



STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Land at East Hill, Chatham

Prepared by Hume Planning Consultancy Ltd.

On behalf of F D Attwood & Partners

March 2019

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement has been prepared on behalf of F D Attwood & Partners and sets out the community engagement and background research which has informed this outline planning application (with all matters reserved except access) for the erection of up-to 800 dwellings with primary school, supporting retail space of up-to 150sqm and local GP surgery, with associated road link between North Dane Way and Pear Tree Lane and other road infrastructure, open space and landscaping.
- 1.2 The Statement is submitted in accordance with Paragraph 39 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019), which attributes significant weight to early engagement and pre-application discussions between public and private sectors.
- 1.3 During the preparation of this outline application the following methods of public engagement are relevant:
- Planning Context - Local Plan Promotion and Review of Local Plan Representations
 - Pre-Application Discussions with Officers of the Council and Statutory Consultees;
 - Presentation of the Proposal at a Design South East Design Review Panel;
 - Presentations to Members of Medway Council; and
 - Presentation of Proposals at a Public Consultation Event
- 1.4 Each of these stages and the outcomes of the discussions will be briefly outlined in turn in the following section of this statement.

2 CONSULTATION METHODS & EVALUATION OF RESPONSES TO FEEDBACK

Planning Context – Local Plan Promotion and Representations

- 2.1 It is relevant that the application site forms a draft housing allocation (Ref. 0783c) in 3 out of the 4 spatial development ‘scenarios’ to meet objectively assessed housing need within the district, proposed within the emerging Future Medway Local Plan – Development Strategy (Regulation 18) published March 2018. The site has also been promoted through the Council’s ‘Call for Sites’ and local plan process, commencing 2008/2009, with the most recent representations made in 2018. These representations highlight the availability and deliverability of the landholding in meeting the Council’s current annualised housing delivery targets of 1,281 dwellings (based upon the 2015 SHMA).
- 2.2 A review of the representations to the most recent Development Strategy Consultation, within which the landholding is identified for housing development, suggests a considerable amount of support for the development of the application site. Of particular note are the representations made by Kent Wildlife Trust, who recognise the contribution made by the site in relieving pressure on ecologically sensitive sites, such as the Lodge Hill SSSI. KWT further acknowledge the opportunity presented by the landholding to encourage green linkages and enhance the Capstone Valley in its role as Country Park and Nature Reserve, placing greater emphasis on the need for comprehensive as opposed to piecemeal development within the valley, which this submission seeks to promote.
- 2.3 Representations received by way of petition against the development of Lodge Hill and development of the Hoo Peninsula, with 11,408 and 843 signatories respectively, have also been taken into account in the formulation of proposals for the Capstone corridor which adjoins the existing urban area and is within close proximity to Chatham town centre.

Pre-Application Discussions & Planning Performance Agreement

- 2.4 To accelerate the delivery of the application site to meet the recognised housing need, the Applicant entered into a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) with Medway Council. This Agreement set out a timeframe for submission and secured dedicated staff resources for pre-application meetings with LPA Officers, Members and Statutory Consultees. It will be shown that the Applicant also separately hosted a public consultation event including questionnaire feedback.

Presentation of the Proposal at a Design South East Design Review Panel

- 2.5 The submission has also benefitted from a South East Design Panel Review on the 18th October 2018 (at Medway Council Offices) at which an emerging layout proposal was presented to a panel with specialisms in planning; architecture; urban design; landscaping / landscape architecture and transport planning. The discussions held during this Review and the report of the Panel issued thereafter have subsequently informed the final proposal submitted under this application and are referenced in the accompanying Design and Access Statement to this submission.

Presentations to Members of the Council

- 2.6 On the 15th November 2018, a presentation was made by the Development Team to members of the Council, outlining the current proposal. At this presentation, members were provided an opportunity to comment on the proposals and raise any queries. The feedback of members has been taken into account in the preparation of this submission.

Presentation of Proposals at a Public Consultation Event

- 2.7 The public were invited to view the emerging outline proposals at a consultation event held at Lordswood Leisure Centre on the 8th November 2018 between 1pm – 8pm, where members of the consultancy team were in attendance to respond to any queries.
- 2.8 A leaflet advising of the consultation event was circulated to c.1000 properties within the Hempstead, Capstone, Darland, Luton and Hale areas a week prior to the event. This was in addition to the displaying of 14no. posters and the placement of an advert in the local KM newspaper in advance of the event. The leaflet / poster and areas of distribution are shown at Appendix 1.
- 2.9 Presentation boards (Appendix 2) were displayed within the venue for public viewing, and hard-copy feedback questionnaires were also made available for members of the public to provide comment on (Appendix 3). For those unable to attend, or who wished to view the consultation material again, the presentation boards were made available to view online via a consultation portal, accessible via www.humeplanning.co.uk. The feedback form provided at the consultation event was also digitised to allow further comments to be made.
- 2.10 The event was well attended, with over 300 attendees from the surrounding wards. 190 feedback questionnaires were completed at the event, with a further 9 representations received via the online consultation portal.



