

Statement of Community Engagement

Land east of Wrotham Road and Land south of
Longfield Road, Hook Green, Meopham

September 2025

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Client

Richborough

Our reference

PP0022

September 2025

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Community Engagement (“SCE”) has been prepared by Pinnacle Planning on behalf of our client Richborough (hereafter referred to as Richborough or “the Applicant”) in support of outline planning applications at land to the east of Wrotham Road and land south of Longfield Road (‘the Sites’).
- 1.2 The two Sites controlled by Richborough are within 300m of each other and are proposed to be brought forward at similar timescales. Public consultation on the emerging proposals for both sites was undertaken at the same time and therefore this Statement of Community Engagement covers comments made to both schemes and is submitted in support of the two outline planning applications.
- 1.3 The description of development for land to the east of Wrotham Road (Site A) is as follows:

“Outline application for the erection of up to 350 dwellings with associated infrastructure and open space (all matters reserved except for means of access)”
- 1.4 The description of development for land to the south of Longfield Road (Site B) is as follows:

“Outline application for the erection of up to 120 dwellings with associated infrastructure and open space (all matters reserved except for means of access).”

Application Sites

- 1.5 Hook Green is one of Gravesham Borough Council’s (GBC) largest and most sustainable settlements, incorporating a good variety of facilities and services which cater for the needs of local residents. These include a range of shops, small food stores, a post office and commercial sites at Meopham Sidings. Hook Green has a primary school and shares Meopham Green’s GP surgery, village hall, library and secondary school. Gravesend Town Centre is located approximately 7km to the north, on a regular bus route, and provides for weekly shopping and additional employment opportunities.
- 1.6 Site A is 15.73 ha in size and broadly comprises two agricultural fields. A Site Location Plan is provided at Appendix 1. The Site is located immediately adjacent to a parade of local shops as well as Meopham Community Academy and is generally contained by Wrotham Road to the west. To the north, the Site is defined by an established row of trees along Green Lane, beyond which low density 20th century housing comprises the existing urban edge. The Site’s eastern boundary is partially defined by the treed curtilage of neighbouring dwelling known as ‘Priestfield Shaw’ whilst mature trees define the southern edge, beyond which lies The Street Conservation Area, which includes the Grade I Listed St John the Baptist Church. The Site has road frontage on two sides and presents opportunities to provide pedestrian improvements to footpath links into the existing network.
- 1.7 Site B is a 5.43 ha broadly rectangular plot that comprises an agricultural field. A Site Location Plan is provided at Appendix 2. The Site is located to the south west of Longfield

Road and north west of Meopham Community Academy and Helen Allison School. Low density contemporary housing is located on the opposite side of Longfield Road. A public footpath runs along the eastern boundary of the Site. It has an undulating topography that falls towards a centralised low point from the south to the north. Whilst mature trees define the south eastern edge of the Site, the northern area has a contrastingly more open aspect. The Site provides the opportunity to create a gateway into Hook Green and to improve pedestrian connectivity and access to the countryside by linking existing footpath networks.

1.8 The Sites comprise open countryside in the Green Belt and have been promoted by Richborough for several years as suitable for residential development, accommodating up to 470 dwellings across the two parcels. Both Sites are identified as emerging allocations in the 2020 Site Allocations and Development Management Policies document:

- Site A - GBS-D: land to the south of Green Lane and east of Wrotham Road with an estimated capacity of 350 dwellings; and
- Site B - GB117: land west of Wrotham Road with an estimated capacity of 120 dwellings.

Statement Purpose

1.9 The purpose of this SCE is to provide details and results of the programme of consultation which has taken place throughout the design process leading up to the submission of the applications. The applicant was keen to ensure that the local community, as well as Meopham Parish Council, and Ward Councillors for Meopham North and Meopham South and Vigo were involved in shaping the proposals and also kept informed of progress. By means of active and early engagement, the applicant has sought to address queries and concerns from the outset, making use of meaningful consultation and using feedback to shape the proposals as they develop.

1.10 This SCE provides an overview of the methods employed by the applicant and the feedback generated as a result.

Structure

1.11 The remainder of this document is based on the following structure:

- Section 2 provides an overview in relation to community consultation
- Section 3 outlines the public consultation strategy and feedback received from pre-application meetings.
- Section 4 presents the feedback received from the public consultation
- Section 5 summarises the response to the matters raised
- Section 6 provides a summary of the SCE

2. Policy Context

2.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires local planning authorities to produce policy documents, called Statements of Community Involvement (SCI). These set out the Authority's expectations for community consultation as part of development plan-making and during the application process.

National Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

2.2 The NPPF was published in December 2024 and sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they are expected to be applied in decision-making as well as plan making. It does not form part of the statutory development plan but does provide significant guidance for Local Planning Authorities. The NPPF provides an up to date and comprehensive expression of national planning policy.

2.3 The NPPF establishes the principle that the planning system should be a collective enterprise with the purpose of helping deliver sustainable development.

2.4 Paragraph 40 of the NPPF iterates that early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties, identifying that good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improves outcomes for the community.

2.5 Paragraph 42 notes that the more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, such as the need to deliver improvements in infrastructure and affordable housing, the greater the benefits.

2.6 Paragraph 43 states that the participation of other consenting bodies in pre-application discussions should enable early consideration of all the fundamental issues relating to whether a particular development will be acceptable in principle.

2.7 Paragraph 131 states that effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities throughout the process is essential for achieving good design.

2.8 Paragraph 137 states that design quality should be considered throughout the evolution of individual proposals including through early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community in order clarify expectations and reconcile local and commercial interests. Applicants should also work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. It is also clear that applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot.

2.9 As this Statement shows, the Applicant undertook engagement prior to the submission of the planning application in full accordance with the guidance set out within the Framework.

Localism Act

- 2.10 The Localism Act provides the context within which the planning system currently operates. The Localism Act was given Royal Assent on 15 November 2011 and sets out the Government's continuing intention of shifting the power balance from central Government back into the hands of individual, communities and councils.
- 2.11 Once secondary legislation has been designated, the Localism Act 2011 will introduce a statutory requirement for developers to consult local communities before submitting planning applications for certain developments, giving people the chance to comment while there is still scope to influence the proposals.

Local Guidance

- 2.12 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires local planning authorities to produce policy documents, called Statements of Community Involvement (SCI). These set out the Authority's expectations for community consultation as part of development plan-making and during the application process.

