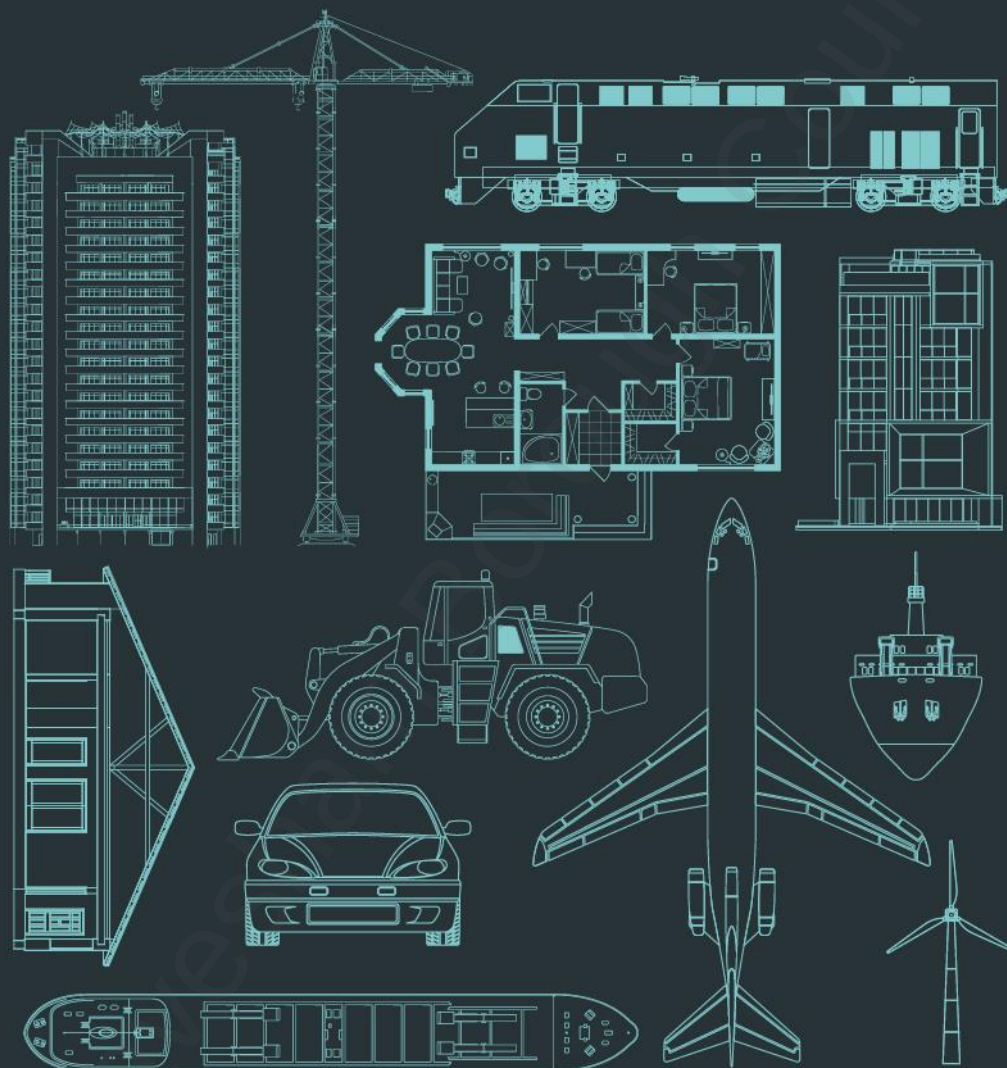


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Statement of Community Involvement

Former GRFC Bowls Club, Church Walk, Gravesend

Prepared for McCarthy Stone

October 2022

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Executive Summary

McCarthy Stone is committed to consulting with the local community regarding their proposals to redevelop the site at Gravesend Rugby Club, Church Walk, Gravesend with specialist retirement apartments, car parking and landscaping.

Residents and stakeholders were given the opportunity to give feedback regarding the proposals via a host of different channels. A website, freephone information line and project email address were made available throughout the process for interested parties to receive further details and to provide feedback.

Pre-application consultation included offers for one-to-one virtual meetings with site neighbours, local stakeholders and third-party groups to introduce the team and outline the proposals. A virtual consultation was then held between **Thursday 22 September 2022 and Thursday 06 October 2022**.

An initial virtual exhibition invitation newsletter was sent to circa **2,000 stakeholders and residents on Thursday 22 September 2022**, providing information about the plans as well as advising them of the consultation period, along with a freepost reply card.

Paper copies of the plans as well as feedback forms with prepaid return envelopes were available on request, to ensure the consultation was inclusive for those without internet access.

During the consultation period, a total of **1 pre-paid postcard, 1 email and 10 online feedback forms**, were received regarding the proposed scheme.

Positive feedback was received that welcomed the delivery of this much-needed type of housing. Concern raised included the potential impact that the development would have on recreational space within the area, as well as the site location being near busy roads such as 'Ellerslie'. In addition, other comments questioned the design not being in keeping with local architecture.

McCarthy Stone has carefully reviewed all the feedback received to date, and the main comments raised by the local community have been addressed within this document and the wider material submitted as part of the application.

McCarthy Stone is committed to engaging with the local community and, following the submission of the application, will ensure that interested parties and key stakeholders remain informed and updated regarding the proposals.

This document provides a chronological account of the pre-application consultation undertaken and a review of the feedback received.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 McCarthy Stone, the country's leading retirement accommodation provider, has acquired an interest in a parcel of land belonging to Gravesend Rugby Football Club (GRFC), formally occupied by the GRFC Bowls Club, Church Walk, Gravesend, and is proposing to redevelop the site for a new retirement community.
- 1.2 The proposal will comprise 62 Extra Care retirement apartments in a mixture of one- and two- bedroom units, alongside community facilities. This would be together with onsite car parking and attractive landscaping.
- 1.3 McCarthy Stone has a strong track record of consulting and communicating with members of the local community, community groups, local councillors, and other relevant third-party stakeholders.
- 1.4 This document has been produced with the aim of clearly and concisely highlighting the community consultation undertaken by McCarthy Stone in respect of its proposal for the site.
- 1.5 This document provides a chronological account of the consultation activity that has been undertaken within the pre-application stages of the planning application and the activity that McCarthy Stone proposes to undertake post application.
- 1.6 In order to assist with the community consultation and communication, McCarthy Stone appointed BECG, a specialist communications consultancy, to form part of its wider project team for the proposed redevelopment,
- 1.7 All feedback received is accounted for and represented within this document.