Figure 1.0 – Presentation Boards and Public Consultation Event

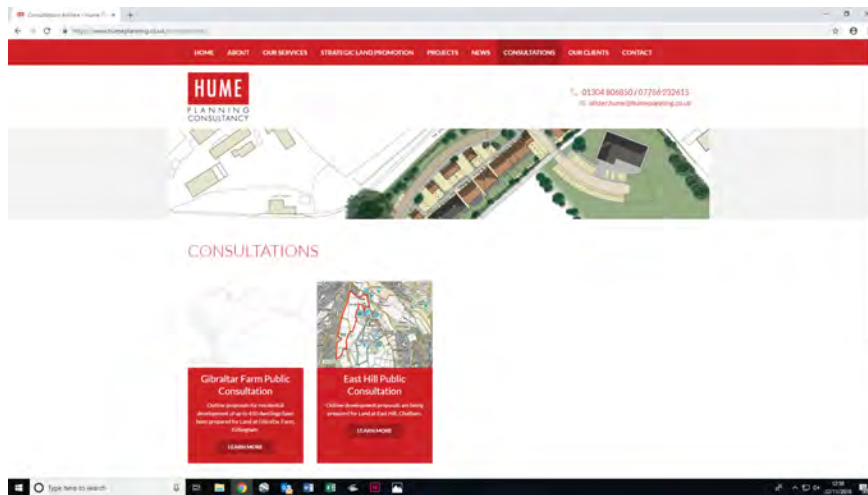


Figure 2.0 – Consultation Page at www.humeplanning.co.uk

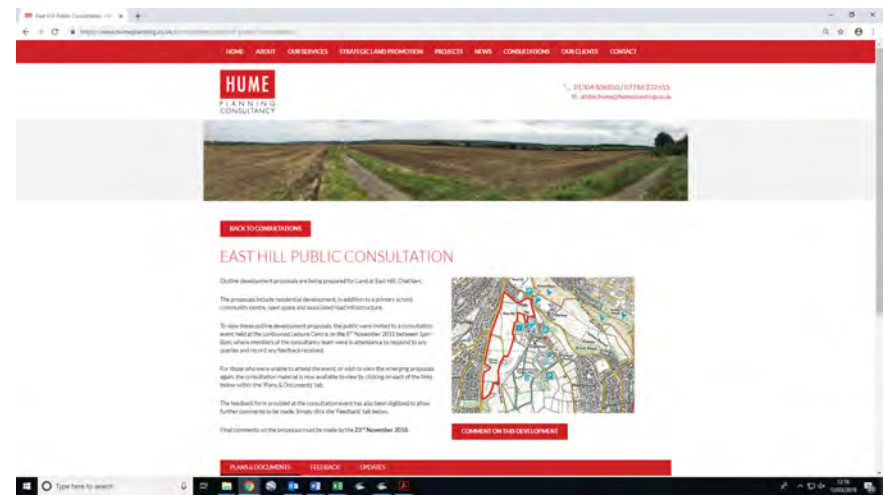


Figure 2.1 – East Hill Consultation Home Page at www.humeplanning.co.uk

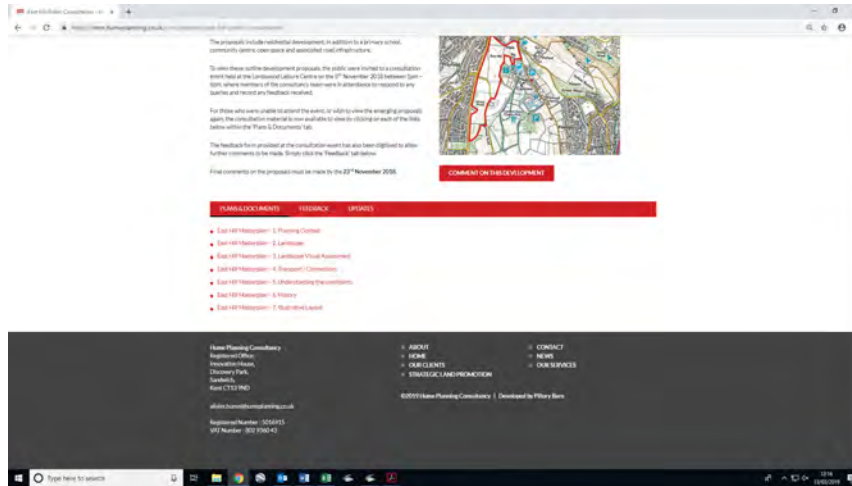


Figure 2.2 – Links to Presentation Boards at www.humeplanning.co.uk

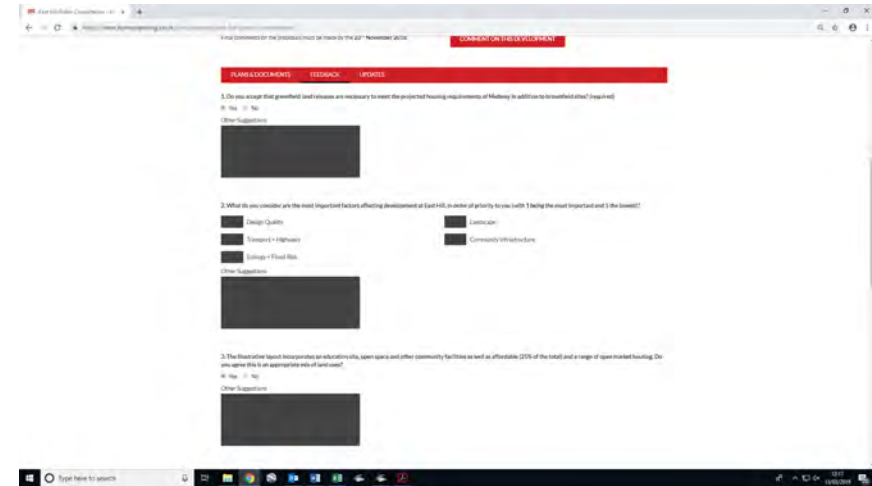


Figure 2.3 – Feedback Form / Questionnaire at www.humeplanning.co.uk

Consideration of Public Consultation Feedback

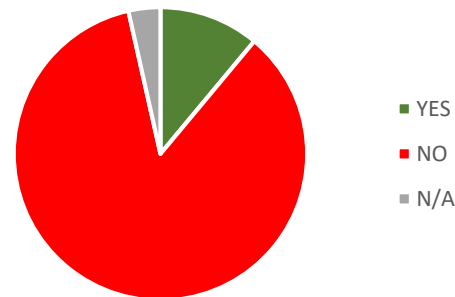
2.11 A summary of the responses received is outlined below:

General Principle & Housing	Resources, Health & Environment	Transport & Access
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brownfield / derelict should be prioritised (i.e. Toys R Us) • Bring back into use empty properties • South East too saturated with development • Coalescence of Lordswood, Hempstead and Walderslade • Should look further afield to areas of countryside which are never touched • Don't build on the Green Belt • Complete New Town needed • More bungalows for elderly • Don't build here – there are plenty of other spaces • Needs more affordable • Use Lodge Hill first • Need for housing is exaggerated • DFLs and homes not going to local people • They won't be affordable homes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development is unsustainable • Overloaded local services (NHS and Schools and local shops, community facilities) • Loss of green space • Don't build on Whites Wood – AW is irreplaceable • Protection of trees to NDW / apple trees • Need local jobs for local people • Loss of biodiversity (Whites Wood) • Loss of farmland • Provision needed for community facilities (i.e. Scouts / Guides) • Kestral Rd community centre sold off – now snooker hall. Development therefore needs community centre • Pollution • Summer water shortages & power cuts... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to M2 and A249 is poor – development will make it worse • Lordswood roundabout impact • Poor existing public transport connections – need bus / rail improvements • Need significant infrastructure investment • Too much traffic to Hempstead Road / Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre • Cycle routes are already good • Bluebell Hill / Motorway junctions need improving • Chatham bound onto A229 – need 2 lanes exit onto M2 • Can already walk up NDW to Capstone Country Park – so no access improvements necessary • Access to Country Park from Memorial Gardens in Capstone Road should be protected for walkers • Cannot cycle along Luton Road – too dangerous. • Need cycle link to Chatham Town Centre • Need to complete the Southern Relief Road • Need a Park and Ride • Increased road accidents on top of existing high levels • Lordswood traffic is already blocked from exiting the area • Cannot get out of Lordswood – Lordswood Lane in particular

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need supported houses for disabled people • Housing will be visually prominent • Need retirement homes, not family homes • Council homes make bad neighbours • All houses should be built from brick • This development cannot be considered in isolation from other developments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot keep extracting from Medway river • Need 'lung' for area • Air, noise, light pollution caused by the development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need junction 3a first before any more development • 1 ½ hours to get to Medway Hospital which is only 2 miles away • Need better access to Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre • Top of Pear Tree Lane will be a nightmare • Need road from top of NDW to Revenge Rd. roundabout • PRowS are in danger • Footpath needed from Wagon at Hale to Capstone Country Park • Need link to A2 • There will be too much traffic on Pear Tree Lane, which is too narrow • Increase traffic to Shawstead / Capstone Road • Negative impact upon pedestrians, horses and livestock • Building homes will make existing roads / routes in and out of Medway too busy • 4 miles to Chatham station, not 2km as stated • Pear Tree lane improvements will not ease traffic but only relocate it • Buses are already being attacked by local youths – what if Arriva cut services?
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2.12 A numeric review of the representations received was also undertaken and provides the following results:

Q1. 'Do you accept that greenfield land releases are necessary to meet the projected housing requirements of Medway in addition to brownfield sites?'



2.13 Approximately 85% of respondents were opposed to the use of greenfield releases to meeting the necessary housing requirements of the district. This corresponds to the written representations received and concerns raised for loss of green and open space.

2.14 Refinements to the proposed open space, LEAP (Local Equipped Area for Play) and NEAP (Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play) areas within the site have taken place following the event, further details of which can be found within the submitted Design and Access Statement.

Q2. 'What do you consider are the most important factors affecting development at East Hill, in order of priority to you?'

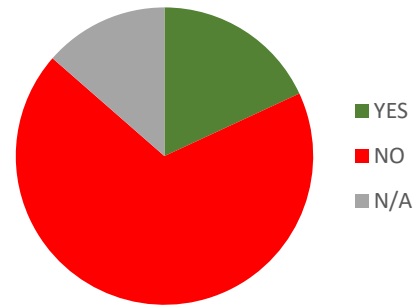
The results below represent the median values of the 199 representations. It should be noted that not all respondents assigned a value to each of the below options, and some numbers were used more than once. As such, the results should be considered to represent a rough approximation only. It is relevant that 1 represented the most important issue, with 5 being the lowest level of concern.