Gravesend Borough Council Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) (2019)

- 2.13 The SCI confirms that Gravesend Borough Council (GBC) strongly encourage developers to undertake pre-application consultation with residents and potentially interested parties to identify and resolve issues in advance of submission. provide the community the opportunity to make suggestions.
- 2.14 Whilst the focus of the SCI is largely on how and with whom GBC will consult when carrying out its planning duties, it confirms the following at section 11 in respect of pre-application consultation by applicants:

"For major planning application proposals, the Council will seek to discuss the form of any such developer consultation with the applicant as part of its pre-application advice service.

Such early consultation should be as open as possible and provide a genuine opportunity for the local community to influence the design and form of the development proposed. The extent of consultation will depend on the nature of the proposal itself and its likely impact - including impact on the local highway network and demands that may be placed on local services. Factors such as scale, location, prominence, proximity and sensitivity of adjoining development are all likely to be relevant."

- 2.15 The benefits of undertaking early pre-application consultation with local Councillors and residents are stressed within the SCI and evidence of this consultation, along with details of how the consultation responses have informed the scheme, is required with all major planning applications.

3. Public Engagement Strategy

Introduction

3.1 The public and stakeholder engagement strategy involved:

- Formal Pre-application engagement with GBC;
- Prior notification of the public consultation and providing further information in respect of milestones ahead of the planning application submission to Meopham Parish Council, Meopham North Ward Councillors and Meopham South and Vigo Ward Councillors;
- Pre-application discussions with National Highways (NH) and Kent County Council Highways;
- Pre-application discussions with the Headmaster of Meopham Community Academy;
- Design Review Panel;
- Leaflet distributed to stakeholders and residents providing details of the proposal and how to comment; and
- A website with information relating to the proposals and the opportunity to provide written comments or complete a questionnaire.

3.2 The remainder of this section provides a detailed summary of the consultation activities outlined above.

Gravesham Borough Council

3.3 The emerging proposals have been the subject of pre-application engagement with Officers of GBC. The key area of discussion principally focused on the design and layout of the development; highways and active travel links; flood risk and drainage; consultation strategy and timings for submission of an application.

3.4 The meeting was held on 15 July 2025 although no written pre-application advice had been received at the point of submitting the application.

Kent County Council Highway Authority

3.5 Richborough engaged with the Local Highway Authority as part of the pre-application design evolution stage. Comments from Kent County Council on the proposed development provided feedback on the access arrangements, including Emergency Vehicle Access and the provision of pedestrian crossing points on Wrotham Road. Further advice was sought regarding junction modelling and the scope of the TA. Additional information was requested in respect of the following points:

- Consideration should be given to whether people are likely to drive to Ebbsfleet station for the highspeed line to St Pancras of southeast Kent.
- Confirm bus journey times to key local facilities and whether they serve Meopham and Ebbsfleet railway stations.
- Provide a Walking and Cycling Audit of the routes to/from key local facilities.
- Consideration should be given to the proposed crossing points, as well as extending and widening the footway along the entire length of Site A to accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists.
- Proposals to be accompanied by a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit report and designers' response.
- Further consideration needs to be given to on-site parking proposals for Camer Parade/local schools to discourage further driving.

Meopham Community Academy

3.6 A meeting was held with the Headmaster of the Meopham Community Academy on 4 July 2025. The key area of discussion focused on the capacity of schools in the local area; the need for specific facilities across the nine schools that make up the Academy Trust; and the existing parking issues in the morning and afternoon.

3.7 The Applicant has also tried to make contact with the Headmaster at Helen Allison School, with no success. It was agreed that the Headmaster of the Meopham Community Academy would attempt to reach out to other stakeholders in the area to widen the discussions.

Design Review Panel

3.8 A Design Review Panel was held on 6 June 2025 in Meopham and was undertaken with The Design Review Panel. The review was attended by the applicant's team, as well as an Officer from GBC, and comprised of a site visit with Panel members; a presentation of the proposed scheme by the applicant; and a discussion session with all in attendance.

3.9 A written summary of the review by The Design Review Panel raised the following matters:

- Land east of Wrotham Road appears inward looking and may benefit from stronger visual and physical connections to the Parade.
- The gateway to land east of Wrotham Road may be improved by creating visual permeability and relocating a green space to the site entrance and selective tree lifting/removal could strengthen character.
- Consideration of noise mitigation for those properties facing Wrotham Road could improve performance and comfort.
- Support was provided for street trees.

- The inclusion of 3 storey properties appears appropriate and their relationship to affordable housing may benefit from being tested through site sections.
- Design coding may help to define key principles, address local vernacular and materials and respond to site specific differences while aligning with the Gravesham Design Code.

Consultation with Local Residents and Stakeholders

Meopham Parish Council and Meopham North and Meopham South and Vigo Ward Councillors

3.10 Richborough has sought to engage with the Parish Council and local Ward Councillors during the preparation of the application proposals. Emails to the Parish Council and Ward Councillors were sent on 24 April 2025 with details of the proposals and information around the public consultation exercise. A further email was sent on 7 May 2025 with a copy of the consultation leaflet.

3.11 The email was sent prior to the leaflets being delivered to local residents on 12 May 2025, therefore ensuring Councillors were briefed ahead of time. The email invited comments or questions on the emerging scheme. A copy of the emails sent to the Parish Council and Ward Councillors can be provided on request.

3.12 At the time of submission, we have received no response from the Parish Council or Ward Councillors.

Distribution of a Consultation Leaflet

3.13 A leaflet was distributed to 1,846 addresses in the local area on 12 May 2025. A map showing the extent of consultation with local residents is provided at Appendix 3 and a copy of the leaflet is provided at Appendix 4.

3.14 The leaflet provided information about the proposals, a plan of the development, and directed residents to the scheme specific website where more information and FAQs could be found. The consultation was live for a period of two weeks up to 26 May 2025, although responses received after that date were also accepted.

Website

3.15 The website was live from 11 May 2025. The address (<https://www.wrothamroad-meopham.co.uk/>) was published in the distributed leaflet.

3.16 The website also provided access to a questionnaire, allowing people to respond to the consultation. The website proved to be a useful tool allowing people to read the consultation information at their leisure, view the key plans and provide feedback. The responses received can be provided on request. A summary of the feedback received is provided in the following section.