2. Background

2.1 Proposal Site



Aerial view of the site

- 2.1.1 The site is located at Gravesend Rugby Club, Church Walk, Gravesend on land formerly occupied by GRFC Bowls Club. The site consists of a bowling green, club house, and associated outbuildings which have been vacated for some time, believed to be around the end of 2020. Gravesend Rugby Club saw a significant reduction in Bowls Club membership in recent years, leading to the club not being financially viable and costing more than it was able to generate in income.
- 2.1.2 The site lies off Milton Road which is the main high street that connects to the Town Centre and its amenities. The site is also served by a regular bus service, at the corner of the junction with Milton Road, that offers regular services to Bluewater, Dartford and Gravesend.
- 2.1.3 The site is in a suitable and highly sustainable location to provide much-needed retirement accommodation for people in later life, in Gravesend. Future residents of the proposed development will be within easy access of local amenities, including shops, cafes, and restaurants.

2.2 Proposals



Indicative sketch of the proposals

2.2.1 McCarthy Stone's proposals for new retirement accommodation, providing choice for older people in the local area comprise:

- A single 'L' shaped building with the building height varying between 2 and four storeys with the highest ridge being approximately 14m, located in the middle of the scheme.
- A high-quality development featuring up to 56 apartments for private sale, part-rent part-buy and rental options, in a range of one and two bedroom units.
- Tailored shared facilities within the building, including a communal lounge with a kitchenette and a hotel-style guest suite.
- A design that will be relatively traditional in form, taking inspiration from the local vernacular materials such as brickwork, render and clay tiles matching with local buildings.
- Parking for approximately 33 cars for homeowners, staff and visitors, including the provision of electric charging points and disabled bays.
- Retention of the existing vehicle access off 'Ellerslie' to the west of the site, with pedestrian access also proposed off both Milton Road and Church Walk, north and east of the site respectively.
- Attractive landscaped outdoor spaces, including a communal garden, creating pleasant spaces for both residents and guests.

2.2.2 McCarthy Stone's proposal would provide extensive new landscaping, including an attractive communal garden for residents and new boundary treatments, further enhancing the proposed development and the character of the local area.

2.2.3 The plans have been sensitively designed to respect the scale and design of buildings surrounding the site, utilising materials to complement the local area.

3. Community Engagement

3.1 Statement of Community Involvement

3.1.1 The Localism Act 2011

Section 122 of the Localism Act 2011 outlines that a person proposing to make a planning application on land in England should carry out consultation on the proposed application. This should include publicity considered likely to bring the application to the attention of a majority of the persons who live at, or otherwise occupy, premises in the vicinity of the land.

3.1.2 National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's policies for England and outlines how these policies should be applied.

3.1.3 McCarthy Stone has had regard to the NPPF at Paragraph 39 when it states that *“early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties.”*

3.1.4 The NPPF goes on to highlight at Paragraph 40 that *“Local planning authorities have a key role to play in encouraging other parties to take maximum advantage of the pre-application stage. They cannot require that a developer engages with them before submitting a planning application, but they should encourage take-up of any pre-application services they offer. They should also, where they think this would be beneficial, encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community and, where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees, before submitting their applications.”*

3.1.5 Paragraph 41 outlines that the Local Planning Authority should encourage other parties to take maximum advantage of the pre-application stage, noting that *“the more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, including the need to deliver improvements in infrastructure and affordable housing, the greater the benefits.”*

3.1.6 Gravesham Borough Council

Gravesham Borough Council adopted their combined *Statement of Community Involvement* (SCI) in 2019.

Gravesham Borough Council's SCI is not prescriptive; however, it does provide the following advice for developers:

11.17 In addition to the above pre-application service, the Council strongly encourages applicants to undertake public pre-application consultation with potentially interested /

affected parties to identify and resolve issues in advance of submission. Such front-loading should be seen as an opportunity to overcome delays within the planning process, reducing the risk of refusal or the need to deal with such issues at the application stage.

11.18 For householder and minor applications, this may simply mean discussing proposals with owners of adjoining properties and properly identifying any potential constraints that need to be addressed and dealing with these at the pre-application stage.

11.19 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.

11.20 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.

11.21 Under certain circumstances, the Council will also encourage developers to enter into a Planning Performance Agreement. Such agreements provide a project plan and bespoke timetable for the determination of any associated application. It also makes sure that the Council has the necessary resources to make a timely and informed decision on any application whilst ensuring that Councillors, stakeholders and local communities are involved in any proposals. Such agreements should also help with the submission of higher quality applications that are capable of delivering the sustainable forms of development needed in our area.

11.22 For all proposals, sharing information can help overcome potential objections and may provide an opportunity for improvements to the design and layout of schemes. Applicants are therefore advised to show what consultation has taken place during the preparation of their schemes.

- 3.17 Therefore, in conjunction with developing the plans, McCarthy Stone undertook a detailed programme of community engagement, as outlined in this document.

Engagement with Officers

- 3.2.1. Before the indicative plans were shared with the community, appropriate steps were taken to discuss the principle of development with Council Officers. The detail of these engagements are set out in the application documents.

Neighbour and Stakeholder Meetings

3.1.7 McCarthy Stone felt it was important to discuss the early proposals for the site's redevelopment with local stakeholders in advance of the wider community consultation.

3.1.8 An invitation letter was distributed to all identified residents and interested stakeholders on **Monday 05 September 2022**. The following stakeholders were invited to attend a one-to-one meeting with the wider project team, to receive a briefing on the early proposals:

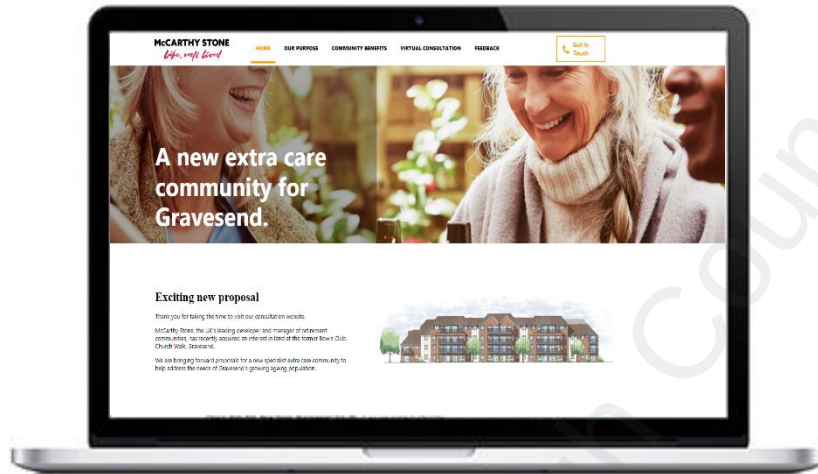
- 57 residents and businesses within the immediate vicinity of the site
- Members of Gravesham Borough Council's Cabinet
- Members of Gravesham Borough Council's Planning Committee
- Ward Members for Central of Gravesham Borough Council
- Division Member for Gravesend East of Kent County Council
- Member of Parliament for Gravesham
- Age UK North West Kent
- Gravesend Grammar School

3.1.9 The initial correspondence outlined the proposals for the redevelopment of the site and invited recipients to attend a virtual one-to-one meeting at a time of their choice. It also included details of the freephone information line number. A copy of this letter has been included in the Appendices.

