

reside.

Maidstone Borough Local Plan Examination
Session 14B – Alternative Sites

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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

- 1.1.1 This additional evidence is submitted on behalf of Reside Developments Ltd (Reside) in respect to the emerging Maidstone Local Plan.
- 1.1.2 Reside is actively promoting Land north of Lughorse Lane, Yalding as a potential residential allocation site and object to the site's omission. Furthermore, we wish to comment on the soundness of the plan in respect to the delivery of housing, specifically how this is delivered in Yalding.
- 1.1.3 We expand upon the evidence for this within this statement specifically responding to the questions of the Inspector.

1.2 Scope of Representations

- 1.2.1 Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) has submitted its Local Plan and associated Documentation for Independent Examination. An Examination Programme has been published, which divides the hearing into various sections over six week-long sessions. The first tranche of hearings is currently in progress and these address issues of national policy consistency, housing and supply and other strategic borough-wide policy issues. The subsequent tranches, to be heard in November and December 2016, will consider site-specific allocations and more generic planning issues.
- 1.2.2 The examination has timetabled two days of Alternative Sites sessions (13 A & B and 14 A & B) to review and assess opportunities of potential housing allocations.
- 1.2.3 This statement constitutes Reside's formal response to the questions raised by the Inspector in regards to Matter 14B only.

2 Response to the Inspector's Questions

2.1 Overview of Evidence

2.1.1 The Inspector has raised twelve questions in respect to matters relating to Alternative Sites, in this case Land north of Lughorse Lane, Yalding.

2.1.2 This evidence builds on our previous representations as to why there are very real concerns about the Council's ability to deliver the housing numbers on the sites proposed and that further residential allocations are required.

2.1.3 We therefore propose that this site is allocated to supplement and, where necessary, replace the council's preferred allocations.

2.2 Qn14.12 Does the site have any relevant planning history? (applications, permissions, appeals, previous allocations)

2.2.1 The site has not previously been promoted for residential development and there is therefore no relevant planning history to the site.

2.2.2 In respect to the wider planning history, the site has a planning consent for the erection of an agricultural building (98/0548) and a consent for a new access from Lughorse Lane (03/1346).

2.3 Qn14.13 What is the site's policy status in the submitted Local Plan? (eg whether in defined settlement/countryside/AONB/ conservation area/Landscape of Local Value etc)

2.3.1 The site is located within the Countryside, as designated in the adopted Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000 and as shown in the emerging Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 plan. The site adjoins the settlement boundary on its southern and western boundaries (again of the adopted and draft plans) and has direct access to Yalding Hill and Lughorse Lane. There are no other planning designations that directly affect this site.

2.3.2 The area to the south of Lughorse Lane (within the village) is a Special Landscape Area (Greensand Ridge). The site itself falls outside of this designation. There are four Grade II listed cottages (Hillside Cottages) on the southern entrance of Lughorse Lane, but the site is neither within or near to a conservation area. The site is within Flood Zone 1.

2.4 Qn14.14 What is the site's policy status in any made or emerging neighbourhood plan?

2.4.1 At this stage the Parish has only undertaken some initial work on their neighbourhood plan, involving some public consultation events. The parish has not sought the designation of a formal neighbourhood plan area and therefore no formal work has commenced on the neighbourhood plan.

2.4.2 As such, there is no draft neighbourhood plan and there has been no formal consultation on any draft document for any site to be assessed against. There is therefore no neighbourhood plan policy status at this time.

2.5 Qn14.15 Is the site greenfield or previously developed (brownfield) land according to the definition in the glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework?

2.5.1 The site is considered greenfield against the definition within the NPPF. However, it should be noted that the site adjoins the existing settlement boundary of Yalding on its southern and western boundaries and therefore has a contiguous relationship within the settlement boundary of Yalding.

2.6 Qn14.16 What previous consideration by the Council has been given to the site's development (eg inclusion in a Strategic Housing and Economic Development Land Availability Assessment (SHEDDLAA) and does the Representor have any comments on its conclusions.

2.6.1 The last call for sites was in 2014 and closed on 4 April 2014, some two years prior to the Submission stage (Regulation 19) Plan being submitted to the SoS for examination.

2.6.2 Reside has recently acquired control of this site, which has not been previously promoted to the planning system. The landowners were keen to engage with the council and promote the site, but did not have the necessary experience to do so. Reside has therefore joined with the landowners to promote the site (for residential development).

2.6.3 Whilst this site has not therefore been assessed by the council, it can be seen from our own assessment (Appendix 2) that there are no technical constraints to the site being developed for residential development.

2.7 Qn14.17 What is the site area and is has a site plan been submitted which identifies the site?

2.7.1 As stated above, there has been no formal consultation opportunities to submit the site to, where the latest call for sites was in 2014 and closed on 4 April 2014, and therefore a plan has not been previously sent to the council.

2.7.2 We have included at Appendix 1 of these representations a copy of the land being promoted (red lined). This site extends to 1.13 ha (2.8 acres) and is broadly rectangular.

