation responses.

This position (and as shown in submitted drawing Proposed Access drawing ref: H08 P8) reflects the discussions with the Highway Officer.

The increased width is marginal and does not fundamentally alter the rural nature of Upnor Road. There are a number of existing trees/hedges that will require removal and these have been identified in an Arboricultural Survey prepared by GRS Surveys.

In addition, the updated Landscape Strategy has provided for a zoomed in view of the access to demonstrate the proposed replacement vegetation to address any tree/hedge loss and demonstrate that the road widening and access proposals can

maintain the rural character of the area. This includes limited rural kerb edging and maintaining the highway and verge relationship.

Landscape / PRoW

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been updated to reflect the provision of a nursery and to address comments received during the course of the consideration of the application from the Landscape Officer. This document supersedes the originally submitted version.

In addition, the Landscape Strategy document has been updated to reflect the nursery and to demonstrate how the proposed development can not only 'create' habitat within the site, but also 'restore' habitat within the wider Hogmarsh Valley. These are the two action points identified in the Councils Landscape Character Study 2011.

In respect of the proposed new Public Rights of Way, we propose two new PRoWs that join the existing PRoW network that lead to Berwick Way (and Medway City Estate/Co-Op) and to Wainscott via the footbridge (to the school/shops).

The new and existing PRoW will be upgraded with an appropriate rural surface (such as Breedon Gravel), that allows for both walking and cycling. There will be low level lighting that respects the rural character and ecology. This lighting works on a PIR dimmable system whereby ambient lighting is set as standard (say 10%) and then increases illumination when the sensor is activated. We have successfully used this form of lighting in both Green Belt and AONB areas. An example of this lighting system is attached to this letter and is specifically designed to address dark skies and emits zero light above the horizontal.

The Hogmarsh Stream is to be bridged with a raised wooden platform that doesn't interrupt any stream flow or ecology and is reflective of the rural character.

The short section of upgraded footpath near the existing trees on Berwick Way will be constructed with an appropriate build over method to protect existing roots and the submitted Arboricultural Report has assessed the route for potential impact on existing tree roots.

The provision of these two new footpaths connects the other existing PRoW in the area (from Castle Street) allowing for a continuous PRoW through the Hogmarsh and Upnor itself.

It is anticipated that the specific details would be subject to an appropriately worded condition.

Other Benefits

In terms of Bus Improvements we are providing a new Bus Stop near our site entrance, again designed with a rural character. This can be accessed from the site via a safe footpath.

We are proposing enhancements to the existing service, extending its operating hours to capture commuters to and from work – as presented to yourself and members. The contribution has been quoted as approx. £140-150k for supplementing the service for 5 years (as per the terms agreed at Cliffe Woods) which we are agreeable to.

In terms of Carbon Reduction we are seeking to deliver carbon efficiencies in our build and be ahead of the curve on Building Regs. To this end we can commit to at least a 40% Reduction in Carbon footprint (compared to current building regulations) when SAP tested and we can agree to a suitably worded Condition to this effect.

For clarity these amendments follow the formal submission of the following other material submitted during the course of the determination of the application:

- Ecology Phase II Survey Results for Batas and Dormice – submitted on 10 August 2020
- Biodiversity Net Gain Calculation – submitted on 10th August 2020
- Technical Briefing Note: Dormouse Survey Results – submitted on 8th September
- Archaeological Fieldwork Report – Submitted on 02 November 2020
- Road Safety Audit assessing Lay By – Submitted 10 November 2020

Overall Benefits

In terms of the overall benefits, based on the amended information submitted the full suite of benefits include;

- 1) Provides much needed market housing for local people;
- 2) Provides much needed affordable housing for people struggling to purchase a home;
- 3) Provides homes in close proximity (within 800m) to schools, shops, pubs, employment areas and bus stops;
- 4) Provides new Public Rights of Ways that will link and connect the existing footpath network and allow for further routes to enjoy the Hogmarsh Valley;
- 5) Provides for a new Bus Stop and increased Bus Service to enhance the opportunity to travel by public transport and for commuters to travel to and from work;
- 6) Will result in significant net biodiversity gains through extensive open space and landscaping- 46% of the site on a present habitat sterile site;
- 7) Will introduce Hogmarsh Valley habitat into the site where it is presently sterile and increase the opportunity for natural flora and fauna to create additional habitat;
- 8) Will create publicly accessible open spaces on a currently private site for the enjoyment of the views of the Hogmarsh Valley and Rochester;
- 9) Will create a high quality bespoke development that reflects the unique surroundings of the Hogmarsh Valley and Upnor;
- 10) Is at a low density that will create an attractive setting and complement the existing village through its architecture and sense of place;
- 11) Will create a softer edge to the Hogmarsh Valley and create a more appropriate transition in this peri-urban location than the present stark edge that presently exists;
- 12) Will create a softer defensible boundary to the Hogmarsh Valley preventing any further pressure on development of the Hogmarsh Valley;
- 13) Will create a development that responds positively to climate change and exceeds current building regulations requirements by removing any gas boilers and using Air Source Heat Pumps. Alongside a fabric first approach this reduce CO2 emissions by up at least 40%;
- 14) Will deliver electric vehicle charging points on all dwellings and encourage the take up of electric vehicles by residents;
- 15) Will create a development that is COVID-19 adaptable with spacious plots, properties and gardens that can facilitate home working, home learning including fibre optic broadband and promote well-being;
- 16) Will be delivered by an SME Housebuilder (recognised as being of National Importance by Government) and aid the delivery of choice and diversity in the market place.
- 17) Will be delivered expediently and contribute to the delivery of homes early in the 5-yr period;
- 18) Meets the identified criteria by Medway Council to boost the supply of land being on a suitable greenfield site, by a developer that will diversify the market and can deliver expediently without delay;
- 19) Will generate jobs through the construction process;