Design Quality	Landscape	Transport / Highways	Community Infrastructure	Ecology & Flood Risk
5	3	1	2	3

- 2.15 In consideration of the above, 'Transport & Highways' was deemed by respondents to represent the area of most importance followed closely by 'Community Infrastructure'. These quantitative results would therefore correspond with the representations, and further transport work has been undertaken to inform the current submission, working directly with the Council's own Head of Integrated Transport and highway model / database.
- 2.16 'Design Quality' was ranked to be of the lowest concern, however, given that the application is in 'outline' form, this was not unexpected. 'Landscape' and 'Ecology & Flood Risk' were ranked equally and were deemed to be of moderate comparative importance by respondents.
- 2.17 Following the consultation event and in response to many of the queries raised:
- the submitted Design & Access Statement now provides an in-depth analysis of the site and the surrounding context and elaborates as to internal character areas proposed within the development site and their design rationales;

- a full Landscape Visual Impact Assessment was also prepared, building on earlier landscape feedback from landscape consultants Allen Pyke Associates to support the submission and consider the content of representations, with viewpoints and key receptors agreed with the Council's internal (and external consultant) landscape teams. A full flood risk and surface water manage strategy further supports the application, having been informed by direct liaison with the Environment Agency regarding the proposals for water management throughout the site;
- a full ecological assessment (incorporating numerous species and habitat surveys) has also been submitted, having been informed by the monitoring of the site for over a year by specialist ecological consultants. The reports largely conclude that much of the internal areas of the site are of low ecological importance, with the margins to the site of greater ecological capacity. The majority of these margins are safeguarded as part of the proposal and mitigation is proposed where they are to be affected. It is however relevant that, throughout the proposal, biodiversity and landscape enhancements are provided in the interests of securing net gains in biodiversity as part of the prospective development;
- an Environmental Statement is submitted which fully assesses the impact of the development proposal, informed by a number of specialist consultants including ecology, flood risk, transport, population & health, noise / vibration, air quality, archaeology and contamination, and highlights the mitigation offered by the proposal where impacts are identified.

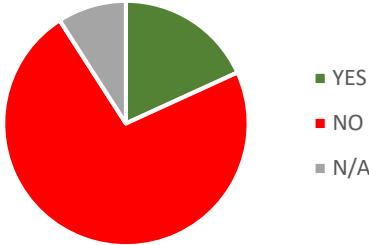
Q.3. 'The illustrative layout incorporates an education site, open space and other community facilities as well as affordable (25% of the total) and a range of open market housing. Do you agree this is an appropriate mix of land uses?'



2.18 The responses to this question showed that 68% of respondents considered the proposed mix of uses as not being appropriate for the application site and proposal, with 18% of respondents considering the mix appropriate.

2.19 Following this feedback, the current submission has been revised and refined to incorporate more public open space and pedestrian connectivity with the Capstone Country Park, a 2-practioner GP surgery and small-scale retail floorspace, with space for a 2FE primary school also maintained to meet local needs.

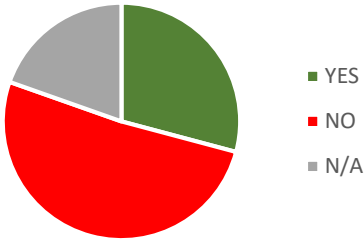
Q.4 'The layout includes a new road link from North Dane Way to Pear Tree Lane. Do you agree this east to west linkage from Lordswood to Hempstead could be part of a package of measures that could improve traffic circulation in this part of Medway?'



2.20 In response to this question 72% of respondents considered that the proposed east-west linkage would not improve traffic circulation in this area of Medway. Since the consultation event, further traffic modelling and assessment has been undertaken by the appointed transport consultants to support the current submission. This further work has had the benefit of access to Medway’s own highway database and model.

2.21 The outputs of this detailed modelling work are set out in the accompanying Transport Assessment which concludes that the impact of the proposed development is not significant. The east-link is proposed as a high specification 7.3m width road with 2m footpath and 3.5m cycleway on each side with a maximum gradient of 8% that will promote pedestrian and cycle usage and has also been designed as a bus corridor which allow improved public transport connections between Walderslade and the Gillingham Business Park for example. The outputs of the transport modelling and conclusions of the Transport Statement are technical matters that the applicant relies on the Highway Authority to scrutinise and respond to as the full technical modelling outputs were not available at the time of the public consultation. This was as a result of Medway Council not having authorised access to the model at the time.

Q.5 'The illustrative layout seeks to improve pedestrian and cycle linkages from the existing neighbourhoods to the Capstone Country Park. Do you agree this is a sound design, social and recreational objective?'



2.22 Whilst 51% of respondents were of the view that the improved pedestrian and cycle linkages proposed by the development were not sound design, social and recreational objectives, 29% of respondents were supportive of the proposed linkages, and a further 20% chose not to comment. Since the consultation event, the proposed masterplan has been refined to further improve these linkages, and the submitted Design & Access Statement addresses in greater detail the connectivity and network of pedestrian and cycle movements across and throughout the proposed development.

3 CONCLUSION

- 3.1 The application site is available and deliverable and is identified as suitable for development in the majority of spatial options included in the latest version of the emerging Local Plan. Representations from the local community and key stakeholders having been taken into account during the preparation of this submission. This engagement has included the hosting of a dedicated community consultation event and online consultation portal. As well as the consideration of community feedback, the application submission has also been shaped by direct engagement via pre-application meetings with Medway Council officers and members, as well as statutory stakeholders and a presentation and critique from the South East Design Panel.

- 3.2 For these reasons it is concluded that this submission has been prepared in accordance with Paragraph 39 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019), which attributes significant weight to early engagement and pre-application discussions between public and private sectors.

Leaflet, Poster and Areas of Distribution for East Hill Public Consultation Event

LAND AT EAST HILL

PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENT

Outline development proposals are being prepared for Land at East Hill, Chatham.

The proposals include residential development, in addition to a primary school, community centre, open space and associated road infrastructure.

To view these outline development proposals, the public are invited to a consultation event to be held at the Lordswood Leisure Centre. Members of the consultancy team will be in attendance to respond to any queries and record any feedback that is received.

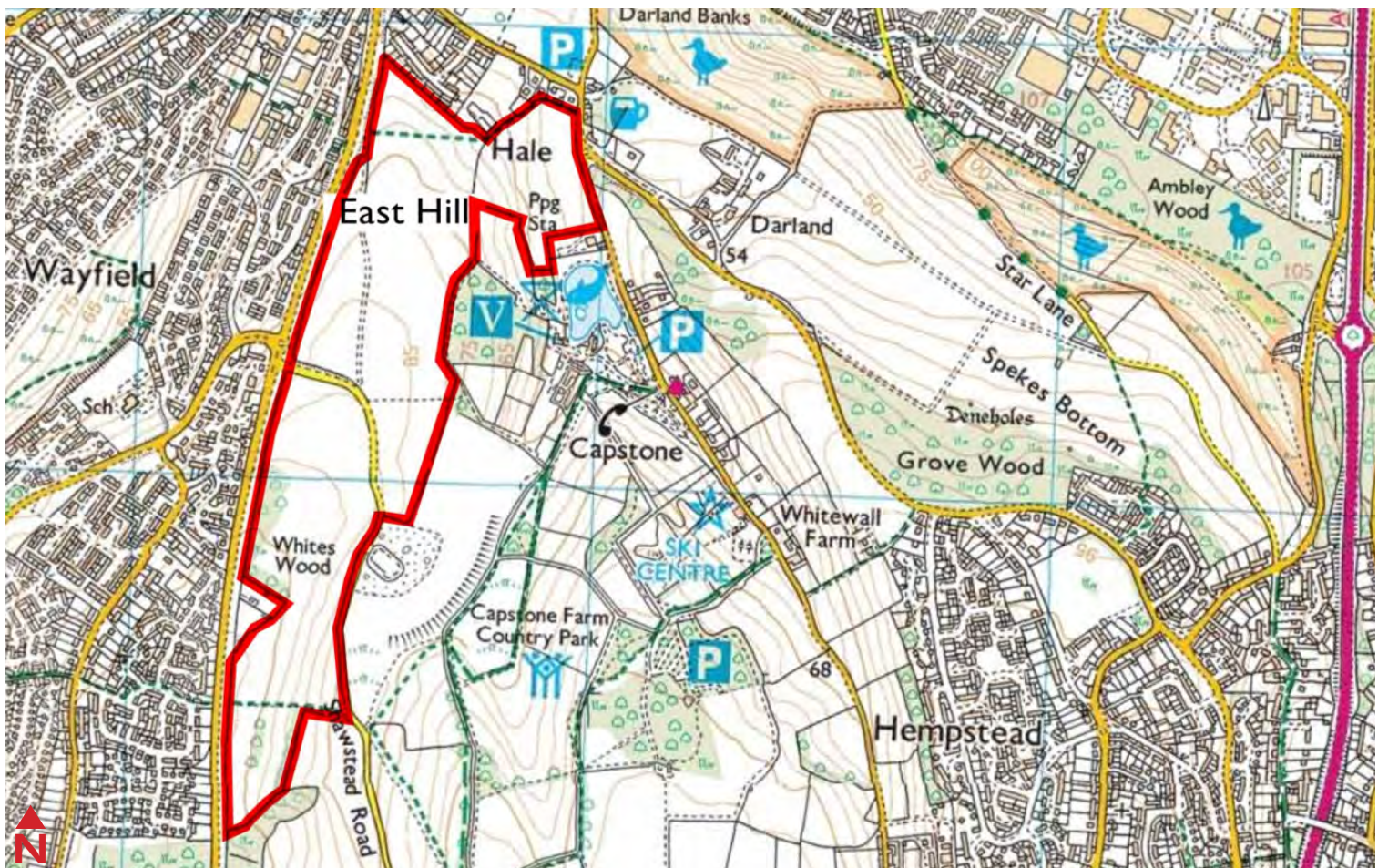
Location: Lordswood Leisure Centre
ME5 8YE