3.1.10 No local representatives and neighbouring residents took up the opportunity to meet with the McCarthy Stone team.

Dedicated Website

3.4.1 A website was set up displaying information about the proposals and is being updated throughout the public consultation and planning process. The website is hosted at <https://mccarthystoneconsultation.co.uk/gravesend/>



An example of a consultation website

3.1.11 The website address was printed on the newsletter, press release and relevant correspondence.

3.1.12 The website includes:

- An overview of the proposals
- Relevant plans and layout
- Information about the public exhibition, including exhibition display materials
- Information about McCarthy Stone
- Information about design
- Information about highways
- Information about landscaping
- Benefits of the proposals
- An online feedback form

3.1.13 The website was viewed by a total of 52 individuals, with there being 313 page views. The average duration of each session was 3.08 minutes.

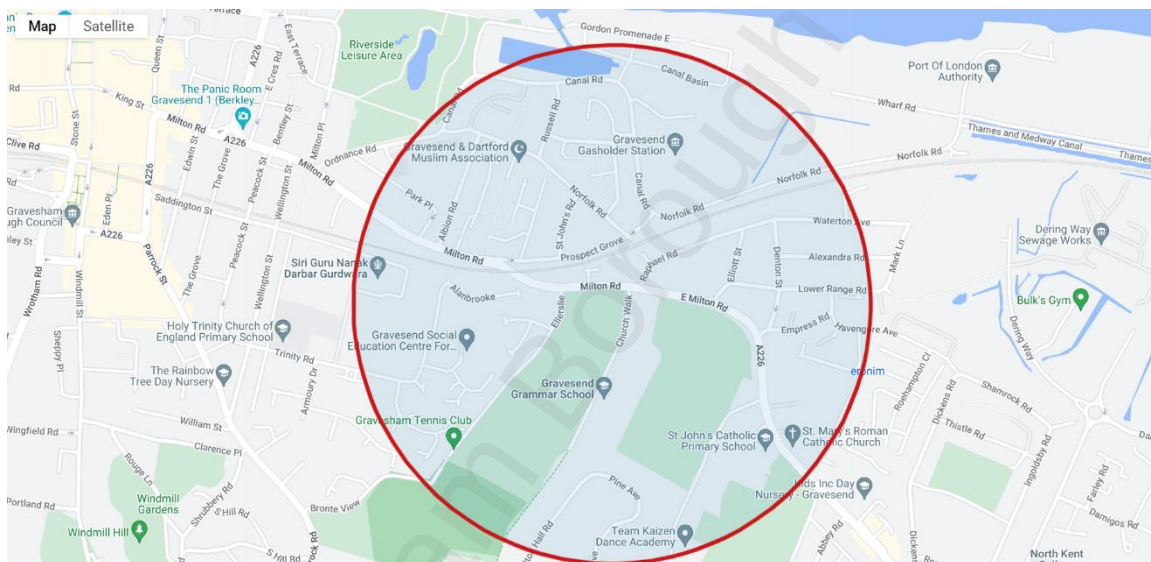
Virtual Public Exhibition

3.5.1 To ensure McCarthy Stone could provide a safe and inclusive consultation, a virtual public exhibition was hosted on the project website. This allowed the local community to explore the initial proposals in detail and respond to them with their views, comments, and suggestions.

3.5.2. The virtual public exhibition was open for comments on the project's website between **Thursday 22 September 2022 and Thursday 06 October 2022**.

3.1.3 The purpose of the virtual exhibition was to present the proposals to the wider community and gain additional feedback prior to submitting a full planning application.

3.1.4 An invitation newsletter and feedback postcards were distributed to **circa 2,000 local households and businesses on Thursday 22 September 2022** advising them of the proposals and the forthcoming virtual public consultation. The following map illustrates the distribution area.



A map depicting the virtual consultation invitation distribution area

3.1.5 The following stakeholders were also invited to view the virtual public exhibition and were sent an email with the invitation newsletter attached on **Thursday 22 September 2022**:

- Members of Gravesham Borough Council's Cabinet
- Members of Gravesham Borough Council's Planning Committee
- Ward Members for Central of Gravesham Borough Council
- Division Member for Gravesend East of Kent County Council
- Member of Parliament for Gravesham
- Age UK North West Kent
- Gravesend Grammar School

3.1.6 The invitation newsletter contained the following:

- Background to the site
- An elevation of the proposals for the site
- Details of the virtual public consultation
- An overview of the proposals
- Information about McCarthy Stone
- Benefits of the proposals

3.1.7 A copy of the invitation newsletter can be found in the Appendices.

3.1.8 The invitation also displayed details of McCarthy Stone's freephone information line and the project's dedicated website address to allow people to request further information.

3.1.9 The invite letters also contained a postage paid feedback card allowing recipients to provide the project team with their early impressions. This allowed McCarthy Stone to get an even wider feedback response from the community.

3.1.10 The virtual public exhibition displayed details about the proposal, which included information about:

- Welcome and purpose of the event
- Information about McCarthy Stone
- Site background and Planning context
- An overview of the proposals
- The initial design approach
- Landscaping
- Highways
- Local need and benefits
- Details on how to provide feedback

3.1.11 Copies of the virtual exhibition downloadable brochure can be found in the Appendices.

3.1.12 Local residents could provide feedback by submitting the feedback form on the project website, emailing our project team via feedback@mccarthystoneconsultation.co.uk with comments or questions, or calling the freephone information line on **0800 298 7040**.

3.1.13 To ensure that as many members of the community could provide feedback as possible, the project team also offered for the virtual exhibition materials and a feedback form to be posted alongside a pre-paid envelope to provide comments on the plans.

3.1.14 A copy of the feedback form is included within the Appendices.

Media Relations

3.6.1 To ensure the wider community was aware of the public exhibition, a detailed press release was issued to The Gravesend Reporter, Kent Live and Kent Online. The press release contained the following information:

- Background to the site
- Details of the virtual exhibition
- A brief overview of the proposals
- The local housing needs
- Benefits of the proposals
- McCarthy Stone's contact information including the freephone information line and the website address

3.1.2 A copy of the media release is included in the Appendices.

Post-paid and 0800 Comment Facility

3.7.1 During and after the consultation, access to a freephone telephone information line was offered to those who wished to find out more about the proposals, or to register their comments via the telephone.

3.1.3 The telephone number used (**0800 298 7040**) was in operation Monday-Friday between the hours of 9.00am and 5.30pm. A message facility was available for voicemails to be left and responded to at the earliest opportunity to ensure information was readily available and that queries or concerns were addressed.