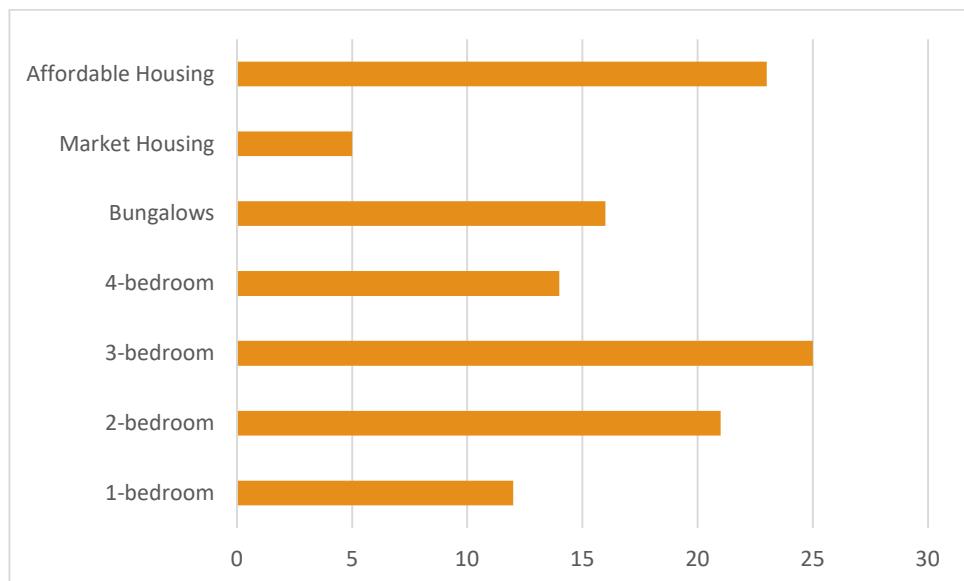
4. Consultation Feedback

Public consultation feedback

- 4.1 This section of the Statement provides a summary of the feedback received during the consultation period.
- 4.2 The public consultation leaflet and website served to engage a wide spectrum of the community, including those groups which are hard to reach.
- 4.3 The consultation period ran from 12 May to 26 May 2025 and during this period a total of 114 pieces of feedback were received.
- 4.4 The online questionnaire included a series of questions which were asked to understand the level of support for the proposals and for people to identify issues which were important to them. Responses to each of the questions are provided below, but it is worth noting that respondents didn't necessarily answer each question so the number of responses to each question is different and may not total 114.
- 4.5 The remainder of this section provides a summary of the comments received and Section 5 explains how the proposals addressed these under the overarching themes.

Question 1: What types of housing do you think would be most suitable for the Site?

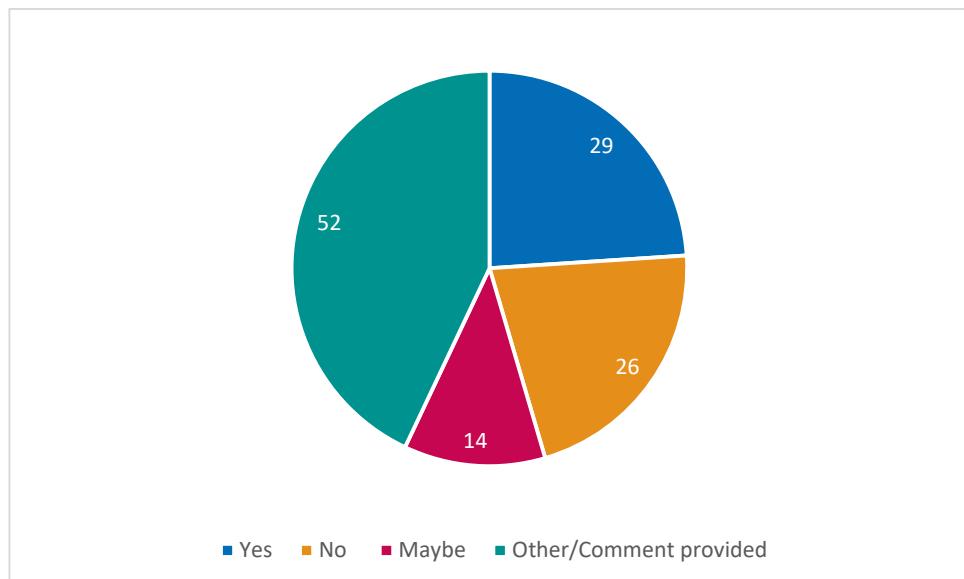
- 4.6 The first question asked respondents to pick an answer from a list of possible responses.



- 4.7 Whilst several respondents did not answer this question, the majority considered there was a need for 3 and 4 bedroom properties, as well as affordable homes. There was also some support for 1 and 4 bedroom homes and bungalows.

Question 2: Do you support the inclusion of parking areas within the developments to be used by visitors to Camer Parade and those picking up and dropping off from the local schools?

4.8 The second question asked respondents a 'yes', 'no', 'maybe' or 'other' question with an opportunity to provide a comment.



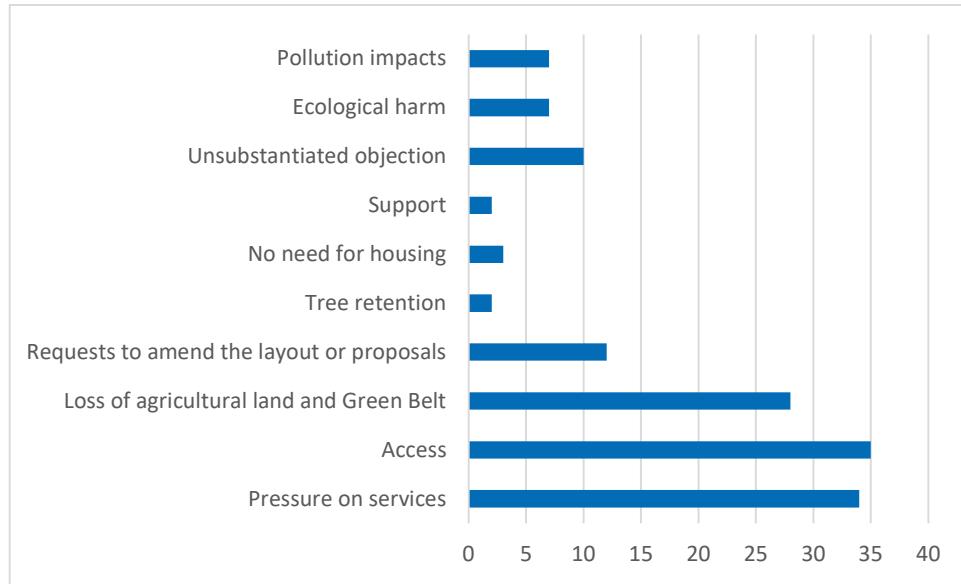
4.9 Overall, the responses were supportive of the proposed parking facilities.