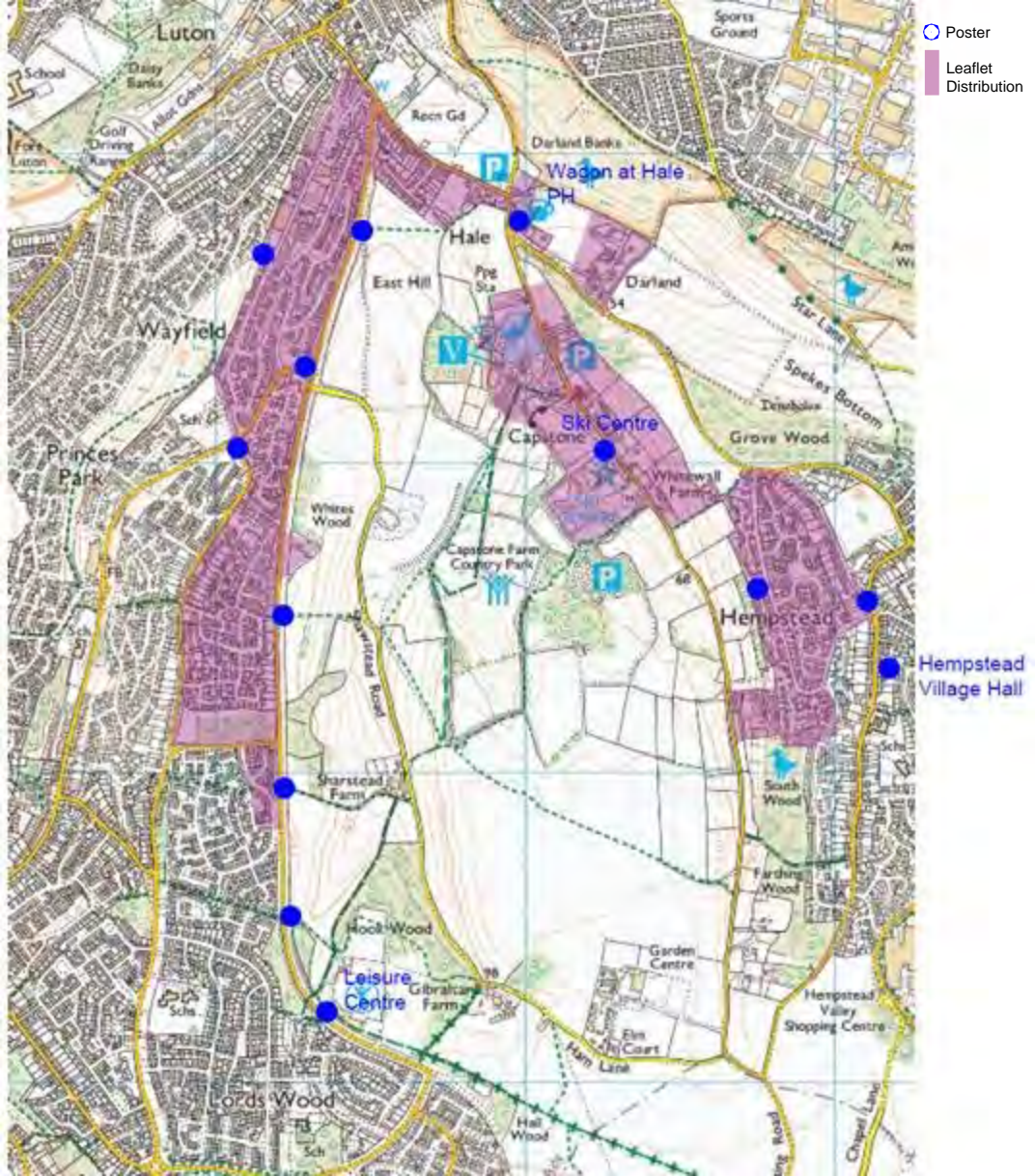
Date: 8th November 2018

Time: 1:00pm to 8:00pm

For those unable to attend, the consultation material, details of the emerging proposals and online comment form will be made available to view online after the event by visiting:

www.humeplanning.co.uk





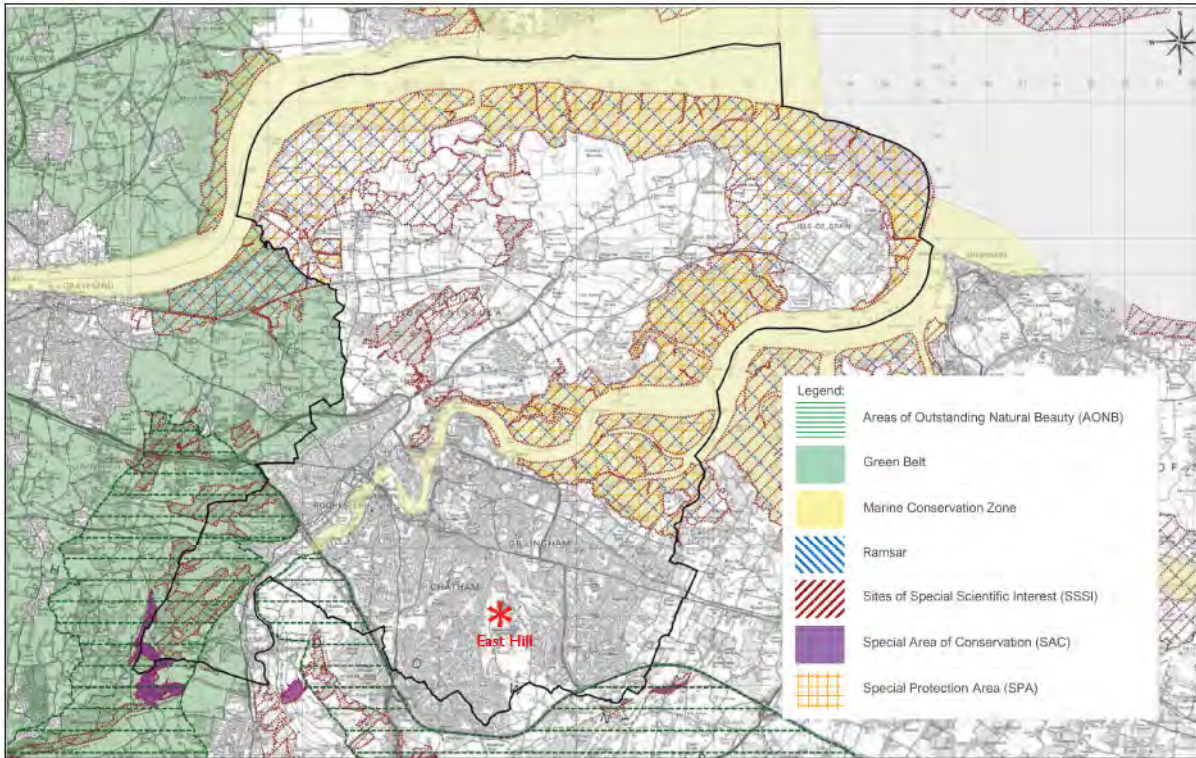
APPENDIX 2

Presentation Boards

Presented at Public Consultation Event and Made Available for Online-Viewing

East Hill Masterplan

I. Planning Context



Environmental Designations

Planning Factfile

- OAN (Objectively Assessed Need) of 29,463 homes = Significant housing pressure on Medway
- Short term supply pipeline not in place = Medway cannot demonstrate the critical minimum of a 5-year land supply.
- Lack of Local Plan guidance... the Medway Local Plan was adopted over 15 years ago and the spatial plan for the emerging Medway Local Plan is likely to include a new settlement (garden community on the Hoo Peninsula). This relies on a public funding bid to improve its sustainability credentials which will require independent scrutiny by a Government Inspector - likely delay in the approval of future Local Plan guidance.