3.1.4 Information was given to callers where possible and, if questions were of a technical nature, these were passed on to project team members.

3.1.5 A freepost envelope was available, on request, alongside paper copies of the virtual consultation boards and a feedback form.

4 Review of Comments

4.1 Overall Feedback Received

4.1.1 A deadline of **06 October 2022** was set for feedback. This Feedback Analysis reviews all feedback received at the time of writing this report, up to **07 October 2022**.

4.1.2 2,022 local residents were issued an invitation to the public consultation, with a total of 12 providing feedback. During the consultation period we received 1 pre-paid postcard, 1 email and 10 online feedback forms concerning the proposed development of the former Bowls Club, Church Walk, Gravesend.

Supportive	Supportive with comments	Object	Unsure	No answer	Total
4	2	3	0	3	12
33%	17%	25%	0%	25%	100%

4.1.3 **33%** of the overall feedback was supportive of the proposal, with a further **17%** supporting the principle of development, whilst also providing additional comments. **Therefore, 50% of overall feedback was positive towards the proposals. 25%** of the responses received objected to the proposals.

4.1.4 Those who supported the proposal were positive about the site's development and the need for Extra Care accommodation in Gravesend. There was also an agreement that the plans represent a good use of the current site, noting that the plans were clear and concise, welcoming McCarthy Stone's aim of meeting the local housing need for this type of accommodation.

4.1.5 The key concerns raised by those who objected, including references to the site being located near a busy main road, and noise from the road, school, and rugby matches.

Further comments were raised regarding the following:

- Some residents felt that the development could create a dangerous corner just off the 'Ellerslie' where the proposal and road intersect.
- A resident felt dismayed that another recreation ground was being taken away, something that has apparently become common in the area.
- There were reservations about the proposed design and whether it would fit in with the environmental requirements needed for net carbon.

- 4.1.6 **54 visitors** logged onto the consultation website across **81 sessions** between **22 September 2022 and 6 October 2022**. A session is a unique visit to the website, by an individual; on average, each user had **00:03:08** length session on the site.
- 4.1.7 The virtual consultation had a **bounce rate of 48.15%** (the number of visitors who exit the website after viewing one page)

Below is a top-line breakdown of all comments received from the 1 pre-paid postcards, 10 online feedback forms and 1 email response.

N.B: The table below summarises the comments and concerns of all postcards and online feedback forms, emails and a posted feedback form received up to 6th October (1 postcards, 1 email and 10 online feedback forms)

Analysis of all feedback – 12 responses

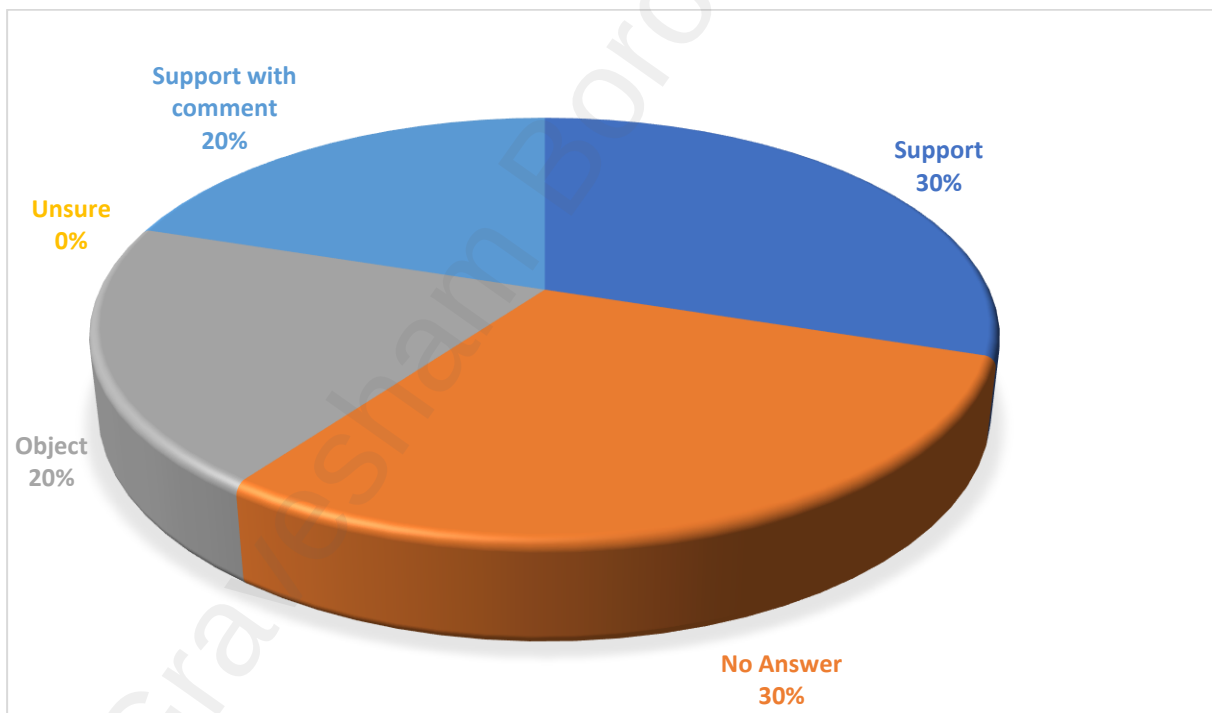
Theme	Frequency
Site being a good use for specialist housing	4
Proximity of the site to a main road and bus stop	3
Concern over traffic congestion caused by Gravesend Grammar School	4
Loss of a recreation ground in the surrounding area	2
The proposed site is located nearby a spot of frequent vandalism	1
Proposed buildings being too high	1
Concern over the local need for retirement accommodation	1
Ensure adequate width of green borders	1
Noise from local school being an issue	1
Environmental concerns over traffic pollution	1
Comments around size of apartments	1
Concern around flooding	1
Overdevelopment in green belt areas already	1
Concern about additional vehicle parking once open	1
Concerns around design	1

Below is a breakdown of the responses to the specific questions featured on the online feedback form

N.B. The pre-paid postcards did not address the same specific questions which feature on the online feedback forms and the posted feedback form and are therefore analysed separately below. The first part of the analysis relates to the 10 online feedback forms, it should also be noted that not all respondents provided a comment to each question asked on the feedback forms or simply answered 'Yes' or 'No'.

Support	Supportive with comments	Object	Unsure	No answer	Total
3	2	2	0	3	10
30%	20%	20%	0%	30%	100%

30% of overall feedback via the online feedback form was positive of the proposals, with an additional 20% supporting the principle of development, offering additional constructive comments. **Therefore, 50% of the feedback received online was supportive in principle to the proposals.** 20% of feedback via the online feedback forms objected to the proposals in principle.