4.10 Comments primarily related to existing parking concerns and referenced on-street parking being an issue at both the Camer Parade and around the school at pick-up and drop-off times. A couple of the comments raised concerns regarding the proposed parking at Site A and suggested pedestrians would struggle to cross Wrotham Road to reach Camer Parade due to the number of vehicles travelling on the road. There were a large number of comments that referenced highway capacity constraints and others that suggested a greater focus should be placed on active and sustainable forms of travel.

4.11 A number of comments made reference to matters of principle and objected to the loss of agricultural land/open countryside. There were also comments that suggest there isn't a need for housing.

Question 3: Do you have any comments on the Development Framework Plan for Site A and are there any other facilities you would like to see included?

4.12 This question was an open question with a comment box.



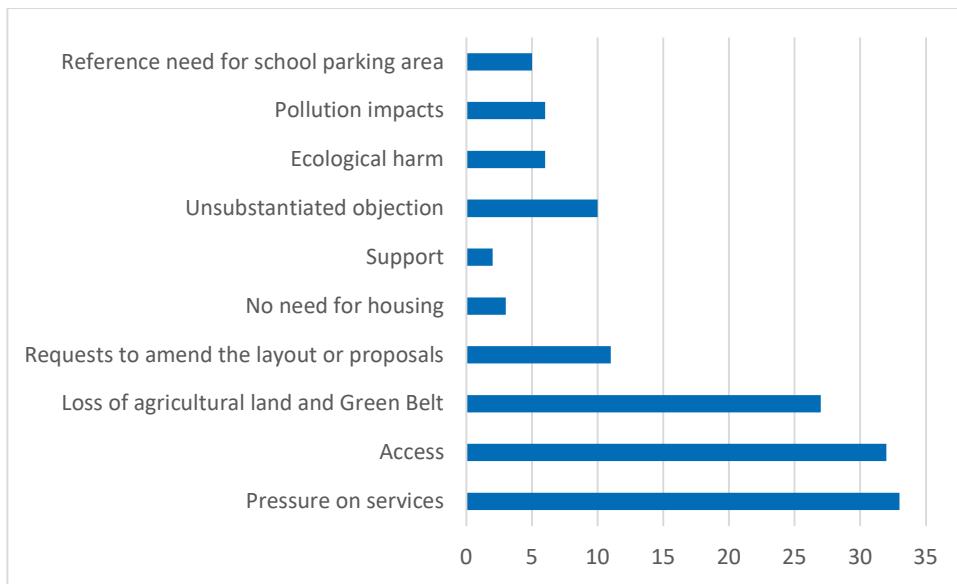
4.13 The responses to this question were mostly objections whilst some comments provided recommendation for the proposals and suggested amendments to the layout. The responses broadly comprised the following:

- The majority of responses objected to the scheme on highways grounds and that there is no capacity in the local highway network to support the number of homes proposed. The responses also suggested the section of Wortham Road where the development is proposed is the busiest and will therefore result in safety concerns with additional traffic. Other access related comments included reference to the need for cycle paths and difficulty in accessing Ebbsfleet due to the capacity of the train station. One comment incorrectly identified, and objected to, a vehicle access off Green Lane.
- The other main objection related to the capacity of existing services with reference made to local GP's, schools, dentists and hospitals.
- A number of comments referenced an objection to the loss of agricultural land/open countryside. Others referenced the need to protect the Green Belt and considered the proposed development to be of a scale that is inconsistent with the local area and would impact the character of the settlement.
- A number of comments suggested there was no need for new housing in the area and that new housing development should be located in other areas of the Borough.
- A number of comments raised concerns with the ecological and pollution impacts of the proposed development in respect of the potential loss of wildlife, impacts on the Camer Park National Landscape and noise/traffic pollution.
- Two comments raised concerns with the potential loss of trees onsite with particular reference to the proposed visual corridor to the church and the proposed parking area.

- Other comments that relate to the proposed layout include a request for a supermarket and leisure centre, request for smaller properties and properties of a countryside style, larger play spaces and the provision of two points of access.

Question 4: Do you have any comments on the Development Framework Plan for Site B?

4.14 This question was an open question with a comment box.

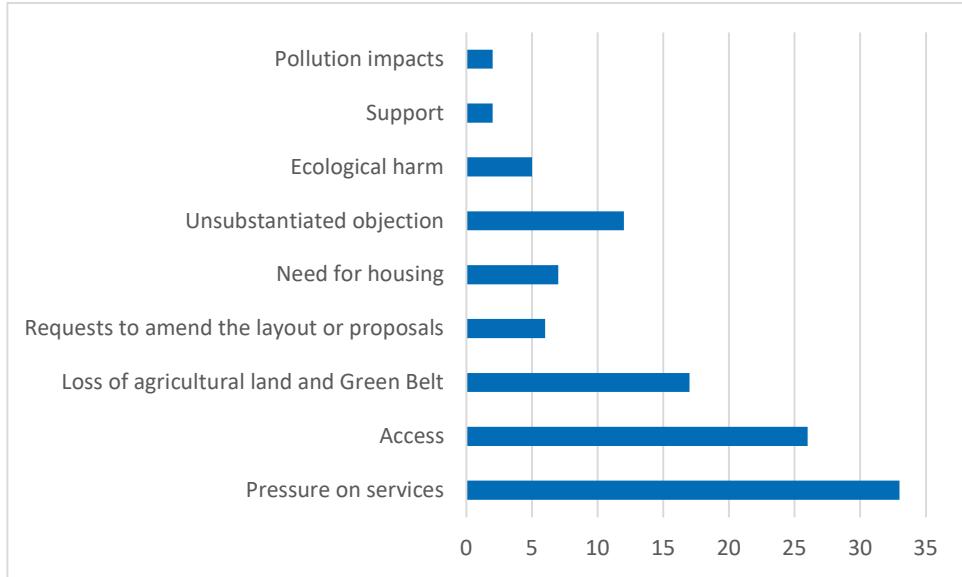


4.15 The responses to this question were mostly copied from the answer to question 3, although there were several instances where additional comments or points specific to Site B were made. These are provided below:

- In respect of access, some comments suggested the footpath provision on Longfield Road was too narrow. Other comments suggested there was an issue with on-street parking along this stretch of Longfield Road and associated with the schools.
- A number of comments suggested the proposal was inappropriate as it would negatively impact the pupils at the Helen Allison School because people on the autism spectrum often experience heightened sensitivity to sensory input.
- One comment requested that a doctor's surgery be provided onsite.
- One comment suggested that local residents should be offered the affordable properties in the first instance, and another suggested the site is not suitable for the provision of affordable dwellings.