2.8 Qn14.18 What type, and amount of development could be expected and at what density?

2.8.1 An indicative layout has been drawn up to establish the potential of the site. The mix is informed by local knowledge and the Council's SHMA. The scheme shows a mix of thirty-six two-storey houses and apartments, where 40% is affordable housing (this accords with emerging Policy DM13).

2.8.2 Thirty-six dwellings on this site equates to thirty-two dwellings per hectare, which is a suitable density for this edge of village location.

2.8.3 The mix includes a range of house types and sizes including family homes and smaller houses and apartments. Dwellings will be designed to a Kent vernacular including red bricks, clay-style roof tiles and tile-hanging/weatherboarding

2.9 Qn14.19 When could development be delivered and at what rate?

2.9.1 As indicated above, there are no technical constraints preventing development being brought forward immediately. There are no third-party rights or land needed and all the land is controlled by a single landowner with a developer partner already on-board.

2.9.2 Reside is a local developer and has control of the land and it is intended that we would develop the scheme. This gives certainty on the delivery of the proposed development.

2.9.3 In respect to delivery of the scheme, in our experience a planning permission can be attained with seven to ten months. A start-on-site would be made within six months, with the first homes available to live in nine months thereafter. We expect the development to be completed within twenty-four months, with circa 16 dwellings being completed in the first year and 20 in the second year.

2.10 Qn14.20 What evidence is there of the viability of the proposed development?

2.10.1 Reside has undertaken its own internal viability assessment, taking into account the full requirements of the planning system, including affordable housing, development contributions/CIL, access arrangements, along with the usual development requirements expected of a development of this size.

2.10.2 Reside, as a developer with vast experience of developing residential developments, are therefore content that the site is viable and can afford the planning requirements expected to be delivered.

2.11 Qn14.21 Has the site been the subject of sustainability appraisal and does the Representor have any comments on its conclusions?

2.11.1 As stated above, there has been no formal consultation opportunities to submit the site to, where the latest call for sites was in 2014 and closed on 4 April 2014.

2.11.2 As such the site has not been assessed by the council at this stage and so has not been subject to a SA.

- 2.11.3 As stated elsewhere in these representations, we do not believe there are any technical constraints to the site being brought forward. We have undertaken a Phase 1 ecological appraisal, landscape assessment and transport/access assessment.
- 2.11.4 The Phase 1 ecological assessment highlighted the potential for some protected species on the site, but concluded that there will be ample opportunities to mitigate any impacts and enhance the site for biodiversity within the development proposals.
- 2.11.5 Vehicular access to the site would be from Lughorse Lane, which would include some local carriageway improvements, between the junction with Yalding Hill (B2010) and the proposed site access. Visibility from the new access would conform to standards with a 2.4m set back and 43m vision splays. It is anticipated that the provision of new development would lead to an extension of the 30mph further north along Yalding Hill and to the eastern side of the site access on Lughorse Lane. This would also benefit existing residents of the lane.
- 2.11.6 Pedestrian access would be provided from the site to just north of the junction of Yalding Hill and Lughorse Lane. From this location pedestrians can safely cross the road onto the existing footway running along the western side of Yalding Hill and continue into Yalding or access the local bus stops just south of the Lughorse Lane junction.
- 2.11.7 Yalding is served by a regular bus services provided by Nu-Venture. Bus route 23 provides an hourly service between Maidstone and Laddingford and bus route 26 provides a two-hourly service between Maidstone and Goudhurst.
- 2.11.8 Yalding station is circa 1.5 miles from the site and provide a good regular (hourly outside of peak times and 2-3 per hour in peak times) service to London and wider Kent towns and villages, including Maidstone, Tonbridge, Paddock Wood and the Medway Towns.
- 2.11.9 The County Landscape Assessment states that the general landscape character sensitivity in this area is classed as Moderate landscape value.
- 2.11.10 The site is well-screened from views from adjacent existing development and public open space/rights of way, and there are potential opportunities to introduce a suitable vehicular access to the site. The southern edge of the site abuts the village, from the site filtered views of residential development, including Hill Farm, are visible on all sides.
- 2.11.11 This site is located within Flood Zone 1, where residential development is considered acceptable.
- 2.11.12 Yalding is designated as a Larger Village and is therefore considered sustainable, where paragraph 5.63 of the draft Local Plan states “*Yalding has a number of the key services and facilities expected of a larger village. The*

village has a local shop, post office and GP surgery. The village is served by a nearby train station and has connections by bus to Maidstone town centre, which is essential in terms of access to secondary education. Yalding also has sustainable connections to nearby Paddock Wood, which also has a range of services and facilities, including a secondary school."

2.11.13 It is therefore clear that Yalding, as a location, is considered sustainable and capable of accommodating further residential development. In addition, from our own appraisal of the site, there are no technical constraints to the site being brought forward for residential development and where the site itself is considered sustainable.

2.12 Qn14.22 What constraints are there on the site's development and how could any adverse impacts be mitigated?

2.12.1 As stated elsewhere in these representations, we do not believe that there are any technical constraints to the proposed site being developed for residential homes.