Review of the responses to the specific questions featured on the online and posted feedback forms.

Question 1: How informative have you found this consultation?

N.B. Some residents left the space blank.

Very informative	Somewhat informative	Not informative	Don't know	Total
1	2	1	2	6
17%	33%	17%	33%	100%

Overall, 50% of feedback received online found the consultation on the proposals for this site to be informative.

Question 2: Do you welcome the provision of specialist housing for local older people in your area?

N.B Not all respondents provided an answer to this question, four residents simply answered 'Yes.'

Positive comments

"This type of facility is needed more now the population is getting older, surviving longer and needing reduced responsibility for day-to-day tasks."

Constructive comments and reservations

"Whilst any additional housing is welcome, your proposal looks like it will cram 60 odd people into very small flats, more information as to their size and arrangements would be welcomed."

"The use of render should be reconsidered due to the local proximity of trees and the building being next to a major road and next to the bus stop. Render will work as a sponge to the environment and either become green due to the trees or grey due to the traffic pollution! This is also not in keeping with the local architecture in the vicinity and is a cheap architectural solution to resolve the issue of breaking up massing on the building. Also from the artist impression I cannot see how this building can deal with the environmental requirements for NET Carbon design. Will the building include for VP's/ air or ground source heat pumps to aid in reducing the energy consumption of the building?"

"Absolut shocking, another recreation ground taken away. All of Gravesend green spaces disappearing fast. Leave alone and move on."

Question 3: Do you consider that this is a good use of this site for specialist housing for local older people?

N.B. Not all respondents provided an answer to this question, four residents simply answered 'Yes.'

Positive comments

"Yes as long as it is private funded and not council."

"The site would seem ideal as it adjacent to a sports club and recreational area for those wishing to use any of the facilities and should also maintain the tranquillity often found in this locality.."

"This is a very good use of the site, but I have concerns on the proximity to the bus stop which gets vandalised and would not wish the same to this new building."

Constructive comments and reservations

"Probably not, they will soon get tired of the noise from the road, school, rugby practice and matches."

"Yes, but I don't know if it outweighs the need for housing for younger local people."

"This is a very good use of the site, but I have concerns on the proximity to the bus stop which gets vandalised and would not wish the same to this new building."

Question 4: Do you have any comments on the design and layout of the proposals?

N.B Not all respondents provided an answer to this question.

Positive comments

"Looks good."

Constructive comments and reservations

"My only comment would be to ensure there is adequate width of green border along the eastern side at Church Walk as the Grammar school is intending to substantially widen this roadway to improve access to the school."

"So noted the MEP strategy needs to be considered to balance the buildings energy consumption. Also from the artist impression the north west corner looks very close to the Culvert shown on the GA plan."

Question 5: Do you have any general comments about the proposals?

N.B The responses received via the ten pre-paid postcards and the three emails, have also been included within this section. Not all respondents provided an answer to this question.

Positive comments

"This would seem a good project to help meet the housing targets for our area."

Constructive comments and reservations

"Yes, the proposed road entrance will be very dangerous as it is just off the corner entrance into Ellerslie, anyone turning right out of it will be in danger of collision with vehicles turning left into Ellerslie from the main road which is blind to both vehicles, the entrance would be safer in Church Walk, Also this will reduce the amount of parking in Ellerslie and at school times and match days cause chaos as people vie for a 'good spot', already people park on the opposite verge and as it is the road with cars parked currently is effectively only one way at a time in and out of Sycamore/Copperbeach Close's and Donald Biggs Drive, which is the

entrance to the Rugby Club to which you're suggesting an increase in traffic as they will be able to put on more Rugby!"

"I do agree but feel the architectural detailing needs to be improved."

"Absolut shocking, another recreation ground taken away. All of Gravesend green spaces disappearing fast. Leave alone and move on."

Email Feedback

We received a single piece of email feedback from a local resident, bellow is the breakdown of their comments.

Themes

The junction of Milton Road, Church Walk and Raypheal Road is prone to flooding

Both Church Walk and Ellerslie entrances are very close to the Grammar School

Entrance to Ellerslie is currently used as a pick-up point for children at the nearby school

The entrance end of the Ellerslie is used as a rugby pitch on certain days, will this continue?

5 Response to Comments

5.1.1 All comments received have been reviewed by the project team and where possible amendments were made to the proposals. Many of the issues raised are covered in the application documents which accompany this response.

5.1.2 During the consultation feedback review period, McCarthy Stone's project team responded directly to a number of specific enquiries and questions relating to the proposals and individual responses were drafted and issued.

5.1.3 Following detailed responses from various consultees and stakeholders, the following elements of the scheme have been altered:

- Revised pallet of materials to better reflect the local vernacular.
- Introduction of a swale as part of a surface water scheme.
- Slight parking realignment.
- Subsequent application for the rugby club to include floodlight relocation / improvements, fencing

6 Post-Application Consultation

6.1 On-going Stakeholder Engagement

6.1.1 McCarthy Stone will ensure information continually flows through existing channels to interested parties.

6.2 Updating Materials

6.1.2 The following website <https://mccarthystoneconsultation.co.uk/gravesend/>, will be updated at the following points during the application process:

- Upon submission, details of the proposals will be available online
- During the process, additional information will be posted
- Once a decision has been made

6.3 Letters to Interested Parties

6.1.3 A letter will be sent to the following groups and individuals informing them that the application has been submitted alongside addressing the main comments raised throughout the consultation:

- 57 residents and businesses within the immediate vicinity of the site
- Members of Gravesham Borough Council's Cabinet
- Members of Gravesham Borough Council's Planning Committee
- Ward Members for Central of Gravesham Borough Council
- Division Member for Gravesend East of Kent County Council
- Member of Parliament for Gravesham
- Age UK North West Kent
- Gravesend Grammar School
- Those that engaged in the consultation process and/or submitted feedback.

6.1.4 Those who requested further information by telephone, letter or email will be responded to in the most appropriate manner.

6.4 Continued Media Contact

6.1.5 To ensure the wider community is aware of the submission of the planning application a detailed press release will be issued to local publications (including *The Gravesend Reporter*, *Kent Live* and *Kent Online*). The press release will contain the following information:

- A brief history of the site
- Notification that the application has been submitted

- An overview of the proposals
- Information regarding the consultation which has taken place
- McCarthy Stone's contact information including the free phone information line number and the website address

Gravesham Borough Council

7 Appendices

- Copy of the stakeholder invitation email
- Copy of the one-to-one resident meeting invitation letter
- Copy of the virtual exhibition invitation newsletter
- Copy of the reply cards
- Copy of the pre-exhibition press release
- Copy of the virtual exhibition home page

Hello,

Proposals to deliver a retirement community at the former GRFC Bowls Club, Church Walk, Gravesend

McCarthy Stone, the UK's leading developer and manager of retirement communities, has recently acquired an interest in land at the former Bowls Club, Church Walk, Gravesend. They are in the early stages of working up proposals for the site's redevelopment for a specialist retirement community for local older people.