Planning Constraints

Housing on brownfield sites including the long-awaited Rochester Riverside is not sufficient to meet the housing need. Any growth option for Medway to deal with the housing pressure will involve difficult choices...see Constraints Plan above including;

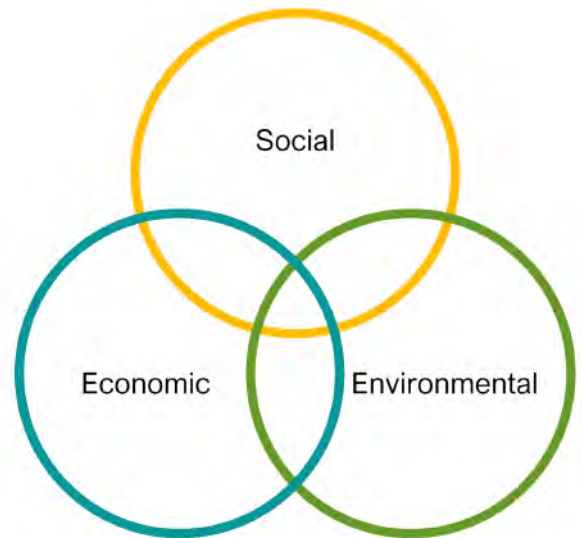
- Green Belt affecting expansion to the west side
- Environmental designations and lack of services, infrastructure and public transport connectivity for expansion on the Hoo Peninsula

East Hill Urban Extension Opportunity

- 47.7 ha site
- Single Ownership = comprehensive planning
- Housing can be delivered much earlier with associated upgrades to existing infrastructure
- Linkages with Capstone Country Park can be improved and the Park will maintain the separate identities of Lordwood and Hempstead.

Urban extensions are recognised as highly sustainable. The following boards will show how the relevant technical considerations have been addressed in the development. The mixed land use growth proposals and the three components defining sustainability (shown below) have been satisfied.

NPPF – 3 COMPONENTS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

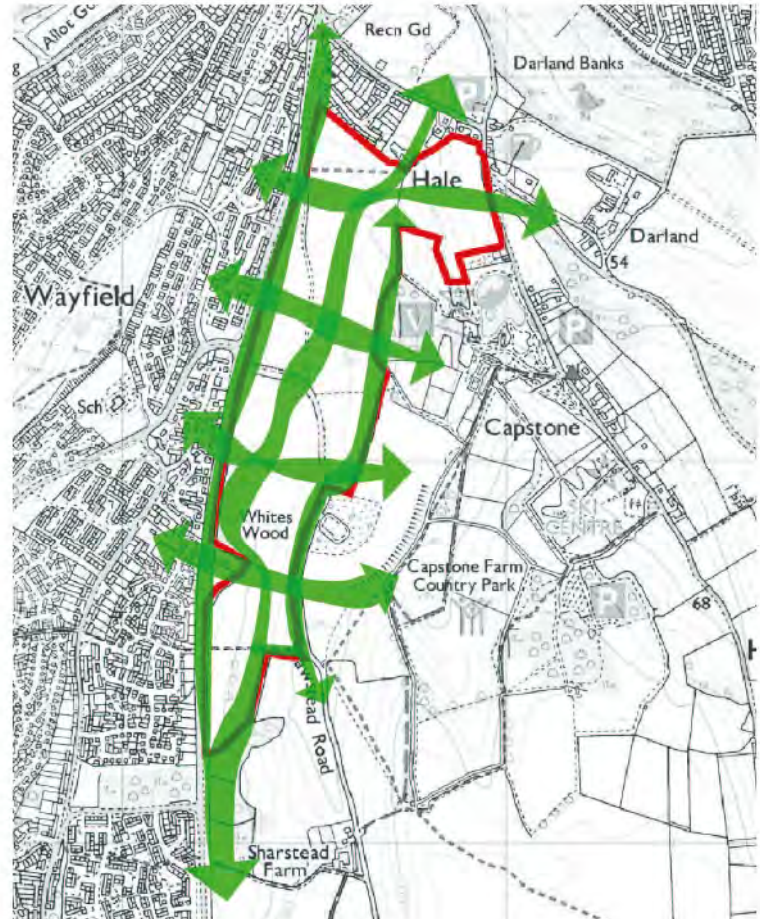


East Hill Masterplan

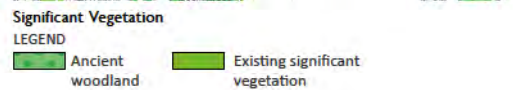
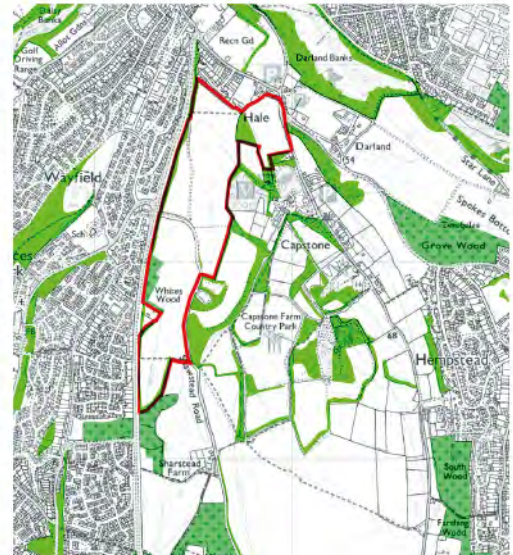
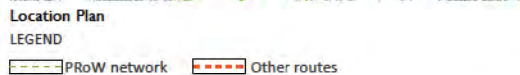
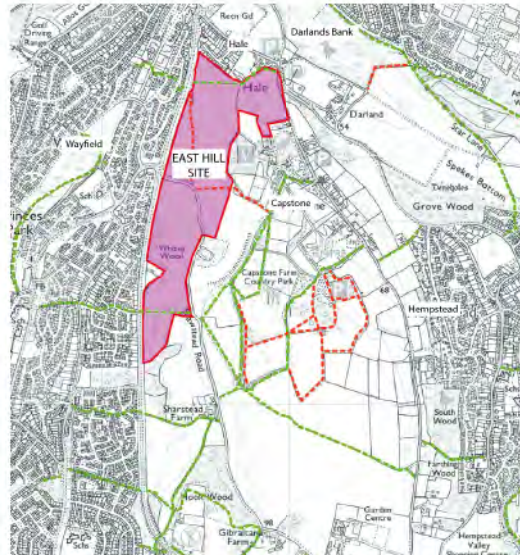
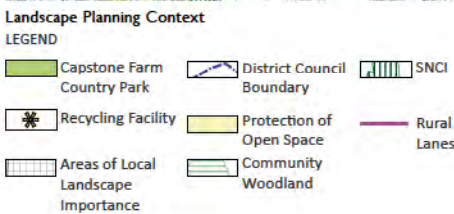
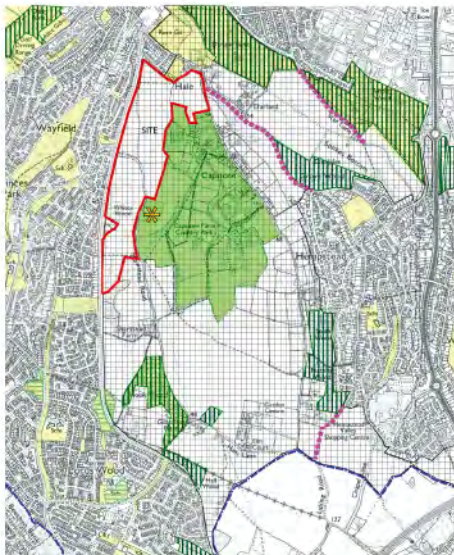
2. Landscape