2.12.2 The site has been the subject of an assessment of constraints and opportunities. Whilst aspects of the scheme will need to be agreed with the relevant authorities and the detailed aspects may alter or change, there are no technical constraints to this site being developed for housing.

3 Conclusion and Suggested Modifications

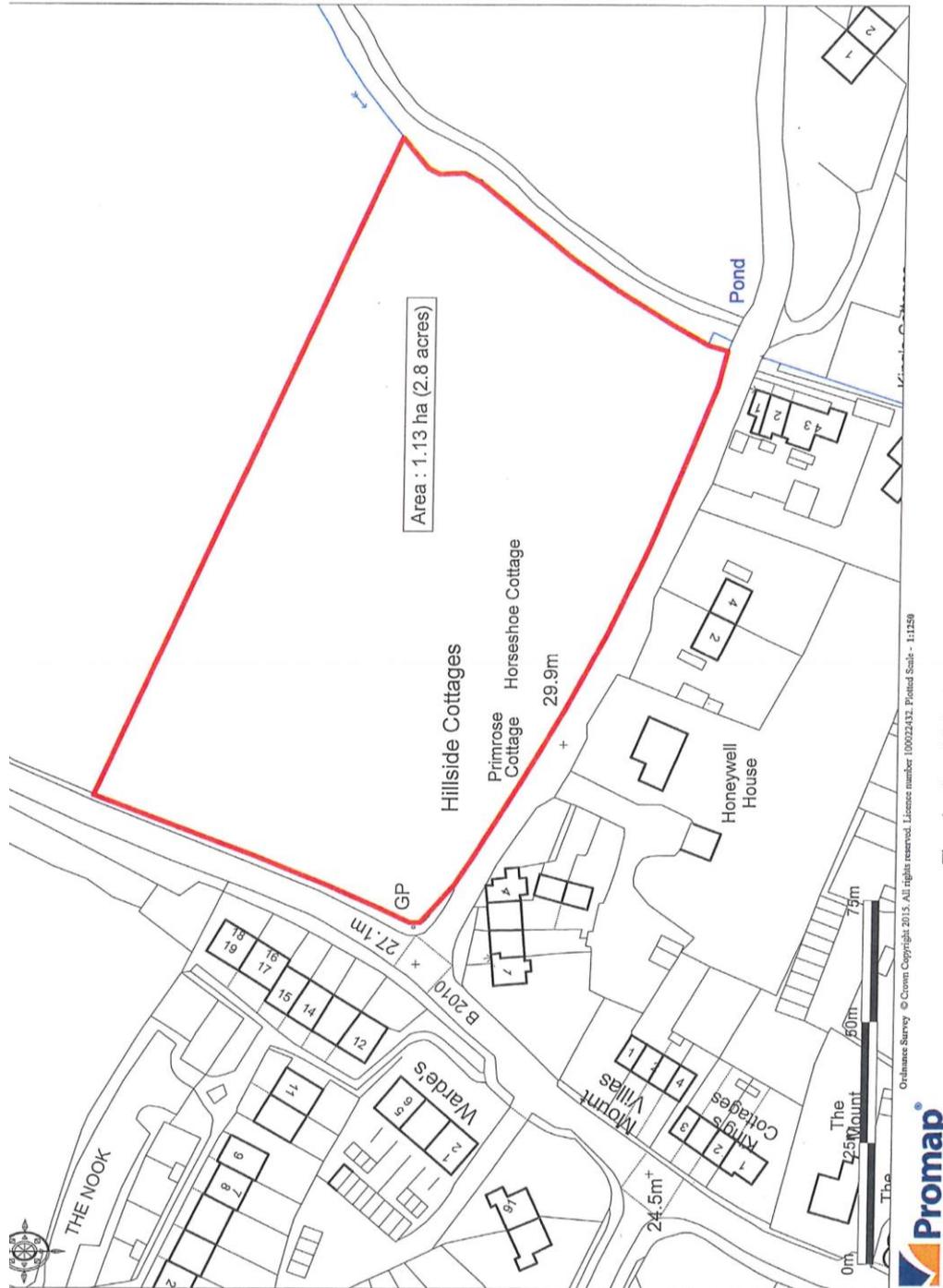
3.1 Summary

- 3.1.1 We have set out that we believe that Yalding is sustainable and has a good range of service and facilities to support further residential development in the village, which will also support and supplement those existing facilities in the future.
- 3.1.2 Furthermore, the site land north of Lughorse Lane is also considered sustainable, developable, deliverable and viable.
- 3.1.3 We have shown that access to the site can be appropriately achieved and that there are no constraints to development taking place that cannot be easily mitigated and dealt with where necessary.

3.2 Suggested Modifications

- 3.2.1 We propose that Policy SP16 should be altered to include Land north of Lughorse Lane as an allocation for thirty-six (36) residential dwellings.

Appendix 1



The plan is published for convenience only. Although thought to be correct its accuracy cannot be guaranteed and it does not form part of the contract.

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