



Strategic Planning
Maidstone Borough Council
Maidstone House
King Street
Maidstone
ME15 6JQ

Our Ref: MJW/13309

25 March 2020

Dear Sir/ Madam

REPRESENTATIONS TO THE LENHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REGULATION 16 CONSULTATION SUBMISSION VERSION

I hereby submit representations to the Regulation 16 Consultation Submission Version Lenham Neighbourhood Plan (LNP), on behalf of Countryside Properties (UK) Ltd. Countryside control the entirety of Site 5 (Land west of Old Ham Lane and north of the railway), which enjoys a draft allocation in the LNP for 360 dwellings and benefits from a resolution to grant detailed planning permission for the first phase of 136 dwellings in the south east corner of the site (Ref: 19/503995/EIFUL). Countryside have engaged with Lenham Parish Council (LPC) throughout the preparation of the LNP and support the overall positive approach which has been taken. These representations focus on the draft site allocation policy, and key issues raised relating to delivery.

Delivery

Countryside have had sight of Maidstone Borough Council's draft representations to the LNP, as presented to the Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee on Tuesday 10th March. MBC express concern about the delivery of the "southern road route" due to the need for third party land to make the connection to the A20, specifically that the owners of the land to the north of Site 5 could refuse a land deal to facilitate the A20 junction improvements necessary for the new road, resulting in a failure of the plan's Strategic Housing Delivery Sites strategy.

Countryside have been engaging with Jones Homes, the owners of the land north of Site 5 for a number of years. Jones Homes are fully aware of the LNP proposals, including the proposed road and junction on the A20, and have attended and participated in recent Infrastructure Delivery Group (IDG) meetings held with LPC and other site promoters. Countryside remain confident that a land deal can be agreed to facilitate the junction works, nevertheless given the concern expressed by MBC, further discussions have been held with Jones Homes. Accordingly, Jones Homes are preparing their own representation to the LNP consultation which specifically states that the land required is available and both Countryside and Jones Homes are actively engaging on the content of a Memorandum of Understanding, as a prelude to a commercial agreement being finalised in the coming months. It is firmly in all landowning parties commercial interests for the land to be made available and no evidence has been provided to suggest that the Jones Homes land is not available or deliverable.

planning transport design environment infrastructure

t. 01622 776226 e. info@dhaplanning.co.uk w. www.dhaplanning.co.uk

Maidstone Office, Eclipse House, Eclipse Park, Sittingbourne Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 3EN

DHA Planning Ltd. Registered in England. Registered number: 2683290



URS is a member of Register of Standard Holders Ltd.



Policy – Strategic Housing Site 5 – Support with Modification

Countryside has engaged with LPC throughout the preparation of the LNP, including attendance at each IDG meeting. Accordingly, the site-specific policy has evolved following advice and input from Countryside and their advisors, and Countryside fully support the principal aims of the policy.

Nevertheless, we do wish to express concern with regard to certain elements of the draft policy, as below:

- **Para 11.3.3 – Policy SHS5 – subsection 5**, states that the scheme’s open space is to be transferred to MBC or LPC together with a commuted sum sufficient to secure ongoing maintenance.

Response – Countryside continue to entertain the prospect of LPC taking ownership of the open space, including the payment of a commuted sum. However, Countryside have expressed concerns about the mechanics of this in terms of ongoing maintenance liabilities for LPC and commitments to existing and future residents. To date, Countryside have not yet received a firm offer from LPC, nor have they been provided with sufficient comfort about the capabilities of LPC’s maintenance company. The open space includes critical drainage infrastructure, therefore it is crucial that it is managed appropriately. We therefore request that the policy also allows an option for the open space to be managed by a private management company, as has been discussed and agreed during the consideration of the recent planning application (Ref: 19/503/995/EIFUL). We are also not aware of any interest from MBC in managing the open space, therefore this element of the policy should be deleted. Revised wording should therefore be:

The Open Space will be laid out in accordance with a scheme submitted to Maidstone Borough Council for approval in consultation with Lenham Parish Council and will be either transferred to a private Management Company, to Maidstone Borough Council or Lenham Parish Council, together with a commuted sum sufficient to ensure ongoing future maintenance.

- **Para 11.3.3 – Policy SHS5 – subsection 6(2)**.

Response – There has never been a request for a vehicular link to be made to either site 6 or 7, therefore we consider the inclusion of the word ‘vehicular’ to be erroneous, and it should therefore be deleted from the policy to avoid confusion.

- **Para 11.3.3 – Policy SHS5 – subsection 6(3)**.

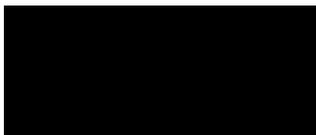
Response – The request for Countryside to accommodate a community hub building within the site came late in the LNP preparation process. The need for such a facility needs to be justified by evidence, which to date has not been made available. Countryside would also question the appropriateness of providing a new community building in this location, at the western extremes of Lenham away from



the village centre. Servicing requirements and the need for appropriate car parking also need consideration, particularly in respect to residential amenity.

Subject to the above clarifications and amendments, Countryside remain in full support of LNP and applaud LPC for the progress made to date.

Yours Sincerely



Matthew Woodhead
Director

