

## **Urgent Update – 18/500346 -- Item 17 pages 113-153**

### **Lordswood Urban Extension Gleamingwood Drive**

**KCC (Highways and Transportation):** The additional information submitted by the applicant has addressed principal areas of concern and enables the holding objection previously raised to be removed: avoiding any loss of existing on-street parking spaces. The arrangements improve upon those previously submitted in how they better cater for all types of road user.

The internal layout has been amended to enable the shared footway/cycleway to extend into the site. Priority workings have been included where tree retention necessitates a narrower carriageway width.

Further capacity modelling of the Gleaming Wood Drive/Lordswood Lane junction has been undertaken with the traffic generation of the Gibraltar Farm development and a proposal to improve the junction by widening the Lordswood Lane carriageway. In the case of the Round Wood Roundabout, the applicant has reaffirmed minor adjustments to road markings and splitter islands. The modifications are unlikely to prevent a worsening of the already extensive queuing on Walderslade Woods in the PM peak. Whilst KCC Highways remain concerned about worsening congestion in this locality, it is recognised that the differential in impact between the consented 89 dwellings and the proposed 115 dwellings will make it difficult to sustain an objection.

**Woodland Trust:** The Woodland Trust **maintains an objection** to this application on the basis of likely damage to the ancient Reedscroft Wood (grid ref: TQ780620). The Government has recently updated the National Planning Policy Framework. Protection for ancient woodland and ancient and veteran trees has been strengthened. This application contravenes paragraph 175c which states: "When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles: development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons [58] and a suitable compensation strategy exists." Exceptional reasons are defined as follows: "For example, infrastructure projects (including nationally significant infrastructure projects, orders under the Transport and Works Act and hybrid bills), where the public benefit would clearly outweigh the loss or deterioration of habitat." The proposed development does not fit these criteria and as such should be refused on the grounds it does not comply with national planning policy.

### **Officer Response:**

Medway Council has not yet responded with the necessary confirmation that the contributions they seek for Open Space and Education are necessary and meet the CIL tests.

The change in the NPPF as regards Ancient Woodland is described in the main agenda report.

Paragraph 175(c) and its explanatory Footnote 58 of the NPPF gives an example of a “wholly exceptional reason” being a national infrastructure project. However, that may not necessarily prevent a Local Planning Authority giving due weight to an extant planning permission granted on appeal also being a “wholly exceptional circumstance”

### **Amend Recommendation**

**Defer application to consider the detailed implications of the new National Planning Policy Framework with regard to Ancient Woodland and to obtain formal confirmation from Medway Council on its requests complying with the CIL Regulations.**