

Present:

Ben Johnson – Obsidian – Planning Director
Graeme Warriner – Stantec – Planning team
Kate Greatrix – Stantec – Communications and Engagement team
Cllr Nigel Stratton – PPC (Chair of the meeting)
Cllr Katy Brooks – PPC
Cllr Graham Hall - PPC
Cllr Christine Snow – PPC
Helen Munro – Clerk

1. **Welcome**

Cllr Stratton welcomed everyone to the meeting, and everyone introduced themselves.

2. **Purpose & confirm minutes will be published in public domain**

It was agreed that minutes of the meeting will be taken and circulated to all. The minutes would not be confidential. The project team are here to brief representatives of Pembury Parish Council (PPC) and for PPC to clarify any items.

Any future publicity as a result of this meeting should be agreed between PPC and Developers and a copy is sent out to each other in advance, to get the other parties' agreement to what is being said.

3. **General Update on the Development**

- a. The emerging proposals had already been shared with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC) in their pre-application meetings. The current indicative layout has changed from previous version.
- b. 103 dwellings are currently proposed. The mix of housing is not yet agreed.
- c. The pedestrian and cycle link from PE3 has been simplified and the main pedestrian / cycle link goes through middle of site then drops down to the existing footpath by A21.
- d. The green open space area has been enlarged from previous plans. It will include natural green play space.
- e. Existing farm buildings on the site will all be demolished.
- f. The entrance road will be widened from the existing Hubbles Farm entrance off Hastings Road, opposite Belfield Road. Modelling for the entrance has

been undertaken and shows it is effective. One of the existing houses fronting Hastings Road would be demolished to allow for a sufficiently wide access road. A raised platform is proposed at the junction to slow traffic.

- g. Traffic calming measures would be installed along Hastings Road including narrowing the road in places and adding parking bays. This has been discussed in detail with Kent Country Council (KCC) who agree with the approach. Full details of the scheme have not been agreed yet. Details of the current scheme to be shared with PPC.
- h. Developers of PE1, PE2 and PE3 continue to work collectively on the transport scheme for the whole area. However, the PE1 development is further behind the other two sites but they have given agreement in principle.
- i. There will be a viewing corridor through the site from close to the A21 over the green open space in the development, across the village and beyond to the Weald.
- j. Topography and landscape levels are currently being reviewed.
- k. A 40m buffer zone is included in the scheme between the A21 and housing with the exception of a small amount of the housing being in a 30 to 40m buffer zone.
- l. Specialist consultants have been appointed to undertake air quality tests.
- m. The plans show 40 dwellings per hectare in the built section of the northern section of the site near existing houses. It reduces to 35 dwellings per hectare in the built section of the southern area near the A21. The average for the whole site is 21 dwellings per hectare, which includes the public open space.
- n. There is 2.13 hectares of green infrastructure and 2.93 hectares of developable area currently proposed.
- o. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) will be required for the site.
- p. Trees will include native and other locally distinctive varieties.

Affordable housing will be 40% of the total number of dwellings, likely to be 41 units. They will work with TWBC to provide the housing mix required by them which will meet the Government definition of Affordable housing at the time. They would be working on a more detailed plan in the next couple of months and would share the range of likely dwelling sizes with PPC once they had done so.

- q. The area set aside for future expansion of the cemetery will be released in two tranches. The first will be the western half of the site. The eastern side will be released in approximately 50 years. In the meantime, the eastern side will be used for natural green open space and will be managed for biodiversity. Legal agreements would be needed to ensure this happens.
- r. An outline application to be submitted to TWBC first and then a 'Reserved Matters' application to follow in due course. An outline application will confirm which areas are to be built on, which areas are open spaces, the maximum heights of buildings, the maximum density, access to the site and landscaping. The outline application stage still allows a degree of flexibility.
- s. Submission of the outline application is likely to be in May 2024. If everything went to plan building could start from end of 2025 at the earliest.

4. **General Update on Community Engagement**

- a. Liaison with PPC was the first step with their community engagement. They would liaise with ward councillors next then go out to key local groups such as the Pembury Society, local schools, doctors' surgery. The dentist and Cricket Club were also suggested as key stakeholders.
- b. A public exhibition in the pavilion would be held on Tuesday 27 February from 2pm to 7:30pm.
- c. An online webinar was planned for Wednesday 28 February from 6pm.
- d. There will be a dedicated website with information and answers to queries raised.
- e. The public consultation will start on 27 February and run until 15 March.
- f. A leaflet flyer would be delivered to 658 homes around the development site to advertise the public events. PPC requested that all homes in the village be included rather than limiting it around the site, which was agreed by the developer. Delivery is likely to be from 15 February.
- g. Posters would also be displayed around the village in various sites.
- h. Information will also be shared via social media using the local village groups.
- i. They will feedback to PPC on the feedback received and any changes proposed as a result of the consultation.

5. Questions

- a. Traffic calming along Hastings Road was queried and would have a significant impact on people parking their cars there. Narrowing the road would cause problems for buses and large vans to get through. The scheme to be shared with PPC.
- b. The intention is to make Hastings Road a slower road, reducing speed to 20mph. The Transport consultant will be at the public consultation events.
- c. The capacity of the site entrance was queried. However, it was confirmed that the entrance had been modelled to ensure lorries could access the site without any issues.
- d. Concern was raised about the junction of the new development, Hastings Road and Belfield Road as historically there had been fatalities here before the bypass was built.
- e. A query about consultation with emergency services to ensure emergency vehicles are not negatively impacted by the traffic calming measures was raised. They had been consulted.
- f. Concern about the air quality and noise nuisance from the A21 was raised. The design and layout of the site would minimise the impact of the noise from the A21. A 1.8m acoustic fence might be needed and would be landscaped. An air quality assessment would be undertaken. It was highlighted that the A21 was used more in the summer months, causing serious congestion along the A21. The A21 is likely to be dualled from Blue Boys in the long term but it was a long way off.
- g. Concern was raised about the narrowness of the footpath by A21 which was not currently suitable for a cycleway. A query was raised to clarify what needs to be done to designate the path for cycling.
- h. Concern about who can get the affordable housing was raised. PPC wanted this to be allocated to local residents. It is likely that legal agreements will be needed (to include any future Housing Association providing social housing for rent) to ensure this is the case. Affordable housing currently included social rent, affordable rent, build to rent and rent to buy, affordable home ownership, shared ownership and shared equity.
- i. Concerns were raised about vehicular access into the western part of the cemetery extension as existing burials blocked a route. Options would be looked into.
- j. A legal process to ensure the eastern part of the cemetery extension was transferred to PPC after the 50 years would be needed. Freehold ownership

of the area would be required rather than a lease or licence due to the nature of the site usage.

- k. PPC would need to liaise directly with the Cricket Club if they wished to lease some of the western side of the cemetery extension to them in the short term.

- l. Surface water will drain into a pond / grass basin by the entrance to the site. Possible hidden wells and springs could be in the area as known wells and springs were nearby.