- 20) Will generate economic activity including the SME supply chain; and
- 21) Will support the rural economy and maximises opportunities to improve its sustainability by foot, cycle and public transport.
- 22) Creation of 5 approximately 34% net biodiversity gain – 24% above the future requirements;
- 23) Provision of a new passing vehicle point on Upnor Road that will benefit the wider community and improve traffic flow;
- 24) Widening of the Upnor Road to the west of the site access to further improve vehicle movements and safety;
- 25) Restoration of parts of the wider Hogmarsh Valley landscape including screening of detracting features; and;
- 26) Provision of a Nursery creating new jobs and providing a mix of uses on the site that supports the local economy.

The following schedule represents the up to date drawings. For completeness, all new House Type drawings have been submitted with this cover letter (Dwgs 30 – 54 - including those not amended) alongside the updated drawings relating to the site layout and access.

Drawing Title	Original Submission	December 2020
Site Location Plan	29414A 01	
Existing Site Block Plan	29414A 02	
Existing Site Sections Sheet 1	29414A 03	
Existing Site Sections Sheet 2	29414A 04	
Proposed Site Plan	29414A 10	29414A 10 Rev A
Proposed Site Plan Coloured	29414A 11	29414A 11 Rev A
Proposed Parking Strategy Plan	29414A 12	29414A 12 Rev A
Proposed Fire and Access Plan	29414A 13	29414A 13 Rev A
Proposed Refuse Strategy	29414A 14	29414A 14 Rev A
Proposed Site Mix	29414A 15	29414A 15 Rev A
House Type Drawing – Plots 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5	29414A 30	
House Type Drawing – Plots 6, 7 & 8	29414A 31	
House Type Drawing – Plots 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 & 14	29414A 32	
House Type Drawing – Plots 15 & 16	29414A 33	
House Type Drawing – Plots 17 & 18	29414A 34	
House Type Drawing – Plots 19, 20, 21 & 22	29414A 35	
House Type Drawing – Plots 23, 27, 28, 29 & 63	29414A 36	29414A 36 Rev A
House Type Drawing – Plots 24 & 30	29414A 37	
House Type Drawing – Plots 25, 26, 66 & 67	29414A 38	29414A 38 Rev A
House Type Drawing – Plots 31 & 32	29414A 39	
House Type Drawing – Plots 33 & 51	29414A 40	29414A 40 Rev A
House Type Drawing – Plots 34, 35, 48 & 49	29414A 41	29414A 41 Rev A
House Type Drawing – Plots 50 & 54	29414A 42	29414A 42 Rev A
House Type Drawing – Plots 36, 37, 60, 61, 68 & 69	29414A 43	29414A 43 Rev A
House Type Drawing – Plots 52 & 53	29414A 44	29414A 44 Rev A
House Type Drawing – Plots 55 & 56	29414A 45	29414A 45 Rev A
House Type Drawing – Plots 59 & 64	29414A 46	

Drawing Title	Original Submission	December 2020
House Type Drawing – Plot 58	29414A 47	
House Type Drawing – Plot 75	29414A 48	
House Type Drawing – Plots 59, 60, 70 & 71	29414A 49	29414A 49 Rev A
House Type Drawing – Plots 63, 64 & 65	29414A 50	29414A 50 Rev A
House Type Drawing – Plots 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43	29414A 51	29414A 51 Rev A
House Type Drawing – Plots 44, 45, 46 & 47	29414A 52	29414A 41 Rev A
Garages and Car Ports	29414A 53	
Nursery Elevations and Floor Plans	-	29414A 54
Proposed Street Scenes Sheet 1	29414A 60	
Proposed Street Scenes Sheet 2	29414A 61	
Bird's-Eye View	LN-LP-09 Rev C	
Site Access	H08 Rev P2	H08 Rev P8

It is considered that the supporting documents and plans submitted as part of this application have demonstrated that the proposal represents a high-quality sustainable development that accords with the relevant planning policies of the Development Plan and other material considerations including the NPPF and, as such, that the proposal should be supported.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Wilford



**Head of Planning
Esquire Developments**

Enc: Amended drawings as set out in the drawing Schedule above
 Updated Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal
 Updated Landscapae Strategy
 Low Level Light Specification
 Arboricultural Assessment
 Letter of Intent from The Montessori Group