Question 5: Please provide any other comments you have on the proposed development.

4.16 This question was an open question with a comment box.



4.17 The majority of comments were in the form of objections to the proposed development. The most common reason for the objection was on the ground of infrastructure capacity and highways and traffic impacts.

4.18 New comments that were not raised in response to questions 3 and 4 above include:

- A request for a car park to serve Camer Parade and the local schools.
- One expression of dissatisfaction with the local bus services.
- One comment which expressed concern with food safety due to the number of developments coming forward on agricultural land.
- A request to provide solar panels on the properties.
- Requests for housing suitable for the elderly, a housing mix that reflects those in the settlement, affordable family homes and provision of 1 and 2 bedroom properties.

Summary

4.19 The applicant has reviewed an extensive number of comments made to the applicant's consultation exercise. Whilst the majority of comments expressed an objection to the development, there were some constructive comments relating to a range of different themes. The majority of comments were concerned about the impact on existing services and amenities such as GP's and schools. The majority of comments also raised concerns regarding the impact on traffic in the surrounding area and the loss of open countryside or Green Belt.

5. Response to Feedback

5.1 All of the feedback received during the consultation has been considered by the applicant and wider project team. Key themes from the consultation feedback are summarised below, along with the applicant's response.

Capacity and accessibility of Services

5.2 The vast majority of feedback received from the local community raised concerns over the capacity of infrastructure, services and amenities in the local area, particularly local schools, doctors and dentists.

5.3 Whilst pre-application consultation has been undertaken with GBC there has been no feedback to date in respect of financial contributions to offset any possible impact on social infrastructure. The Draft Heads of Terms within the Planning Statements include items for education and healthcare provision. The applicant will continue to engage with GBC and Kent County Council regarding possible contributions in order to agree Section 106 Agreements.

5.4 The Design and Access Statement, Planning Statement and Transport Assessment submitted with the applications demonstrate the accessibility of the sites and proximity to existing services. The submitted Illustrative Framework Plans demonstrate how the sites can link to key transport nodes and arterial routes in the local area to facilitate various modes of active and sustainable methods of travel to nearby services in Meopham and Meopham Green, as well as those further afield.

Traffic and Access

5.5 A significant number of responses relate to highways and access with the most common response being in respect of traffic and the capacity of the local highway network. Similarly, residents referenced an existing issue with cars parking on Wrotham Road and Longfield Road at school drop-off and pick-up times.

5.6 The sites are sustainably located within walking distance of a range of amenities which cater for the needs of residents. This includes shops and cafes at Camer Parade on Wrotham Road, schools, doctors, a dentist, pharmacy, takeaways, and a church.

5.7 Wrotham Road is also on a regular bus route with services to nearby towns and schools. Meopham train station is within cycling distance of the two application sites and provides regular services to London and Gillingham (up to every 2 hours) 7 days a week.

5.8 A detailed Transport Assessment (TA) and Travel Plan (TP) have been prepared for both sites and are submitted with the applications. The TA's assess the existing highway capacity and the likely impact the proposed development would have on the surrounding roads. Traffic and speed data has been collected on Wrotham Road using automated traffic counts (ATC). This data has informed the visibility splays required for the proposed accesses based on current traffic speed data. It is worth noting that the mitigation measures for the site south of Longfield Road include an extension of the 30mph speed limit further west.

- 5.9 KCC Highways expressed support for the proposed access designs following a Road Safety Audit and pre-application engagement. KCC have been involved in establishing the parameters of the highway modelling scenarios and have provided comments on the access arrangements, parking requirements and the need for a separate emergency vehicle access. KCC Highways have also been instrumental in establishing the proposed off-site highway works.
- 5.10 The proposed highway mitigation includes the provision of pedestrian crossings on Wrotham Road to facilitate permeable access to Camer Parade. Improvements to the cycle infrastructure on Wrotham Road have also been proposed.
- 5.11 The mitigation measures also include tactile crossing facilities on Longfield Road to ensure residents and pupils of the schools can gain access to the wider footpath north of Longfield Road and can avoid any parked cars on the southern side of Longfield Road during busy periods.
- 5.12 The two sites include an area of land suitable for public parking. The land south of Longfield may include a parking area to accommodate school drop-off and pick-up times and the applicant has been in contact with Helen Allison School to understand if access from the car park to the existing school plot would be beneficial. Land to the east of Wrotham Road includes a car park area close to Camer Parade and may help alleviate existing parking issues at the Parade. KCC considered the parking areas may promote private vehicle trips for short journeys so this element of the proposals will be considered further during the determination of the applications.
- 5.13 The Travel Plans incorporate a commitment to provide welcome Travel Packs to each household that include maps of local walking/cycle routes, bus services and timetables, and available rail services. The Packs will reference relevant active/sustainable travel websites, promote the health benefits of active travel and include a voucher for use on cycle equipment or bus taster tickets. The Travel Plans also commit to providing a Travel Plan Coordinator.
- 5.14 The provision of Construction Traffic Management Plans can be secured via condition.

Housing Need

- 5.15 Several pieces of feedback from the local community suggested there is no need for new housing in the area. Where residents responded directly to question 1, a preference for affordable homes and 3 and 4 bedroom properties was highlighted.
- 5.16 There is a requirement for each authority to demonstrate a five year deliverable housing land supply against the relevant housing requirement. The most recent Five Year Housing Land Supply Statement covers the period 2024-2029 and confirms that GBC can only demonstrate a housing land supply of 3 years and there is a deficit over this period of 1,603 dwellings.
- 5.17 The Government also monitors housing delivery via a Housing Delivery Test that is published annually. GBC have failed the test as it has delivered only 59% of the number of homes required over the three year period (2020/21-2022/23).