With a significant reduction in membership in recent years, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, the club does not have the number of members required for it to be financially viable, and has struggled to meet its running costs. With a reduction in fixtures, with limited players, it is understandable that the core of their remaining members have since joined other neighbouring clubs.

The sale of the Bowls Club will enable the funding of additional floodlighting, as well as drainage and levelling improvements to the adjacent rugby pitches, which will allow for more matches to be played at the Rugby and Football Club and help increase its membership and assist in more local people to either take up or return to playing rugby.

The Club is also looking at various Clubhouse improvements, as well as possible improvements to the cricket pitches.

The emerging proposals for the site in Gravesend consist of:

- 56 purpose-built, specifically designed apartments to encourage independent living
- A mixture of one- and two- bedroomed units available
- Tailored shared facilities within the building, including a bistro restaurant, wellbeing suite and communal lounge as well as a hotel-style guest suite for guests
- 33 associated car parking spaces

According to Gravesham Borough Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment, the over 65s population is predicted to rise at a 'significant level' over the course of the next 20 years. Redeveloping this site with retirement accommodation will help provide much needed homes for local older people. Furthermore, national planning policy guidance identifies the need to increase the provision of homes for older people as 'critical.'

We will fully demonstrate the need for retirement housing during the application.

As a local stakeholder to the development, we would like to invite you to an individual virtual meeting to discuss the emerging proposals with you and answer any questions you may have at this stage.

Our project team will be available to meet with you at a mutually convenient date and time, of your choosing. The meetings will be held using the online platform Microsoft Teams, or via telephone if you'd prefer.

As part of our commitment to community engagement, we will also be arranging for a virtual exhibition to display our proposals to the wider community in due course and we will ensure you receive details of this.

The aim of the virtual exhibition will be to provide details about the scheme to the local community, and to receive further feedback on our proposal which, where possible, will be fed into the final plans prior to the submission of a full planning application.

If a virtual meeting is of interest, please contact Miles Willshire at BECG via email at miles.willshire@becg.com to arrange a 30-minute timeslot.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Wickett
Divisional Managing Director
McCarthy Stone

Gravesham Borough Council

02 September 2022

Information line: 0800 298 7040

Dear Neighbour,

Proposals to deliver a retirement community at the former GRFC Bowls Club, Church Walk, Gravesend

McCarthy Stone, the UK's leading developer and manager of retirement communities, has recently acquired an interest in land at the former Bowls Club, Church Walk, Gravesend. They are in the early stages of working up proposals for the site's redevelopment for a specialist retirement community for local older people.

With a significant reduction in membership in recent years, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, the club does not have the number of members required for it to be financially viable, and has struggled to meet its running costs. With a reduction in fixtures, with limited players, it is understandable that the core of their remaining members have since joined other neighbouring clubs.

The sale of the Bowls Club will enable the funding of additional floodlighting, as well as drainage and levelling improvements to the adjacent rugby pitches, which will allow for more matches to be played at the Rugby and Football Club and help increase its membership and assist in more local people to either take up or return to playing rugby.

The Club is also looking at various Clubhouse improvements, as well as possible improvements to the cricket pitches.

The emerging proposals for the site in Gravesend consist of:

- 56 purpose-built, specifically designed apartments to encourage independent living
- A mixture of one- and two- bedroomed units available
- Tailored shared facilities within the building, including a communal lounge as well as a hotel-style guest suite for guests
- 33 associated car parking spaces

According to Gravesham Borough Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment, the over 65s population is predicted to rise at a 'significant level' over the course of the next 20 years. Redeveloping this site with retirement accommodation will help provide much needed homes for local older people. Furthermore, national planning policy guidance identifies the need to increase the provision of homes for older people as 'critical.'

We will fully demonstrate the need for retirement housing during the application.

As a neighbour to the development, we would like to invite you to an individual virtual meeting to discuss the emerging proposals with you and answer any questions you may have at this stage.

Our project team will be available to meet with you at a mutually convenient date and time, of your choosing. The meetings will be held using the online platform Microsoft Teams, or via telephone if you'd prefer.

As part of our commitment to community engagement, we will also be arranging for a virtual exhibition to display our proposals to the wider community in due course and we will ensure you receive details of this.

The aim of the virtual exhibition will be to provide details about the scheme to the local community, and to receive further feedback on our proposal which, where possible, will be fed into the final plans prior to the submission of a full planning application.

If a virtual meeting is of interest, please contact Miles Willshire at BECG via email at miles.willshire@becg.com to arrange a 30-minute timeslot.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Wickett
Divisional Managing Director
McCarthy Stone

Gravesham Borough Council

Proposals to deliver a later living community in Gravesend

McCARTHY STONE
Life, well lived



Proposed elevation

WELCOME

McCarthy Stone, the UK's leading developer and manager of retirement communities, has recently acquired an interest in a parcel of land belonging to Gravesend Rugby Football Club (GRFC), formerly occupied by the GRFC Bowls Club, Church Walk, Gravesend, and is in the early stages of working up proposals for the redevelopment of the site with a high-quality Retirement Living PLUS (Extra Care) scheme.

As part of our commitment to community engagement, McCarthy Stone has recently commenced a community consultation programme to inform local people of the proposals and gather early feedback which, where possible, will be used to inform the plans prior to their submission to Gravesham Borough Council.

If you have any comments at this early stage, please take a moment to let us know your thoughts by completing the online feedback form on the virtual consultation website or by completing the enclosed feedback card and returning to us in the postage paid envelope.

OUR PURPOSE

Since building our first development in 1977, we have become the UK's leading developer and manager of retirement communities.

We are focused on developing beautiful, sustainable and more affordable places to live, with flexible services and choices of ownership options at the core of our developments, designed around the needs of our customers and their families.

We believe that retirement living is so much more than simply deciding to move into a new home that's better suited to our customers' needs. It's also an opportunity for them to embrace a new way of life, to have the freedom to live a lifestyle with more choices and more time to do the things they enjoy.

FIND OUT MORE VIA OUR VIRTUAL EXHIBITION

We are committed to meaningful community engagement regarding our proposals for the site at GRFC Bowls Club, Church Walk in Gravesend.

Our virtual exhibition will be live between **Thursday 22nd September** and **Thursday 6th October 2022** and can be accessed by visiting mccarthystoneconsultation.co.uk/gravesend or by scanning the QR code to the right.



This will be an opportunity to find out more information, as well as providing your feedback by completing an online feedback form. All feedback received will be evaluated and considered before a planning application is submitted. You can also email your views to feedback@mccarthystoneconsultation.co.uk.

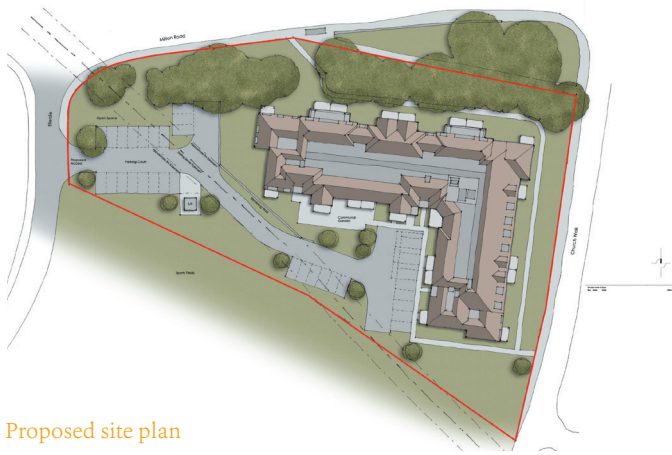
If you are unable to access the internet, please contact us on the freephone line, **0800 298 7040**, and a member of the team will arrange for copies of the virtual consultation information to be sent in the post.

UNABLE TO GET ONLINE?

If you are unable to access the internet, please contact us on the freephone line, **0800 298 7040**, and you'll be able to speak with a member of the project team and arrange for copies of the virtual consultation information to be sent in the post.

You can also write to us at **Consultation Response, BECG, 8 - 10 Mansion House Place, London, EC4N 8BJ**

McCarthy & Stone Retirement Lifestyles Limited. Registered Office 4th Floor, 100 Holdenhurst Road, Bournemouth, BH8 8AQ. No.6622231, Registered in England and Wales



Proposed site plan

OUR PROPOSAL

- Much needed Retirement Living PLUS (Extra Care) accommodation for local older people
- 62 purpose-built apartments to encourage independent living, with a mixture of one-and two-bedroom units available
- Ideal sustainable location close to public transport links, shops and services
- An attractive building for the site with the design approach taking inspiration from the local vernacular
- Associated landscaping and planting, including a communal garden for both residents and guests to enjoy
- A sensitive neighbour for those living near to the site
- Low levels of traffic generation and car ownership
- Associated car parking spaces, for residents, visitors and staff
- Proposed vehicular access to the development is off 'Ellerslie' to the west of the site. Pedestrian access is proposed off both Milton Road and Church Walk, north and east of the site.

REDEVELOPING THE GRFC BOWLS CLUB

With a significant reduction in membership in recent years, impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and rising costs, the GRFC Bowls Club is no longer financially viable for Gravesend Rugby Club. With a corresponding reduction in fixtures, and better facilities elsewhere, it is understandable that the core of their remaining members have since joined other neighbouring clubs where there remains plenty of capacity.

The sale of GRFC Bowls Club will enable significant investment in the rest of Gravesend Rugby Club with the provision of improved security additional floodlighting, as well as drainage and levelling to the adjacent rugby pitches, which will allow for more matches to be played at the Rugby Club and help increase its membership and assist more local people to either take up or return to playing rugby.

Gravesend Rugby Club is also looking at various clubhouse improvements, as well as supporting facility enhancements for the wide range of sports offered on site e.g. cricket, tennis, petanque, hockey.

RETIREMENT LIVING PLUS

Retirement Living PLUS is a form of Extra Care housing designed specifically for the over-70s. They also offer many on-site facilities such as restaurants, well-being suites and function rooms. Importantly, they also provide on-site CQC-regulated care and support packages to assist those needing additional help.

Designed to make life a little easier

Our developments are carefully designed with the needs of our customers in mind, with step-free access throughout the building.

The beautiful apartments are all built to generous internal space standards and are adaptable for wheelchair use. They are built to incorporate features designed to help customers maintain their independence, such as 24-hour emergency call points, level-access bathrooms, good lighting, and switches / electrical sockets at a raised height to reduce bending.

Stunning shared spaces

Along with the benefits of independent living within their own apartments, residents can enjoy activities in the shared spaces within the development, including a communal lounge as well as a hotel-style guest suite and landscaped outside spaces.

These shared spaces within retirement communities help to combat loneliness in later life more effectively, as there is a ready-made community available. We make this a priority within our developments, ensuring that a range of activities, trips and opportunities to make new friends are available to our residents.

BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSAL

- Support for the local economy, with a typical 62-unit retirement development generating £757,640 of spending per year, much of which goes to local shops, supporting retail jobs and keeping shops open.
- Typically, most residents moving to a McCarthy Stone development move within a 5-mile radius from the development, releasing family housing back into the market
- The average 80-year-old feels 10 years younger after moving into specialist retirement accommodation
- McCarthy Stone's homeowners are around half as likely to be lonely, making them significantly less likely to develop dementia

By its very nature, specialist retirement accommodation is regarded as a 'passive' form of residential development and considered to be an entirely 'sympathetic neighbour,' with extremely low levels of car ownership and traffic generation.

UNABLE TO GET ONLINE?

If you are unable to access the internet, please contact us on the freephone line, **0800 298 7040**, and you'll be able to speak with a member of the project team and arrange for copies of the virtual consultation information to be sent in the post.

You can also write to us at **Consultation Response, BECG, 8 - 10 Mansion House Place, London, EC4N 8BJ**

McCarthy & Stone Retirement Lifestyles Limited. Registered Office 4th Floor, 100 Holdenhurst Road, Bournemouth, BH8 8AQ. No.6622231, Registered in England and Wales

Privacy Statement

By filling-in this form you are agreeing that BECG can hold and process your personal data in relation to this public consultation exercise.

- BECG will only share your personal data with McCarthy Stone and its project team for planning evaluation purposes only.
- Your identifiable, personal data will not be used for any other purposes without your consent.

BECG and McCarthy Stone will use your data to:

- Send you updates about the project (where you provide us with your contact details).
- Develop a Statement of Community Involvement (or similar document) about this public consultation that will be submitted to the planning authority or similar body; this will be a publicly available document. Your comments will be anonymous, and we will only identify you in these reports with your express permission.

If you provide us with your contact details, we might also contact you to ask you more about the comments you've made.

BECG acts on behalf of McCarthy Stone to run public consultation activities.

About the Consultation

We welcome feedback from local residents and stakeholders on our proposals for the redevelopment of the GRFC Bowls Club, Church Walk, Gravesend. McCarthy Stone believes that the views of the local community are important, along with conservation and economic factors, when developing sites.

Your Details

If you choose not to fill in all parts of this section, we will not be able to include your comments in the consultation process.

Title (Miss/Mrs/Ms/Mr/Other)

First Name or Initial

Surname

Postcode

Age Group (please circle)

Under 13 13-17 18-24 25-34 35-44 45-54
55-64 65-74 75-84 85+

Your Contact Details

We will use these details to contact you and update you on the proposals. You don't have to fill in this section if you'd rather we didn't contact you.

Address

Telephone

Email

Do you support these proposals?

YES

NO

***PLEASE COMPLETE IN BLOCK CAPITALS**

Once completed, please place this in the Business Reply envelope and post it to us. You do not need to affix a stamp.

Any additional comments

Data Protection

We hold all personal data in accordance with the retained EU law version of the General Data Protection Regulation ((EU) 2016/679) (the "UK GDPR"), as it forms part of the law of England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland by virtue of section 3 of the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018, the Data Protection Act 2018, the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003 as amended, and any successor legislation. Your personal data will not be transferred outside of the EU. You can see our full Privacy Statement, Data Protection Policy, Data Retention Policy and find out how to make a Subject Access Request at the following website address becg.com/dp or by contacting us on 01962 893 893 / dataprotection@becg.com. You can also find McCarthy Stone's Privacy Statement at mccarthyandstone.co.uk/privacy-and-cookies.

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September 2022– For Immediate Release

Local residents invited to view high-quality Retirement Living PLUS (Extra Care) proposals for Gravesend

McCarthy Stone, the UK's leading developer and manager of retirement communities, has recently acquired an interest in a parcel of land belonging to Gravesend Rugby Football Club (GRFC), formerly occupied by the GRFC Bowls Club, Church Walk, Gravesend. They are in the early stages of working up proposals for the site's redevelopment for a specialist retirement community for local older people.

With a significant reduction in membership in recent years, impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and rising costs, the GRFC Bowls Club is no longer financially viable for Gravesend Rugby Club. With a corresponding reduction in fixtures, and better facilities elsewhere, it is understandable that the core of their remaining members have since joined other neighbouring clubs where there remains plenty of capacity.

The sale of GRFC Bowls Club will enable significant investment in the rest of Gravesend Rugby Club with the provision of improved security additional floodlighting, as well as drainage and levelling to the adjacent rugby pitches, which will allow for more matches to be played at the Rugby Club and help increase its membership and assist more local people to either take up or return to playing rugby.

Gravesend Rugby Club is also looking at various clubhouse improvements, as well as supporting facility enhancements for the wide range of sports offered on site e.g. cricket, tennis, petanque, hockey.

McCarthy Stone's emerging proposals for the site consist of 62 purpose-built, in a range of one and two bedroom units. The site will also benefit from tailored shared facilities within the building, including a communal lounge as well as a hotel-style guest suite, alongside high quality landscaping of the site. Vehicular access to the site is located off 'Ellerslie' to the west of the site, while Pedestrian access is proposed off both Milton Road and Church Walk, north and east of the site respectively. 32 car parking spaces will also be provided for residents, visitors and staff.

According to Gravesham Borough Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment, the over 65s population is predicted to rise at a 'significant level' over the course of the next 20 years. Redeveloping this site with retirement accommodation will help provide much needed homes for local older people. Furthermore, national planning policy guidance identifies the need to increase the provision of homes for older people as 'critical.'

The proposals will also have benefits for the wider housing market, as those moving to the retirement accommodation will 'downsize', thereby releasing much-needed family homes and smaller homes for first-time buyers further down the housing chain as for every three moves into retirement accommodation, two first time buyer homes are freed up in the chain.

McCarthy Stone hopes to submit a planning application in the coming months, following a full review of the feedback it receives during the public consultation. Residents that have any further comments or require more information can contact the project team with any questions via a Freephone Information Line on **0800 298 7040**, by email at feedback@mccarthystoneconsultation.co.uk or by visiting the project website: www.mccarthystoneconsultation.co.uk/gravesend.

The proposals will be available to view and comment on from Thursday 22 September 2022 until Thursday 06 October 2022 via the project's dedicated website www.mccarthystoneconsultation.co.uk/gravesend. Residents who wish to engage in the consultation but cannot access the internet can contact the project team on **0800 298 7040**, who will arrange for a hard copy to be sent.

Andrew Wickett, Divisional Managing Director at McCarthy Stone London and South East, said: *“The virtual exhibition provides us with an important opportunity to understand feedback on our proposals at this early stage. That way, we can incorporate and address the views of the local community into the design process and our plans for the site, where possible.*

“It is important that communities cater to the needs of all their residents. We are proposing a high-quality redevelopment that delivers specialist Extra Care accommodation on a sustainable site, close to shops and facilities in Gravesend. This development would improve accommodation choice for older people in the local area, within a vibrant community of like-minded individuals.”

“Our proposals for Gravesend will also help free up the wider housing market for local families and first-time buyers further down the chain. Our research shows that every McCarthy Stone apartment sold generates at least two moves further down the housing chain. This means this a 62-unit scheme in Gravesend, would likely free up 124 homes for local people at differing stages of the housing ladder.”

- Ends -

For more information contact:

Jacob Salawu

Email: jacob.salawu@becg.com

Telephone: **0800 298 7040**

Notes to editors:

About McCarthy Stone:

McCarthy Stone is the UK's leading developer and manager of retirement communities. Its customers maintain their independence within a beautiful, secure, contemporary private home, while enjoying the peace of mind that help and care is on hand if needed. Its communities make a positive difference to the lives of its customers and the organisation is focused on supporting and championing the role, wellbeing and happiness of older people in society.

McCarthy Stone has two main product ranges – Retirement Living, and Retirement Living PLUS. Retirement Living developments provide independence in private apartments designed specifically for the over-60s, as well as facilities such as communal lounges and guest suites that support companionship. Retirement Living PLUS developments, which are a form of Extra Care housing, are designed specifically for the over-70s, offer all of this plus more on-site facilities such as restaurants, well-being suites and function rooms. Importantly, they also provide on-site CQC-regulated care and support packages to assist those needing additional help.

All developments built since 2010 are managed by the company's in-house management services team, providing peace of mind that it will look after customers and their properties for the long term. As of November 2021, McCarthy Stone operates 475 developments across the UK for more than 20,000 people.

McCarthy Stone's commitment to quality and customer service continues to be recognised by residents. In March 2021, the Group received the full five-star rating for customer satisfaction from the Home Builders Federation for the sixteenth consecutive year – making it the only UK developer, of any size or type, to achieve this accolade.

For further information, please visit www.mccarthystone.co.uk

A new extra care community for Gravesend.

Exciting new proposal

Thank you for taking the time to visit our consultation website.

McCarthy Stone, the UK's leading developer and manager of retirement communities, has recently acquired an interest in land at the former Bowls Club, Church Walk, Gravesend.

We are bringing forward proposals for a new specialist extra care community to help address the needs of Gravesend's growing ageing population.