Existing and Proposed Green Infrastructure (GI) Context

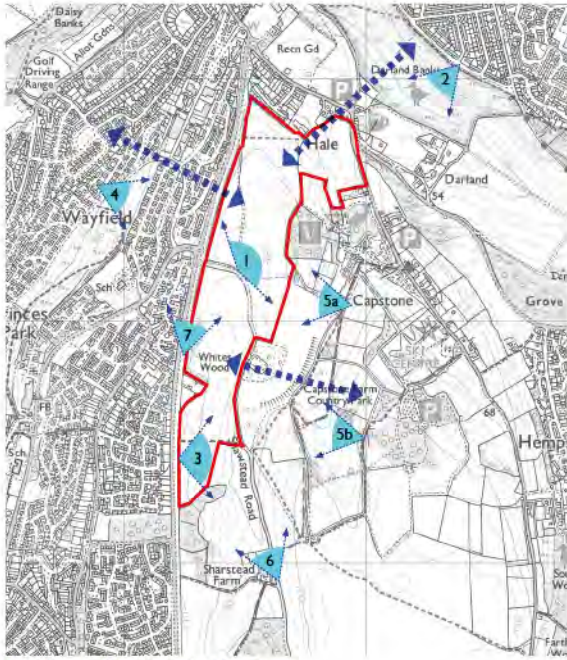


Proposed GI Grid for East Hill



East Hill Masterplan

3. Landscape Visual Assessment



Key Views and Photographic View Points

LEGEND

- Key views
- Viewpoint location and reference number



View 1. Site - East Hill Ridge



View 2. Darland Banks Ridge - Kingsway



View 3. North Dane Way



View 4. Wayfield Ridge



View 5a. Capstone Country Park



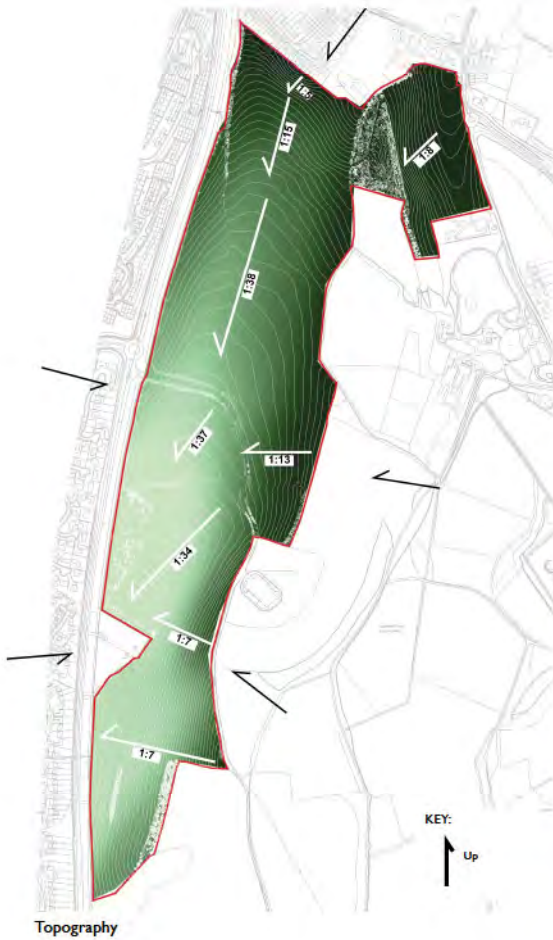
View 5b. Capstone Country Park



View 6. Shawstead Road



View 7. North Dane Way



Topography



East Hill Masterplan

4. Transport / Connections

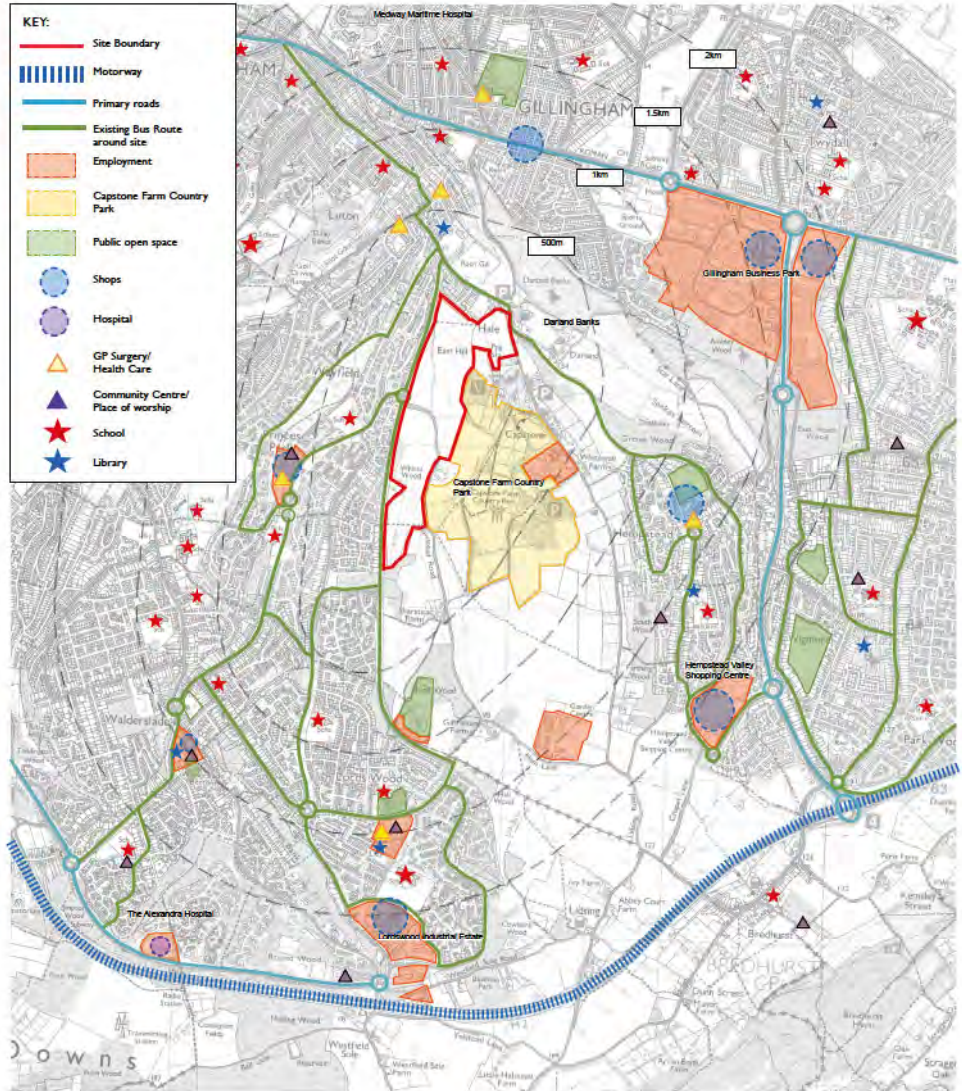
Accessibility

The proposed development site is in a highly sustainable location, within 2.5km of Chatham Town Centre and Gillingham Business Park making both locations accessible by non-car modes, including walking and cycling.

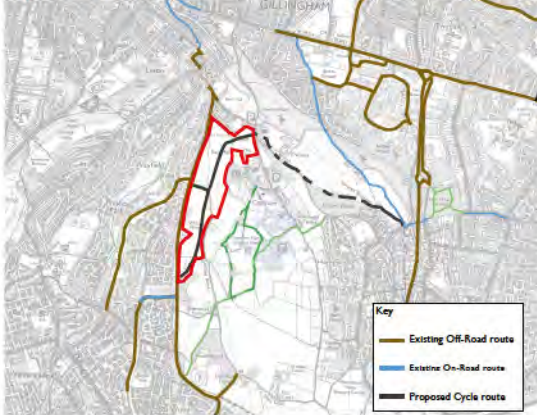
North Dane Way is a high quality bus corridor providing access into the town and across the Medway area. The site falls within 400m walking isochrones of the existing bus stops and services, providing up to 10 buses per hour, between Lordwood and Chatham.

Opportunities exist to provide new, east-west bus routes linking areas either side of the Hempstead Valley.

There is an existing off road cycle route along North Dane Way providing a traffic free route to Lordwood to the south and onwards around much of Walderslade. To the north, the off-road cycle route continues to the junction with Capstone Road where a road route continues to Chatham town centre.



Cycle Routes



North Dane Way Access



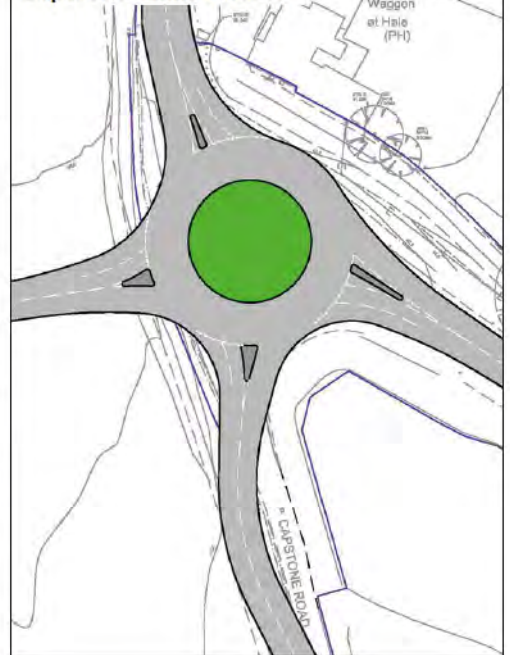
Nearby Capstone Farm Country Park provides leisure facilities including cycle routes and footpaths, and Lordwood Leisure Centre is at the southern end of North Dane Way.

A proposed cycle route will provide a south west to north east connection through the development, with plans to extend this onwards to Hempstead.

Access and Highway Improvements

Access to the development will be from North Dane Way in the west and Capstone Road/Pear Tree Lane in the east, forming a new link between the two. This link will provide relief to the Capstone Road around the Ash Tree Lane junction. It will also facilitate a sustainable transport corridor between the east and west. Linking either side of the valley without reliance on the A2 or rural lanes and allowing enhanced sustainable travel modes, including new bus links and footway/cycleway connections.

Capstone Road Access



East Hill Masterplan

5. Understanding the constraints



Ecology Survey

The Environmental Statement required to support the application, and the full suite of technical documents which will be lodged with the application will demonstrate that the layout derives from a full technical understanding of the site and (when submitted) will be informed by feedback from pre-application consultation with members, officers, statutory consultees and the local community.

It is also important to recognise that the development will contribute to justified improvements to existing infrastructure, although other than the provision of a primary school site and the desire to improve linkages with the country park this has not influenced the design of the layout itself.

The examination of other important issues (NB highways and landscape which are being individually explained on separate boards) has informed the design process. The application has already been the subject of a screening and scoping opinion and will be supported by a full Environmental Statement (ES) which will include detailed reports addressing the issues of;

- Noise
- Air Quality
- Archaeology and Heritage

Other issues were examined at the point of first design principles including;

- Ecology and
- Surface Water Drainage Management and Flood Risk

because these were factors that could

shape the layout options and needed to be understood by the architect masterplanner at an early stage in the consideration of design options. These key findings are set out below

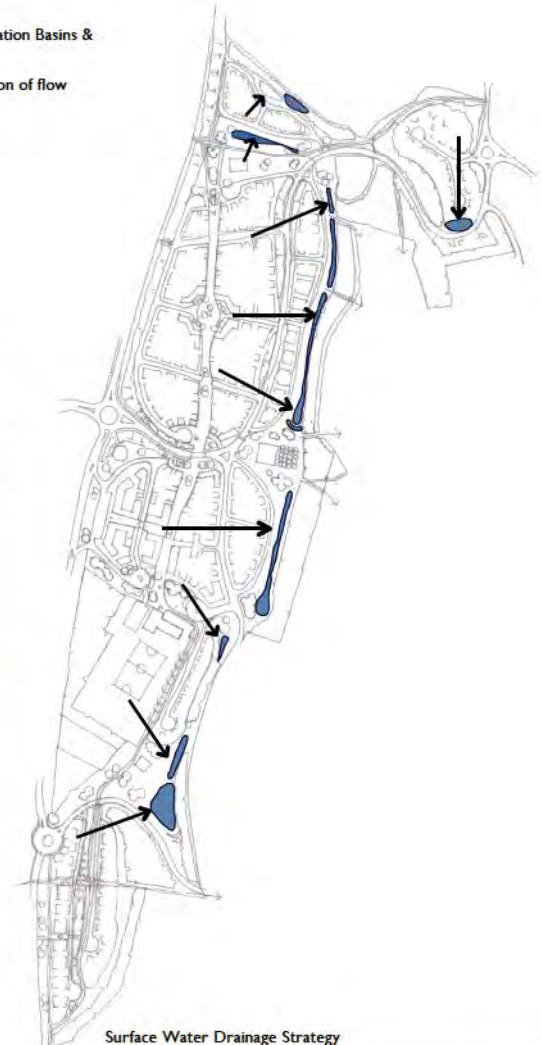
Ecology

The site is generally of low ecological value as it is mostly intensively farmed agricultural land.

1. There are orchids and reptiles adjacent to the old road in the north-west of the site.
2. Area of woodland shrub used by badgers, bats and dormice.
3. Dormice in hazel along eastern boundary.
4. Reptiles in earth banking along Shawstead Road which would need relocation.
5. Whites Wood is ancient woodland.
6. Potential of badger setts by North Danes Wood.

- Key
- Site Survey Area
 - Tree
 - Confirmed Reptile Presence
 - Ancient Woodland Boundary 15m development buffer
 - Important Bat Habitat
 - Bat Roost Location
 - Dormouse Habitat
 - Dormouse Nest Location
 - Suspected Badger Set Location
 - Confirmed Badger Set Location
 - Important Red List Bird Habitat

- KEY:
- Attenuation Basins & Swales
 - Direction of flow



Surface Water Drainage Strategy



Example of a swale



Example of an urban swale

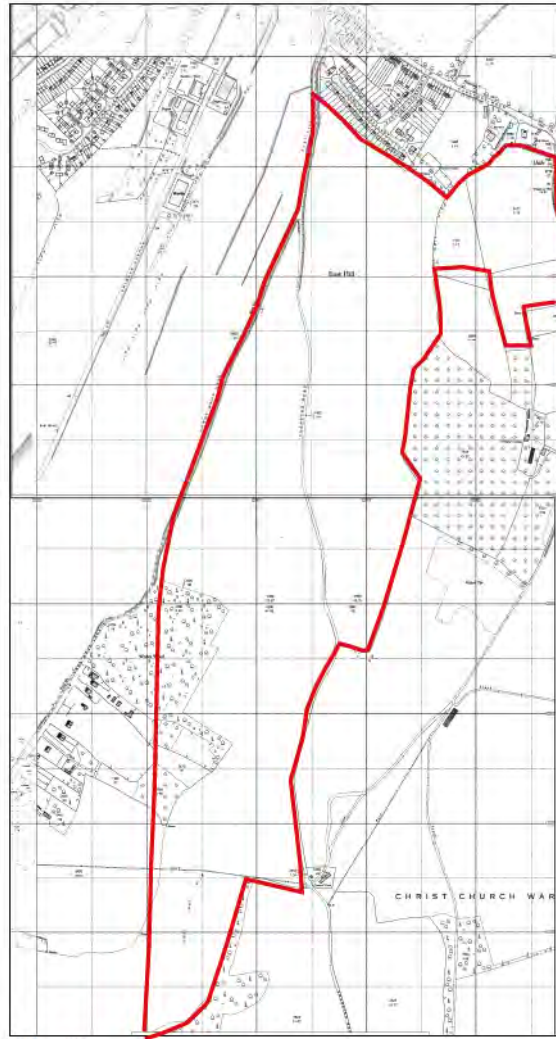


East Hill Masterplan

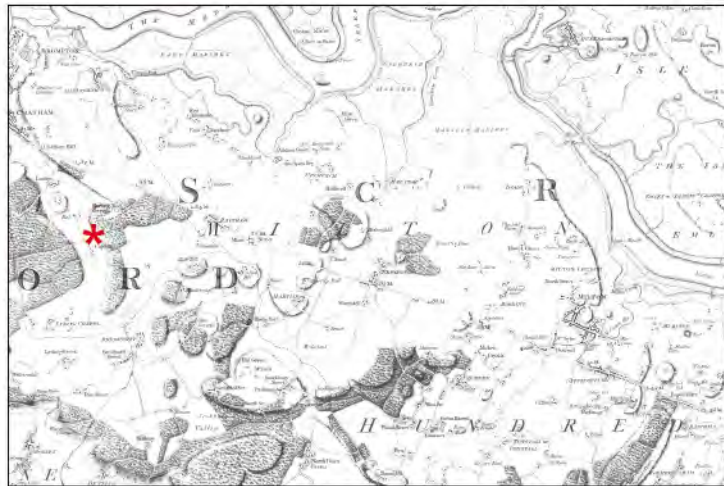
6. History



1896



1955 - 1965



1762 Anderson Map



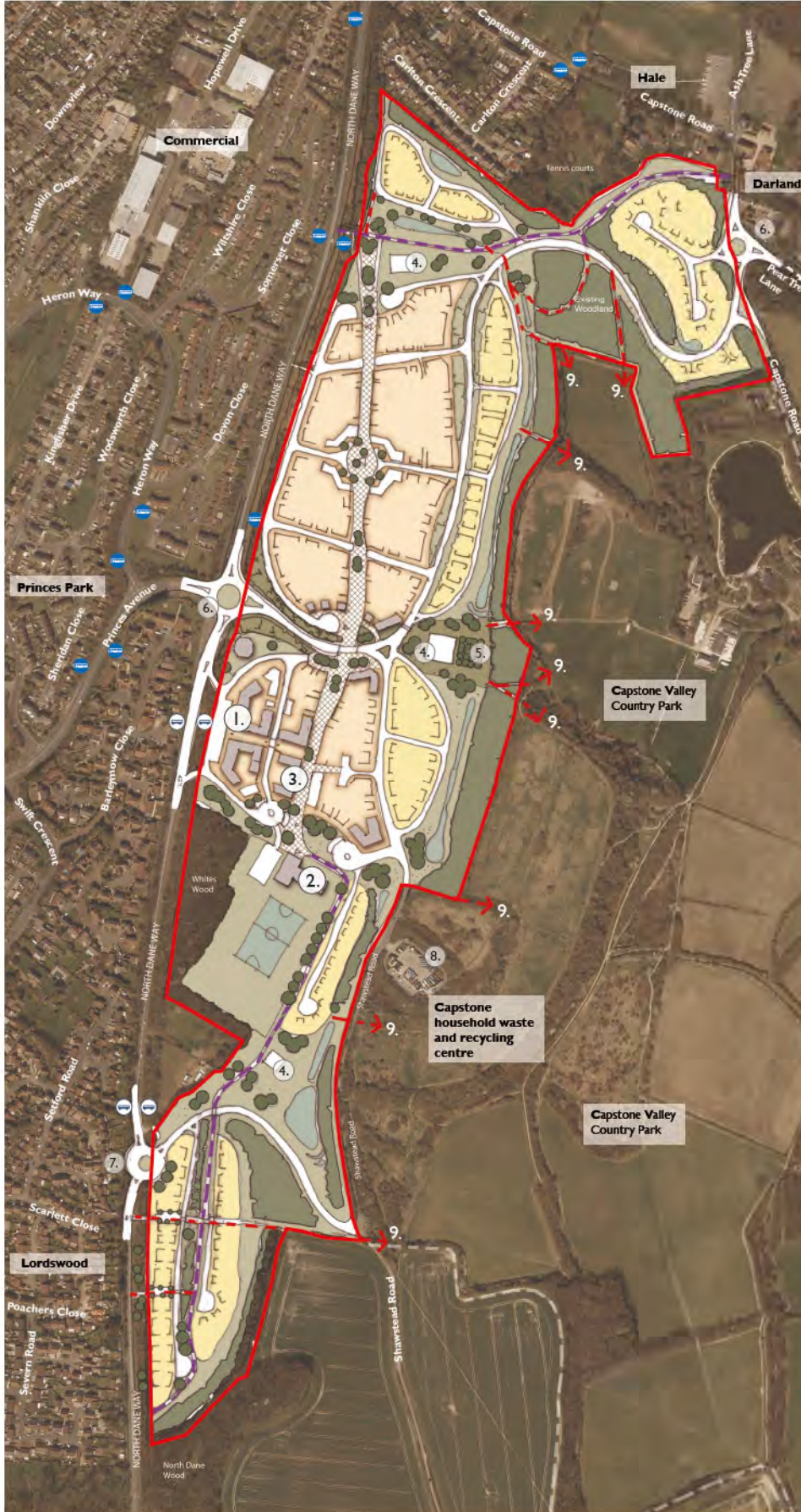
1802 Mudge Map

- Mapping Evidence shows the site and has been farmed for several centuries and has few historic features.
- Shawstead Road Historically ran across the site until the North Dane Way was built and the old route is now informally used as a footpath.
- The area of Luton and Wayfield, closest to the site, was developed from the late 1960's onward, up the hill to North Dane Way.



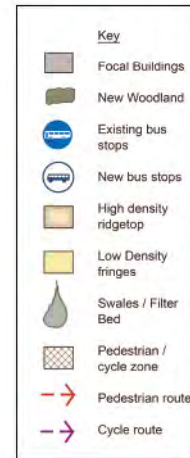
East Hill Masterplan

7. Illustrative Layout



Next Steps

- Further Pre application meetings with officers and key stakeholders
- Consideration of feedback from recent South East Design Panel Presentation
- Review of Feedback from recent presentation to Medway Councillors
- Consideration of Feedback from this Public Exhibition Event
- Assessment of comments made on line via the Hume Planning project website: www.humeplanning.co.uk
- Further Meetings with officers and statutory stakeholders
- Refinement of Scheme
- Submission of Outline Planning Application
- Further Public Exhibition to Explain Submission Proposals



1. Local Shops & Cafes
2. Site for two form Primary School & Community Hall
3. Site for doctors surgery
4. Play areas
5. Community orchard / allotments
6. Adjusted roundabout
7. New roundabout
8. Household waste & recycling facility
9. Ways into Country Park



APPENDIX 3

Questionnaire Feedback Form

Available in Hard-Copy and Subsequently Digitised for Online Completion

EAST HILL QUESTIONNAIRE FEEDBACK

VENUE: LORDSWOOD LEISURE CENTRE

DATE: 8th NOVEMBER 2018

1. Do you accept that greenfield land releases are necessary to meet the projected housing requirements of Medway in addition to brownfield sites?

YES NO

OTHER SUGGESTIONS:

2. What do you consider are the most important factors affecting development at East Hill, in order of priority to you (with 1 being the most important and 5 the lowest)?

- Design Quality
 Landscape
 Transport + Highways
 Community Infrastructure
 Ecology + Flood Risk

OTHER SUGGESTIONS:

3. The illustrative layout incorporates an education site, open space and other community facilities as well as affordable (25% of the total) and a range of open market housing. Do you agree this is an appropriate mix of land uses?

YES NO

OTHER SUGGESTIONS:

4. The layout includes a new road link from North Dane Way to Pear Tree Lane. Do you agree this east to west linkage from Lordswood to Hempstead could be part of a package of measures that could improve traffic circulation in this part of Medway?

YES NO

OTHER SUGGESTIONS:

5. **The illustrative layout seeks to improve pedestrian and cycle linkages from the existing neighbourhoods to the Capstone Country Park. Do you agree this is a sound design, social and recreational objective?**

YES

NO

OTHER SUGGESTIONS

6. **OTHER COMMENTS:**

NAME:

DATE:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

PLEASE NOTE: From the 13th November 2018, a website link of the presentation boards and the questionnaire will be available at www.humeplanning.co.uk . The deadline for all feedback is the 20th November 2018. All comments will be considered prior to the submission of the application.