- 5.18 There is a demonstrable need for housing in Gravesham Hook Green is a suitable and sustainable location for future development.
- 5.19 With regard to housing mix, the proposed development is for two sites of 120 dwellings and 350 dwellings with matters related to scale and layout to be agreed at a later date. The Illustrative Layouts presented in the Design and Access Statements (DAS) therefore don't provide a breakdown of the housing mix by size as this will be agreed through the submission of reserved matters applications subject to approval of the outline applications. The housing shown on the Illustrative Masterplan includes a mix of apartments, terraced, semi-detached and detached properties offering a range of sizes.
- 5.20 This application is proposing affordable housing at a rate that complies with the National Planning Policy Framework's 'Golden Rules'. This results in a 15% overprovision from the Council's policy requirement to 50%. It is the intention that the affordable dwellings would be integrated throughout the development and be tenure blind to create an integrated community.
- 5.21 The tenure split for the affordable housing provision is to be agreed through the determination of the application but is anticipated to be 70% affordable housing for rent and 30% affordable home ownership in accordance with the Council's Housing Development Strategy.
- 5.22 Allowance has also been made across the Illustrative Masterplan such that all dwellings meet Nationally Described Space Standards and are M4(2) Building Regulations compliant for accessible and adaptable dwellings. A further 10% of the dwellings will be built to M4(3) Building Regulations standards to meet the needs of wheelchair users and those requiring enhanced accessibility.

Loss of Open Countryside and Green Belt

- 5.23 Respondents raised objections to the schemes based on the loss of open countryside, loss of agricultural land and loss of Green Belt.
- 5.24 Whilst both schemes include the retention of small sections of Public Rights of Way, the application sites are in private ownership, currently farmed and therefore not publicly available countryside.
- 5.25 The proposed developments incorporate significant additional tree and vegetation planting, including the creation of wetland features and drainage basins. The submitted Biodiversity Net Gain Metrics for both sites confirm that the proposed development will achieve a 10% net gain in biodiversity.
- 5.26 With regard to the developments being located in the Green Belt the Planning Statement and Landscape Visual Impact Assessment provide a detailed assessment against national policy in respect of development in the Green Belt and a Green Belt Appraisal that provides judgements on the developments impacts on the Green Belt purposes.
- 5.27 Adopted GBC Policy CS02 is titled 'scale and distribution of development' and establishes the housing requirement and the spatial strategy for the plan period, 2011-2028. The following supporting text is relevant to the planning applications [emphasis added]:

"The Core Strategy acknowledges that as development opportunities within the existing urban area and settlements inset from the Green Belt become more limited, some development may be required on land in the rural area before the end of the plan period to meet the Borough's housing needs and sustain rural communities. The Green Belt has therefore been identified as a broad location for future growth and its boundaries will be subject to a review."

5.28 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 established the concept of Grey Belt as follows:

"For the purposes of plan-making and decision-making, 'grey belt' is defined as land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a), (b), or (d) in paragraph 143. 'Grey belt' excludes land where the application of the policies relating to the areas or assets in footnote 7 (other than Green Belt) would provide a strong reason for refusing or restricting development."

5.29 The application submission demonstrates that both sites are suitable grey belt sites having regard to the Stage 2 Green Belt Study (2020) prepared by GBC.

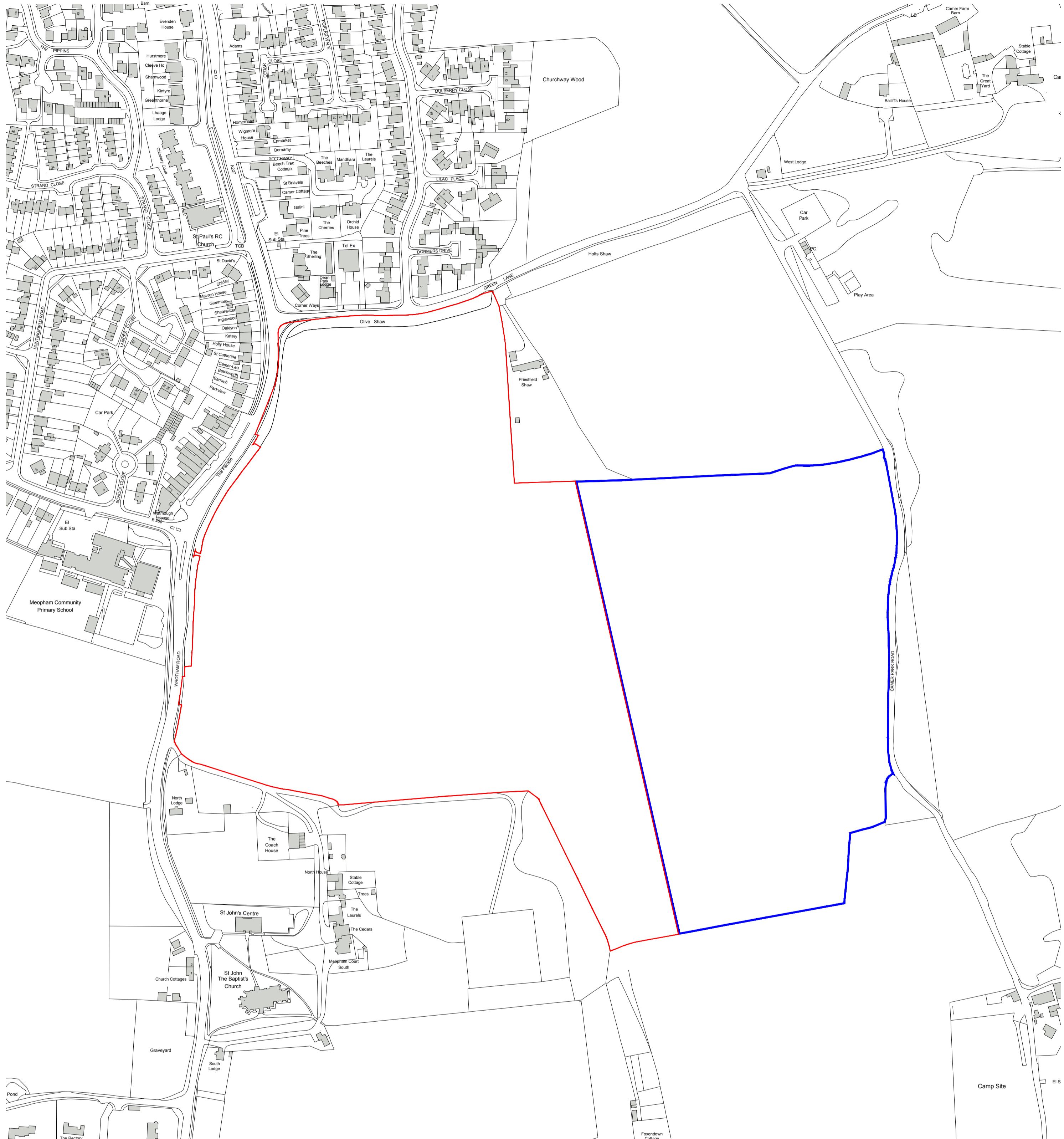
5.30 The Planning Statement demonstrates that there is an unmet need for housing in the Borough and there is an insufficient housing supply to meet future needs. Therefore, having regard to the NPPF, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies.

5.31 Finally, the applications also comply with the NPPF's Golden Rules and it has been demonstrated that both sites are sustainably located. The proposed developments incorporate 50% affordable housing, allow for discussions regarding financial contributions towards local infrastructure and the provision of 8.61 ha of publicly accessible open space (6.72 ha on land to the east of Wrotham Road and 1.89 ha on land to the south of Longfield Road).

6. Conclusion

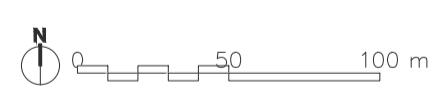
- 6.1 The Applicant has ensured that local residents and identified stakeholders were informed and involved early in the pre-application stages of scheme development.
- 6.2 The pre-application activity which has been undertaken has included the distribution of an information leaflet to local residents and Members, pre-application discussions with the Parish and Ward Councillors, Kent County Council Highways Authority and Gravesham Borough Council.
- 6.3 The feedback received in response to the proposed development was key in shaping the Applicant's understanding of the site and the proposed scheme.
- 6.4 The feedback received mostly comprised of objections with comments relating to different technical themes. The majority of comments raised concerns with the impact on traffic and highways. The Applicant has considered all comments and has responded to these within this SCE and provided additional information in other planning application documents.
- 6.5 The Applicant therefore considers the pre-application consultation to have been meaningful and informative.

Appendix 1: Site A Location Plan



KEY

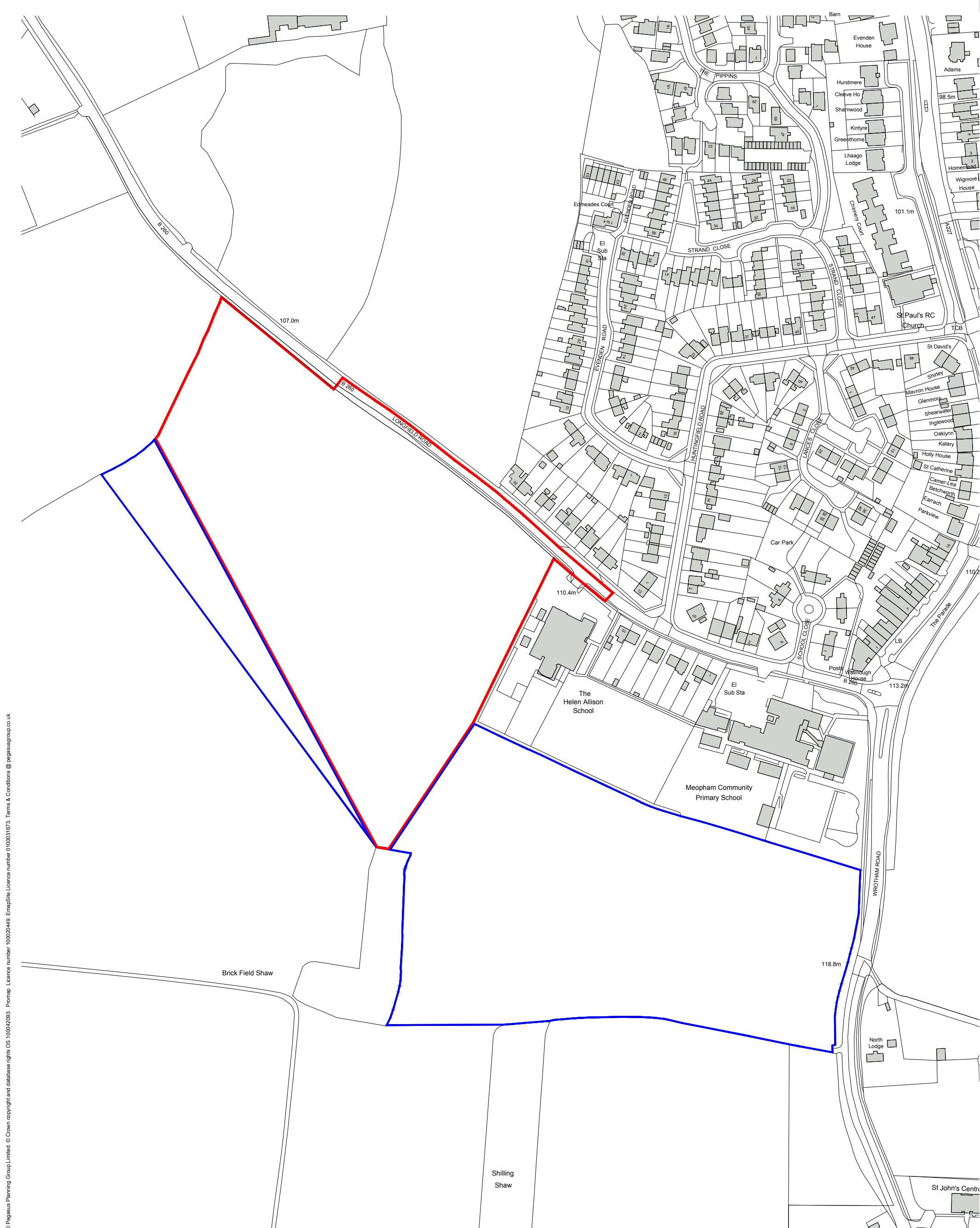
- SITE LOCATION
15.84 HECTARES / 39.14 ACRES
- OTHER LAND IN OWNERSHIP
9.93 HECTARES / 24.54 ACRES



REV A : RLB UPDATED. 01.09.25 (SB)
REV B : RLB UPDATED. 17.09.25 (RL)

WROTHAM ROAD, MEOPHAM – SITE BOUNDARY

Appendix 2: Site B Location Plan



Appendix 3: Map showing extent of consultation leaflet delivery



Application sites outlined red, consultation boundary outlined yellow.

Appendix 4: Consultation leaflet

WE WOULD LIKE YOUR COMMENTS

Richborough are keen to hear your views on the emerging development proposals before they submit the two Outline Planning Applications. We welcome any comments that you may have, including what you might want to see on the Sites.

This is not the last time you will be able to make comments on these proposals. Once the planning applications are submitted to Gravesham Borough Council you will also be able to submit formal comments to the Council directly. These comments will be considered by the Council when they determine the planning applications. In the future, there will be further opportunities for safe engagement to allow more involvement in how the detail of the schemes might look.

We are particularly interested in your answers to the following questions:

1. What types of housing do you think would be most suitable for the Site?
2. Do you support the inclusion of parking areas within the developments to be used by visitors to Camer Parade and those picking up and dropping off from the local schools?
3. Do you have any comments on the Development Framework Plan for **Site A** and are there any other facilities you would like to see included?
4. Do you have any comments on the Development Framework Plan for **Site B**?
5. Please provide any other comments you have on the proposed development.

Land East and Land West of Wrotham Road, Hook Green, Meopham

Richborough is preparing Outline Planning Applications for new residential development on two Sites - Land to the east and Land to the west of Wrotham Road.

Both Sites are identified as draft allocations in the emerging Site Allocations and Development Management Policies document, identified as:

GBS-D: Land east of Wrotham Road - estimated capacity of 350 dwellings (**Site A**);

GB117: Land west of Wrotham Road - estimated capacity of 120 dwellings (**Site B**).

WE WOULD LIKE YOUR VIEWS

This leaflet has been prepared so we can share the emerging proposals for the Sites and so we can provide details of the public consultation website. We are seeking feedback regarding our development proposals and your comments will help shape the finalised planning application before submission to Gravesham Borough Council.

ABOUT US

This Sites are being promoted by Richborough, a land promotion business who work in partnership with landowners, Councils, local stakeholders and the community to bring forward development schemes that deliver new homes and facilities that meet the needs of the local area.

Richborough's guiding ethos is to create sustainable developments that are of a high quality and integrate sympathetically with their surroundings.

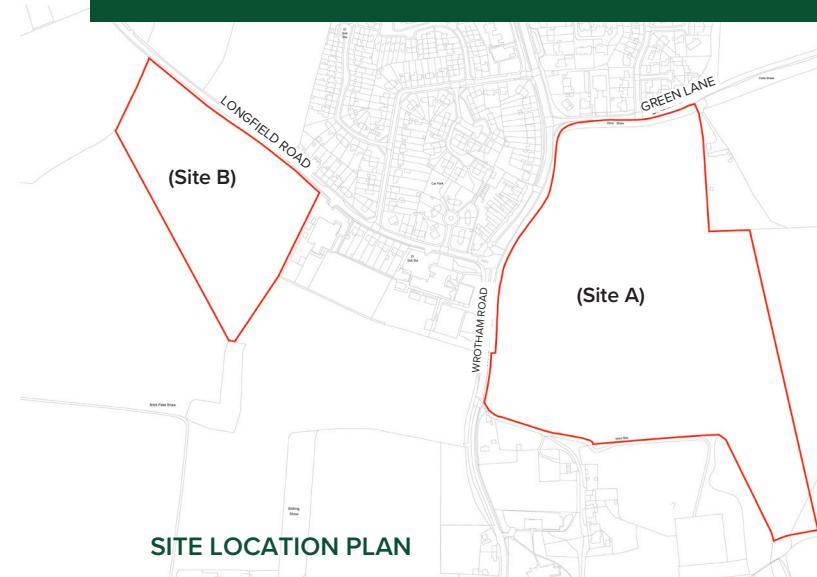
Our public consultation has now launched.
You can share your views by visiting our consultation website on:

www.wrothamroad-meopham.co.uk

OR SCAN ME



Please submit your comments by 26th May 2025



LAND EAST AND LAND WEST OF WROTHAM ROAD, HOOK GREEN, MEOPHAM

Site A is located to the east of Wrotham Road and south of Green Lane. The Site lies adjacent to existing residential development with Camer Parade to the west.

Site B is located to the west of Helen Allison School and south of Longfield Road.

Both Sites are sustainably located within walking distance of a range of existing services and facilities.

OUR PROPOSALS WILL DELIVER A RANGE OF BENEFITS AS FOLLOWS:

- The delivery of around 350 dwellings on Site A and around 120 dwellings on Site B with a mix of market and affordable homes (compliant with policy requirements) contributing to local housing need;
- A variety of new homes of varying tenures to create and add to a diverse and balanced community;
- Introduction of a new pedestrian crossing point on Wrotham Road to facilitate access to Camer Parade;
- Provision of a parking area within Site A for existing residents in the local area to park and safely access the existing amenities and facilities at Camer Parade;
- Provision of a parking area within Site B to ease existing parking constraints on Longfield Road during school drop-off and pick-up times;
- Retention of existing trees and hedgerows around the edge and across the Site, where possible;
- A high-quality landscaping scheme sensitive to the existing landscape character and nearby heritage assets, which will achieve the required net gains in biodiversity value;
- The delivery of areas of public open space including children's equipped play area;
- A sustainable drainage solution with features to support and enhance wildlife; and
- Retention and enhancement of the existing Public Right of Way on Site B and links to the wider network of public footpaths.

Our emerging proposals comprise the development of both Sites with a combined total of around 470 dwellings, including affordable homes, additional landscaping, retention of existing green infrastructure, new areas of public open space and improvements to an existing Public Right of Way.

In advance of the submission of two Outline Planning Applications, we are now consulting the local community on our emerging proposals, which have been informed by various site assessments, including a series of technical and environmental studies.

We would like to hear your views so we can review feedback before finalising and submitting our proposals and designs.

DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK PLANS

(Site A) : GBS-D: Land east of Wrotham Road - estimated capacity of 350 dwellings



KEY

SITE BOUNDARY	EXISTING TREES
SITE ACCESS VIA WROTHAM ROAD	NEW STRUCTURAL PLANTING
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT	NEW TREE PLANTING
PUBLIC OPEN SPACE	PLAY SPACES
PRIMARY STREET	NATURAL PLAY
RESIDENTIAL STREET	OVERFLOW PARKING FOR 'THE PARADE'
FOCAL SPACES	PARKING FOR ALLOTMENTS
PRIVATE LANES	EMERGENCY ACCESS POINT
"THE STREET" CONSERVATION AREA	SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE
EXISTING PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY	EMERGENCY LANE
ACTIVE TRAVEL / CYCLE ROUTES	

(Site B) : GB117: Land west of Wrotham Road - estimated capacity of 120 dwellings



KEY

SITE BOUNDARY	ACTIVE TRAVEL / CYCLE ROUTE
SITE ACCESS VIA LONGFIELD ROAD	EXISTING TREES
RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT	NEW STRUCTURAL PLANTING
PUBLIC OPEN SPACE	NEW TREE PLANTING
PRIMARY STREET	PLAY SPACE
RESIDENTIAL STREET	NATURAL PLAY
FOCAL SPACES	SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE
PRIVATE LANES	EMERGENCY LANE
EXISTING PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY	