
LAND NORTH OF THANET WAY
WHITSTABLE

STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

ON BEHALF OF
DEVINE HOMES PLC

JUNE 2015

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WHISTABLE**

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Project Ref:	23907/A5
Status:	Final
Issue/Rev:	01
Date:	11/06/2015
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CONTENTS

PAGE NO

1.0	INTRODUCTION	01
2.0	LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND	02
3.0	THE APPROACH TO PRE-APPLICATION ENGAGEMENT	04
4.0	PUBLIC EXHIBITION	08
5.0	KEY STAKEHOLDERS	18
6.0	CONCLUSION	23

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A	PUBLIC EXHIBITION DISPLAY BOARDS
APPENDIX B	2009 CONCEPT PLAN
APPENDIX C	2010 CONCEPT PLAN
APPENDIX D	QUESTIONNAIRE SAMPLE AND SUMMARY OF RESPONSES
APPENDIX E	ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN
APPENDIX F	LETTER FROM FRIENDS OF DUNCAN DOWN – 4TH MAY 2010
APPENDIX G	LETTER FROM FRIENDS OF DUNCAN DOWN – 11TH NOVEMBER 2014
APPENDIX H	LETTER FROM STAGECOACH – 15TH MAY 2015

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement ('SCI') has been prepared by Barton Willmore LLP on behalf of Devine Homes PLC (the 'Applicant') to accompany a planning application submitted to Canterbury City Council ('CCC') for the following proposed development:

"Outline planning application (with all matters reserved except for access) for the demolition of existing buildings and the erection of up to 400 dwellings including affordable housing, extension of Duncan Down, green infrastructure, multi-use games area, parking, access, associated infrastructure and other ancillary works."

- 1.2 This SCI demonstrates how the Applicant has consulted with the local community and key stakeholders regarding the proposed development. In summary, the consultation has included engaging with local councillors, residents, and interested organisations. In addition, discussions have been held with the planning, economic development and infrastructure teams at Canterbury City Council and Kent County Council.
- 1.3 The Applicant also presented the proposals at a pre-application consultation event, 'Ask Whitstable?' which was held at All Saints Church Hall, Whitstable in September 2011 and also via an online forum. This presented an opportunity for local residents, community groups and stakeholders to meet the Applicants and discuss the proposals in person, and to provide written and verbal feedback.
- 1.4 Full details of the proposal are set out in the accompanying application documentation. This SCI describes the level and nature of community engagement and participation undertaken to date in the preparation of the planning application.
- 1.5 It should be noted that the scheme is proposed in Outline form, and opportunities remain for further consultation on the detailed design of the scheme prior to the Reserved Matters stage. This statement outlines how the input from the community and key stakeholders has benefitted the preparation of the development proposals to date, but this should not be seen as the limit to which community involvement will play a role in the design of the development. The local community and key stakeholders will also have opportunities to comment on the detailed design of the development at the reserved matters stage if outline planning permission is granted.

2.0 LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

National

- 2.1 The Government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) on the 27th March 2012. The NPPF states at paragraph 188 entitled 'Pre-application engagement and front loading' that:

"Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community."

- 2.2 Further, Section 4 of the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) (published March 2014) entitled, "Before submitting an application", advises at paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 20-001-20140306 that:

"...pre-application engagement by prospective applicants offers significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system."

- 2.3 The NPPG identifies in this paragraph that engagement can be achieved in a number of ways, including working collaboratively with interested parties at an early stage to identify, understand and seek to resolve issues associated with a proposed development. Statutory consultees have an important role to play at the pre-application stage. The NPPG advises that statutory consultees should take an early, pro-active approach and provide advice in a timely manner. Pre-application engagement with the community is encouraged where it adds value to the process and outcome.

Canterbury City Council

- 2.4 CCC adopted its Statement of Community Involvement ('SCI') in April 2007. Under section 7.2 it advises that:

'Pre-application discussions for complex proposals in particular help to provide a greater understanding of issues and provide a transparent approach to decision making. Involving our community before an application is made allows them to influence developments as they are being designed and generally input into the process. We will therefore encourage applicants to involve the community at this stage on appropriate proposals but will also ensure that the council operate a 'watching brief' to ensure impartiality.'

2.5 The SCI advises that CCC expects applicants to include statements of pre-application discussions, as appropriate, in the formal submission of any applications.

3.0 THE APPROACH TO PRE-APPLICATION ENGAGEMENT

3.1 The Applicants are aware that a planning application for up to 400 new dwellings has the potential to generate interest amongst the local community, and have been keen to ensure that the pre-application discussions with the local community, key stakeholders and the Local Planning Authority have been held at an early stage in the process.

The Strategy

3.2 The consultation engagement strategy can be broken down into the following five categories:

- i. Site promotion through the Local Plan preparation and consultation process;
- ii. Public involvement through undertaking a public exhibition;
- iii. Stakeholder involvement;
- iv. Pre application discussions with CCC; and
- v. Technical pre application discussions with statutory consultees.

3.3 As this SCI and the accompanying Design and Access Statement explain, the Applicants and Development Team have actively engaged with the local community and key stakeholders throughout the evolution of the Proposed Development.

i. Site Promotion through the Local Plan

3.4 The Applicant has promoted the development of the site through all relevant consultation stages of the CCC Local Plan. This has included the submission of representations to the following:

- Core Strategy Options Report Consultation (2010);
- Core Strategy Preferred Options Consultation (2013); and,
- Local Plan Submission Version Consultation (2014).

3.5 The Core Strategy Preferred Option consultation draft and the Local Plan Submission Version consultation draft both identified this site as a strategic allocation for the provision of up to 400 dwellings, an extension of Duncan Down Country Park, and additional public open space, including allotments. Appendix 1 of the Submission Version consultation draft provides an illustrative masterplan of the site which follows the broad theme of the illustrative masterplan submitted for this application – dividing the site with housing concentrated to the

east and public open space to the west. The Local Plan has now been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for examination.

ii. Public Exhibition

- 3.6 The Applicants held a public exhibition at All Saints Church Hall, Whitstable, on Friday 2nd and Saturday 3rd September 2011.
- 3.7 At the exhibition the Applicants 'Vision' for the creation of a unique 'Community Park', together with the development of a high quality residential neighbourhood was presented across a number of presentation panels at the public exhibition. The display boards are provided at Appendix A of this SCI. The presentation boards included information on potential recreation enhancements including the provision of the expansion of Duncan Down, and details of the scale and location of the potential housing area.
- 3.8 The exhibition was also supplemented by an online consultation at www.askwhitstable.com, for those unable to attend the consultation event in person. The consultation event established a broad level of support for the development of the site, particularly with reference to the extension to Duncan Down.
- 3.9 Further details on the public consultation event and how the scheme has responded to the consultation responses can be found in Section 4 of this report.

iii. Pre-Application Consultation with Canterbury City Council

- 3.10 In line with both national and local policy guidance a pre-application meeting was also held with CCC on 9th December 2014. Attendees from CCC included Adrian Verrall (Head of Planning Policy), Ben Young (Principal Planning Officer), Ceri Williams (Planning Officer) and Anna Palmer (Countryside Officer).
- 3.11 Also present at the meeting were representatives from the Applicant and the Applicant's appointed Architect (Clague), Planning and EIA Consultants (Barton Willmore and Howard Courtley Associates) and Ecologist (Chris Blandford Associates). At the pre application meeting the rationale behind the Illustrative Masterplan and Parameter Plans were explained in detail.
- 3.12 Following the pre-application meeting a formal pre-application response was issued by CCC, dated 14th January 2015.

3.13 A summary of the key comments raised at the meeting and in the pre-application response letter are set out below:

- The site is not reliant on any other strategic allocations being brought forward, and the infrastructure required to deliver the development could be provided by the developer through the application process, as such there was a cautious suggestion that the principle of the development could be considered acceptable if the application were to be submitted in advance of the adoption of the emerging Development Plan;
- A general agreement to the sustainable nature of the scheme, and advice that it should be demonstrated through the application process how the development is NPPF compliant. Provision of appropriate soft landscaping to reflect the transition and change in character will be critical to the success of any scheme;
- A summary of the on-site open space requirements was explained, including the provision of allotments, amenity green space, play space areas and sports facilities.
- Bringing the site forward for development would contribute significantly to the Local Planning Authority's housing supply requirements, and 30% affordable housing should be provided and,
- Guidance was provided on the scope and extent of the planning application submission documents, as well as on the likely Section 106 Agreement development contributions.

iv. Pre-Application Consultation with Local Community and Key Stakeholders

3.14 A number of meetings have taken place between Devine Homes (DH) and their representatives with the following groups since 2010:

- Local Community Key Stakeholder Engagement
 - Friends of Duncan Down (FOD)
 - Whitstable Society (WS)
 - Transition Town (TT)
 - Whitstable Umbrella Community Centre (WUCC)
 - Kent Enterprise Trust (KET)
 - Thanet Way Residents Association (TWRA)

- Local Government:
 - Kent County Council (KCC);
 - Canterbury City Council (CCC)
- Other Interested Parties:
 - Stagecoach (SC)

3.15 These meetings have demonstrated how engagement with local community groups and key stakeholders has informed the evolution of the scheme for developing the site. A key outcome of the early consultation with FoD and CCC was the reduction in size of the residential area. A 2009 Concept Plan (enclosed as Appendix B) outlines the original proposed scheme. Following the consultation event of 8th April 2010, a revised 2010 Concept Plan (enclosed as Appendix C) was prepared, which retains the same broad layout for the residential area as the application proposed in this instance. A more detailed summary of the meetings and relevant outcomes is provided below at Section 5 of this SCI.

v. Pre-Application Technical Consultations

3.16 A number of further technical consultations with statutory and non-statutory consultees have taken place, including:

- Environment Agency;
- Local GP and Dental Practices;
- English Heritage;
- Natural England;
- Highways Agency;
- Southern Water; and,
- South Eastern Water.

3.17 These technical consultations have assisted in the evolution of the scheme and are referenced separately in the supporting technical reports.

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4.0 PUBLIC EXHIBITION

4.1 As identified above, the Applicants undertook a two day public consultation exercise on Friday 2nd and Saturday 3rd September 2011 at All Saints Church Hall, Whitstable. The exercise took the form of a public exhibition and informal discussion forum, the purpose of which was to engage with local residents to ensure that they were informed of the proposed development, and to provide them with an opportunity to view and comment on the draft proposals.

4.2 In order to ensure that local community were made aware of the proposals, the events were extensively advertised, as follows:

- Invitations were sent by post to 1,944 properties within a 400 metre radius of the site;
- Letters were also sent to key local stakeholders including:
 - Senior Council Officers;
 - Councillors;
 - The Constituency MP, and
 - Local community and conservation groups.
- An advertisement was placed in the Whitstable Times on 24th August 2011;
- An advertisement was placed in the Whitstable Gazette on 25th August 2011.

4.3 The meeting was attended by 352 people, the majority of which were local residents. Attendees were given the opportunity to view various presentation boards detailing the illustrative masterplan of the site.

4.4 All attendees were given the opportunity to partake in a questionnaire. Of the 352 attendees, 145 questionnaires were completed. The questionnaires (original copy included at Appendix D) sought the views of respondents on a number of issues, specifically:

- The principle of expanding Duncan Down to create a Community Park;
- Which recreational facilities and environmental enhancements respondents would most like to see incorporated in the development;
- Suggestions for striking a balance between nature conservation and recreation;
- The principle of housing development as identified by the masterplan;
- The type / tenure of housing respondents would most like to see.

4.5 The exhibition consisted of a series of six presentation boards presented on display screens, covering the following topics:

- Introduction;
- The Community Park;
- Potential Recreational & Environmental Enhancements;
- Potential Housing Area;
- Benefits of the Vision;
- Next Steps.

4.6 A copy of the exhibition boards is enclosed at Appendix A. The following representatives of Devine Homes were on hand to answer questions:

- Chris Posgate (Managing Director);
- Luke Eldridge (Senior Land Manager);
- Joseph Fowler (Land & Planning Manager);
- Tahla Heavens (PA to Chris Posgate).

4.7 In addition, Ashley Clark of Friends of Duncan Down attended on the Friday and was available to answer questions. A representative of Devine Homes manned the entrance/exit to count attendees, and to direct people towards the questionnaires and displays. Attendees were encouraged to complete the questionnaires (example at Appendix D) whilst in the hall. The feedback forms were intended to be completed on the day, although two responses were posted at a later date. In addition the Applicant has considered responses submitted via the website www.askwhitstable.com.

4.8 In total, 145 questionnaires were returned. When read against the 352 attendees at the exhibition, this represents a return rate of 41.2%. It is noted that there may be a slight overlap with regard to the online submissions, as some may not have attended the meeting but still submitted comments.

4.9 The format of the consultation during the exhibition allowed for:

- Informal one to one and group discussions with attendees;
- An informal setting to encourage questions from attendees;
- The opportunity to speak directly with members of the project team; and
- A local venue, at an appropriate time and for an appropriate duration to allow as many people as possible to attend.

Analysis of Responses

4.10 Provided below is a summary of the consultation responses received to the public exhibition. For ease of analysis, the responses have been broken down into two broad topics:

- The principle of expanding Duncan Down and creation of a Community Park; and
- The principle of Housing Development.

Principle of expanding Duncan Down and creation of Community Park

4.11 Respondents were asked: "Do you think the expansion of Duncan Down would benefit the residents of Whitstable?" 65.19% said yes 34.81% said no.

4.12 Further to this, respondents were also asked "Do you support the principle of expanding Duncan Down to create a Community Park?" 66.30% said yes 33.70% said no.

4.13 The questionnaire goes on to establish in further detail the types of features, environmental enhancements and recreational facilities that local residents wish to see incorporated as part of the development. Respondents were offered a list of options, and were asked to give a score between 0 and 5 (with 5 being the most preferable) to determine a general order of preference. The average scores for each option in order of preference are as follows:

3.98 Creation of a wild flower meadow

3.73 Planting of meadow glades

3.61 Enhancement of existing and creation of additional footpath network

3.58 Planting of native fruit hedge coppice

3.20 A children's adventure play area

3.05 Allotments with potting sheds

2.87 Wide ride paths

2.57 A community hall and car park

2.55 Creation of green burial ground

2.21 All weather tennis courts

4.14 The questionnaire then asks: "Do you think the suggested enhancements strike the correct balance between nature conservation and recreation?" 61.76% said yes 38.24% said no.

- 4.15 The overall feedback from respondents with regard to the Duncan Down and Community Park element of the scheme can be viewed positively. Approximately two thirds of respondents were supportive of the principle and considered that the developments would benefit the residents of Whitstable. A slightly lower proportion, albeit still a favourable majority, considered that the proposals would strike the correct balance between nature conservation and recreation.
- 4.16 In assessing this aspect in more detail, the pattern of respondents' comments seems to be favourable towards nature conservation features such as meadows, glades and native hedges than recreation uses such as tennis courts and community halls.
- 4.17 In addition to the multiple choice questions, respondents were also asked whether they had any specific suggestions for other enhancements/facilities that they would like to see provided. The most common suggestions were additional car parks, healthcare facilities, seating areas and public toilets. Additional suggestions were for refreshment stalls, cycle paths and lighting along footpaths.
- 4.18 Enhancing the footpath network is seen as a preferred feature to create walking routes, with issues such as children's play areas, allotments and wide ride paths attracting a mid level of preference.
- 4.19 The illustrative Green Infrastructure details submitted as part of the application outlines the provision of green space proposed as part of the development. The consultation responses have influenced the overall proposed provision with semi-natural space (containing meadows, glades and woodlands – as prioritised by the responses) accounting for approximately 50% of the overall provision. Other features such as green corridors (containing rights of way and cycle paths) are proposed, and the spaces would be legibly laid out linking to existing rights of way and the new car parking provision adjacent to the proposed Thanet Way access. Children's play space and allotments, which received a mid level of favour from consultees, will also be provided where appropriate.
- 4.20 A further reference in the consultation exercise was to Tankerton Football Club (TFC), which is a local community-based youth football club with over 350 boys and girls between the ages of 5 and 18 registered. The club has 31 teams but no permanent base. At the time of the consultation there was strong community support for the provision of football pitches within the site for use by the club. Although this is likely to still be the case, it is worth noting that TFC has recently submitted a planning application to CCC for the redevelopment of land to the east of Whitstable, adjacent to St Augustine's Business Park, to provide permanent facilities. The proposals include the provision of 8 football pitches of varying size for use by

the club's teams, and ancillary facilities including a clubhouse with changing facilities. As such, no direct provision for TFC would be provided as part of the proposals.

Principle of Housing Development

4.21 The questionnaire stated that to enable the provision of the enlarged community park, a part of the site had been identified for housing development.

4.22 With regard to the proposed location of housing on the masterplan, respondents were asked: "Do you agree this is the best location on the site for housing?" 51.70% agreed and 48.30% disagreed.

4.23 The respondents who disagreed were then asked: "Where do you think housing should be located?" Suggestions included building on the west side of the site as well as placing the development centrally within the site to be surrounded by countryside.

4.24 With regard to housing type and tenure, respondents were offered a list of options and were asked to give a score between 0 and 5 (again with 5 being the most preferable) to determine a general order of preference. The average scores in order of preference are as follows:

3.44 Family houses

3.14 Houses for young people

3.09 Affordable homes

2.87 Houses for the elderly

2.81 Bungalows

1.86 Townhouses

1.24 Flats

4.25 Additionally, respondents were asked: "Do you have any other suggestions for house types you would like to see provided?" Responses included:

- The use of renewable energy resources including solar panels;
- A preference for the units to be designed in keeping with the area and well spaced – "not crammed in";
- The use of greenery;
- The inclusion of good sized gardens;
- A lack of enthusiasm for flats and apartments;
- Some residents felt that additional housing was not required.

- 4.26 With regard to the preferred housing types, the general response veered towards the provision of houses for young people and families which should be of a relatively low density, have good sized gardens, a generous use of greenery and the inclusion of sustainable features such as solar panels. A proportion of the housing should also be affordable.
- 4.27 While bungalows and homes for the elderly received a mid-level of support, there was a comparably lower level of interest in the provision of flats and townhouses. This seems to correlate with the view that respondents would like a lower density well-spaced form of housing which will reflect the semi-rural nature of the site.
- 4.28 The proposals will aim to address the priority issues raised in the consultation exercise. However at this stage the layout, scale and overall design of the residential area is proposed in outline form only and the final mix is yet to be confirmed. The illustrative masterplan and indicative mix shows a layout to reflect the policies of CCC and the wider aims of the NPPF, and although this may be subject to change, the illustrative proposals clearly demonstrate that a policy compliant and legible scheme can be achieved.
- 4.29 Chapter 8 of the emerging Local Plan covers Design and the Built Environment. Chapter 8 includes policies referring to, *inter alia*, sustainable design and construction (DBE1) and residential space standards (DBE7). The housing density will range from areas of 40-60 dwellings per hectare (DPH), to the lowest density areas of less than 35 DPH. The average density across the residential development is approximately 37 DPH. Although the final details will be approved at the reserved matters stage, the illustrative masterplan has been prepared with CCC's space standards in mind, and will be fully capable of providing a policy compliant development. Further details of the illustrative design and provision of housing is outlined in the accompanying Design & Access Statement.

General Observations

- 4.30 The final question asked was: "Do you have any further comments or suggestions?" Several recurrent themes were raised in the further comments or suggestions section of the response forms. A summary of how these recurrent themes issues have been assessed and how the Applicant has taken steps to address the concerns and preferences of respondents in evolving the proposals is provided below each theme in *italics*.

Community Park and Open Space:

- The need for parking spaces for visitors to Duncan Down;
 - *A parking area will be provided to the south west of the residential development in close proximity to the roundabout access from Thanet Way.*
- Incorporating greenery to residential areas to improve the connection to Duncan Down;
 - *A central green space is proposed by the illustrative masterplan to form a focal point for the residential development. Furthermore, the density of the housing is proposed to allow for generous gardens and well-spaced plots.*
- Some respondents argued that the extension of Duncan Down will only benefit the new housing, and not the rest of Whitstable.
 - *While the proposals are intended to serve the new residential development, they are also intended to be an attraction in their own right and to serve the entire community of the town and the wider area. This is evidenced by the provision of parking areas to attract people to travel to Duncan Down, while ensuring that traffic associated with those travelling to and from the site for leisure activities will not cause unnecessary harm to the amenity of the existing and proposed nearby residents.*

Housing:

- Strong views were raised regarding the design of housing. Opinions were split with some respondents wishing to see contemporary and innovative designs, with some preferring to see designs incorporating more traditional vernacular architecture. However one common theme was the preference to see building heights minimised.
 - *While the appearance of the dwellings will be reserved for determination at a later date, indicative Design details have been provided in the Design and Access Statement which have taken account of the feedback received as a result of the consultation exercise. . Further opportunities will arise for additional community involvement to discuss the detailed design prior to the submission of the Reserved Matters. Parameters Plans have also been submitted which outline the building heights and densities for certain parts of the site. The proposed building heights parameters plan identifies that the taller buildings (3.5 storeys) will be on lower ground towards the north of the site, while the lower 2 storey buildings will be on the higher ground. However all buildings will remain in keeping with the surrounding built form and will not*

appear to be intrusive. The higher density residential areas are also proposed to be on the less prominent parts of the site, further from the main Thanet Way thoroughfare.

- Sustainable design features should be included;
 - *All housing will be designed to incorporate high standards of sustainable design and construction and further details on the sustainable design features of the site can be found within the 'Sustainability Statement' submitted in support of the application. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems will also be implemented throughout the site.*
- The recent 'holiday home' influx to the area means young families are priced out of traditional 'starter' type homes. To address this issue additional affordable housing is needed, and this must be maintained to an acceptable standard;
 - *As required by emerging planning policy, 30% of all units will be provided as Affordable Housing, which will be split between affordable rent and shared ownership housing.*
- Homes for the elderly should be provided with good access to public transport;
 - *The emerging Local Plan requires 20% of all new housing to meet Lifetime Homes (LTH) standards. LTH lists 16 criteria to ensure that housing is adaptable to meet the changing needs of occupants over their entire lifetime, including a fully accessible layout and the potential for the installation of specialist equipment including stairlifts, through-floor lifts and hoists. The proposed residential development will provide housing to meet these criteria in accordance with local policy. Furthermore, improved public transport provision will aid accessibility and inclusion for elderly residents and those with disabilities.*
- Whitstable could not cope with the increased population as traffic is already congested and services are stretched. Some respondents argued that no additional housing is required;
 - *Details of traffic and transport matters associated with the development proposals can be found in the Transport Assessment submitted in support of*

the application. The Transport Assessment has concluded that the development will not have a detrimental impact on the operation of the local highway network in the vicinity of the Site including Thanet Way and off-site junctions with the A299, Borstal Hill and Millstrood Road. Detailed capacity assessments undertaken for these junctions during AM and PM peak periods confirm that the development will not significantly impact on their performance during the completion year.

- *An outline Residential Travel Plan has also been submitted in support of the application. The site's accessible location will enable the introduction of a successful Travel Plan, which will include robust measures to achieve a modal shift away from car use and the take up of more sustainable travel modes.*
- *The developer has agreed in principle to fully fund the introduction of a new half hourly bus service operated by Stagecoach connecting the site with Canterbury and Whitstable town centre. The service would be funded by the developer for a period of 3 years (secured via a Section 106 Agreement), and to maximise take up of the new service the developer would explore with the operator further incentives such as offering discounted fares for a fixed period as part of the new residents Travel Pack.*
- *The lack of need for housing is not a view supported either by the Applicant or by CCC in its emerging Local Plan, which identifies this site as a strategic housing site that needs to be delivered if CCC is to meet its own objectively assessed housing need.*

Infrastructure:

- Concerns with the pressure the development may have on schools, medical facilities, and emergency services, and a preference to see such facilities provided as part of the development;
 - *Consultation has taken place with local GP and Dental Surgeries, and this is outlined in the Socio-Economic chapter of the Environmental Statement submitted as part of the application. This concluded that the proposals were unlikely to have a significant impact on medical facilities or secondary school places, and it was not necessary for the proposals to either mitigate this impact or provide new facilities on site. It has been identified that the proposals may create demand for primary school places, and a financial contribution could be agreed with the Local Planning Authority to mitigate this.*

- Local shops and retail facilities should be provided;
 - *The site is located within a short walking and cycling distance of a wide range of existing local facilities including bus services, retail, education and employment. As such no new local shops or retail facilities are proposed.*
- Opportunities should be provided for local people to be employed in the construction and for wider access to jobs;
 - *The applicant will be willing to enter discussions with the Local Planning Authority to discuss mechanisms to give local people and businesses the opportunity to contribute to the construction phase of development.*

4.31 Changes to the scheme as a result of feedback from the public exhibition are also described in the Design and Access Statement submitted in support of this application, and are reflected on the Illustrative Masterplan attached at Appendix E.

5.0 KEY STAKEHOLDERS

5.1 As identified above, a number of meetings have taken place between Devine Homes (DH) and their representatives (namely Barton Willmore [BW], Courtley Consultants [CCo], and PT Planners [PTP]) with the following groups since April 2010:

- Local Community Key Stakeholder Engagement
 - Friends of Duncan Down (FOD)
 - Whitstable Society (WS)
 - Transition Town (TT)
 - Whitstable Umbrella Community Centre (WUCC)
 - Kent Enterprise Trust (KET)
 - Thanet Way Residents Association (TWRA)
- Local Government:
 - Kent County Council (KCC);
 - Canterbury City Council (CCC)
- Other Interested Parties:
 - Stagecoach (SC)

5.2 Since the initial meeting took place in April 2010, Devine Homes have sought to engage on a regular basis with the groups above to ensure that the views and preferences of interested parties are known, and can inform the evolution of the proposed development where feasible. Through these meetings, a strong working relationship and understanding has been established. The final design of the proposed scheme outlines the influence that these consultees have had, and makes clear the benefits that the scheme will deliver to the local community.

Timeline of Meetings and Consultation with Key Stakeholders

5.3 The table below summarises in date order the meetings that have taken place with key stakeholders between April 2011 and November 2014, together with a brief description of any outcomes and/or actions that have influenced the evolution of the proposals.

Date	Description	Outcomes / Actions
08/04/10	Meeting between representatives of DH, FOD and CCC. The meeting sought to discuss the DH plans and aspirations for the site, and to develop an understanding between all parties with regard to the current situation and future opportunities.	A positive letter was received from FOD in response to the meeting (enclosed as Appendix F) which included annotated plans and indicated a strong willingness to work with DH in developing suitable proposals for the site. The residential area was reduced in size and the layout redesigned in response to the feedback received (see Appendix B and C)
04/02/11	Meeting involving representatives of DH, FOD, WS, TT and KET. The proposals were discussed in further detail and issues such as affordable housing were covered.	N/A
15/04/11	Meeting between DH, FOD and CCC to update on the emerging Development Plan and the initial preparations for the aforementioned public consultation event (September 2011).	NA
04/04/12	Following the consultation event and analysis of the findings, a meeting was attended by DH, CCC and KCC where the findings of the consultation exercise were presented. CCC provided an update with regard to the emerging Development Plan.	Both CCC and KCC advised DH to discuss proposals with the local bus provider, Stagecoach (SC).
29/05/12	A positive meeting was held with SC, which outlined the potential bus routes that could be extended to include the site and the preferences for access. SC indicated a preference for a north-south 'through' route for buses.	DH agreed to investigate the feasibility of the north-south route, while SC agreed to provide a summary of the bus route service options.

Date	Description	Outcomes / Actions
14/06/13	Meeting between DH and the TWRA to gather the general views of the TWRA with regard to the proposals. TWRA were informed of the evolution of the scheme. The TWRA noted a preference to see a roundabout junction to access the site from Thanet Way, rather than a priority junction.	In response to the views of the TWRA, a roundabout feasibility report was commissioned by DH.
11/08/14	DH met with KCC to discuss the access options for the site and to discuss the initial scope of the Transport Assessment (TA) submitted in support of this application. In terms of access, options were put forward for either a ghost island right turn lane junction or a roundabout connecting to Thanet Way.	The summary of this meeting required further work to be undertaken with regard to the detailed scope of the TA and design of the development. KCC indicated that both access options could be acceptable in principle, but there were likely to be fewer issues with the roundabout proposal.
18/09/14	A meeting was held between DH, CCC, KCC and SC to discuss improvements to bus access and infrastructure in more detail, including potential developer contributions. SC reaffirmed that a new bus route travelling north-south throughout the site was preferable and likely to be financially viable following the end of the developer funding period. The possibility of a new bus route along Thanet Way was viewed less favourably due to difficulties with access to and from the site.	SC and KCC advised on the likely developer contributions, and an indicative scope of the works and consultations required between all parties.

Date	Description	Outcomes / Actions
06/10/14	DH met with FOD, WS, WUCC and the Gorrell Ward Councillor to discuss the forthcoming application submission and options for the masterplan. Issues discussed included access and highways, public transport, green infrastructure, community uses and ownership/management issues.	Further discussions took place with KCC regarding highways issues and amendments to the green infrastructure plan. The issue of a through-road for all traffic was discussed with KCC, who were generally unsupportive due to the potential for 'rat running'. FOD submitted a letter to CCC on 11th November 2014 (enclosed as Appendix G) outlining their supportive stance to the proposals following the 6th October meeting, and provided a 'wish list' of features they would like to see incorporated into the development.
13/10/14	Meeting with representatives of the TWRA who were unable to attend the meeting of 6 th October. TWRA suggested spreading the housing into the extension of Duncan Down to improve access to green space. However this was not considered feasible as it was contrary to the general principles of the development, which had been established since 2010 and agreed with key stakeholders. Other suggestions included widening the green buffers surrounding the residential area.	Buffers on Parameter Plans have been widened to a minimum of 10 metres, where development is proposed adjacent to existing built development.
09/12/14	Formal pre-application meeting with CCC.	Cautiously favourable response from officers to the principle of the development, as summarised in Section 3 of this Statement.

Date	Description	Outcomes / Actions
15/05/15	Letter received from SC confirming the most appropriate access for a bus route (i.e. access from Thanet Way and bus only access to the north into wider residential area). Suggested cost of £350k over 3 years to provide service, and SC would wish to influence infrastructure within the site to ensure it is of an appropriate standard.	The letter (enclosed as Appendix H) provides justification for S106 contributions and SC will be consulted at the reserved matters stage to ensure they can influence proposals.

Summary of Key Stakeholder Consultation

- 5.4 The above timeline of meetings describes the evolution of the development since the initial proposals were tabled. There is key evidence to demonstrate how the input of key stakeholders, including professional bodies and local community groups, has influenced the design of the development to ensure that it provides as great a benefit to as wide a cross section of the community as possible.

6.0 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 This document summarises the extent and detail of the public consultation to date on proposals for the development of land to the north of Thanet Way, Whitstable. This document evidences the extensive pre-application consultation process undertaken by the Applicant with a wide range of key stakeholders in the local community and wider area.
- 6.2 The techniques employed by the Applicant accord with best practice and have resulted in productive and positive engagement with stakeholders. The attendance at the exhibitions by representatives of the Applicant and members of the consultant team provided residents with the opportunity to discuss particular points of interest and concern and to obtain further detailed information.
- 6.3 The consultation process has directly informed the formulation, development and refinement of the scheme, and has ensured that the submitted proposals have been designed giving full consideration to the views of the community they will serve. If outline planning permission is granted, approval of the reserved matters will be sought, at which stage consultees and local residents will have an opportunity to comment on the detailed design of the proposals.

APPENDIX A

PUBLIC EXHIBITION DISPLAY BOARDS

01 Introduction

Devine Homes PLC has a vision for the creation of a unique 'Community Park', together with the development of a high quality residential neighbourhood of approximately 300 new family homes on land to the north of Thanet Way.

Approximately 17.6 hectares (43.5 acres) of open land could be added to the award winning Duncan Down, almost doubling the size of this expanse of open land, which is made up of grassland, shrubland, woodland and stream habitats. This could enable the 'Friends of Duncan Down' together with their partners, to extend the existing area of Duncan Down and create an environmental and recreational facility for use by the residents of Whitstable.

In considering this key opportunity for the area of Whitstable, Devine Homes is seeking the opinions of local residents and key stakeholders on the possible creation of a Community Park, in association with the development of part of the site for mixed housing, including affordable dwellings.

If support is shown for the outlined vision, Devine Homes will seek to secure an allocation for protected open space and housing in the Councils forthcoming Local Development Framework.



Figure A: Land controlled by Devine Homes submitted to Canterbury City Council for consideration under their Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA).

02 The Community Park

Duncan Down is jointly managed by the Friends of Duncan Down together with Canterbury City Council. Their combined efforts, in terms of conservation, enhancement and ongoing management have created a vital recreational and environmental resource for the residents of Whitstable.

The new vision aims to build on this work by enabling the expansion of Duncan Down and the possible creation of the 'Duncan Down Community Park'.

In consultation with the Friends of Duncan Down, a concept sketch of Duncan Down Village Green Community Plan has been produced – as shown.

The following questions arise

- > *Do you think the expansion of Duncan Down would benefit the residents of Whitstable?*
- > *Do you support the principle of expanding Duncan Down to create a Community Park?*



Figure B: Duncan Down Community Park Concept

03 Potential Recreational & Environmental Enhancements

Prior to any transfer in ownership, a number of recreational facilities and environmental enhancements could be implemented in order to create the Community Park. Suggestions that have been put forward by the Friends of Duncan Down include:

Creation of Community Zone to include:

- > Community Hall and Car Park
- > All Weather Tennis Courts
- > Allotments with Potting Sheds
- > Child Adventure Play Area
- > Enhancement of existing footpath and creation of additional footpath network
- > Creation of Wide Ride Paths

Environment

- > Planting of Meadow Glades
- > Creation of a Wild Flower Meadow
- > Planting of Native Fruit Hedge Coppice
- > Creation of Green Burial Ground

The following questions arise:

- > *Do you agree with the suggested enhancements and facilities?*
- > *Do you think the suggested enhancements strike the correct balance between nature, conservation and recreation?*
- > *Do you have any other suggestions for enhancements and or facilities that you would like to see provided?*



Figure C: Community Zone Concept

04 Potential Housing Area

To enable the creation of the enlarged Community Park an area of land as show in Figure D has been identified as being suitable for a high quality residential development of approximately 300 new family homes.

Why is this Land suitable for housing?

Background studies have identified the following key points:

- > Ecological Assessment of the site shows this area to be of least ecological value, due to it being predominately arable farmland.
- > This area is the greatest distance from the potentially sensitive environments of Duncan Down and Benacre Wood.
- > The area has existing residential development on two sides of its boundary, meaning it is a logical extension of the built up area.
- > The site is in a sustainable location, in close proximity to existing pedestrian links and is also near well established bus routes. It is close to the town centre and other community facilities.
- > Landscape and visual assessment reports indicate that the development of this area would be the least visually intrusive.
- > Access assessment indicates that a single point of vehicular access can be taken from Thanet Way, meaning no direct pressure is placed on local estate roads.

The following questions arise:

- > *Do you support the principle of development in this location to enable the expansion of Duncan Down and creation of a Community Park?*
- > *Do you agree this is the best location on the site for housing?*
- > *If you do not agree where do you think housing should be located?*
- > *What sort of housing would you like to see provided?*

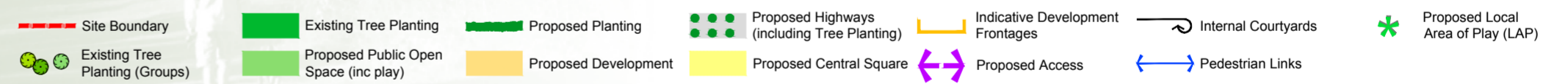
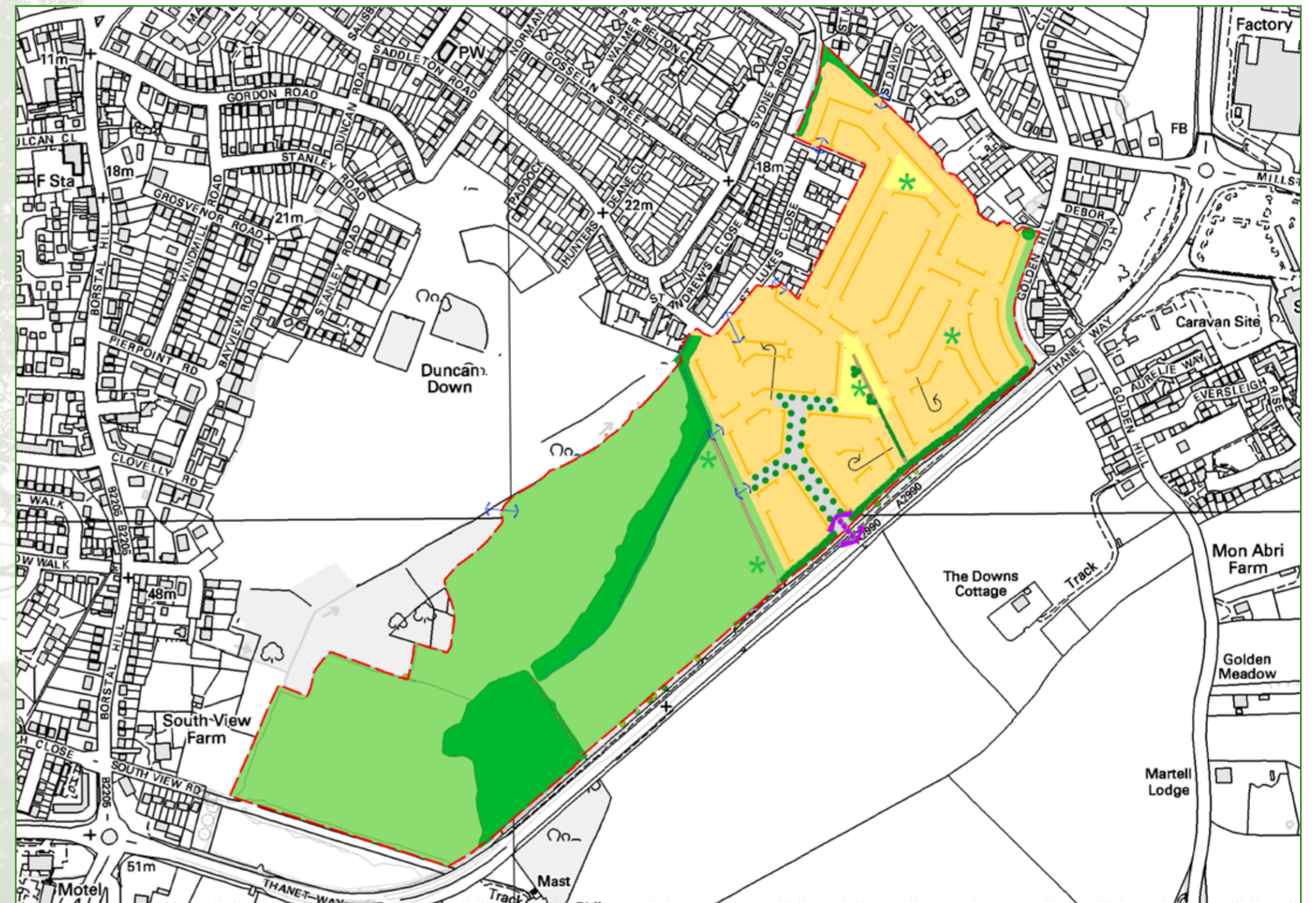


Figure D: Housing Concept Master Plan

05 Benefits of the Vision

It is considered the creation of a Community Park could:

- > Aid community cohesion through increasing opportunities for social interaction.
- > Aid physical and mental health through increased opportunities for exercise.
- > Aid and enhance existing efforts in terms of wildlife and habitat protection.
- > Provide potential employment opportunities for local residents.
- > Protect the area from future development proposals through the transfer of ownership.

It is considered the residential development could:

- > Fulfil a proportion of the Districts' housing requirement, whilst securing a significant community benefit.
- > Provide an element of much needed affordable housing.
- > Increase levels of permeability for existing residents providing improved cycle and pedestrian links to local facilities.
- > Limit vehicular access to a single point from Thanet Way, thereby limiting impact on local road networks.



06 Next Steps

Thank you for attending this public consultation exercise. We look forward to reviewing your thoughts and opinions on the vision for the land North of Thanet Way.

If you have not done so already please could we request that you complete the questionnaire provided and place it in the sealed box.

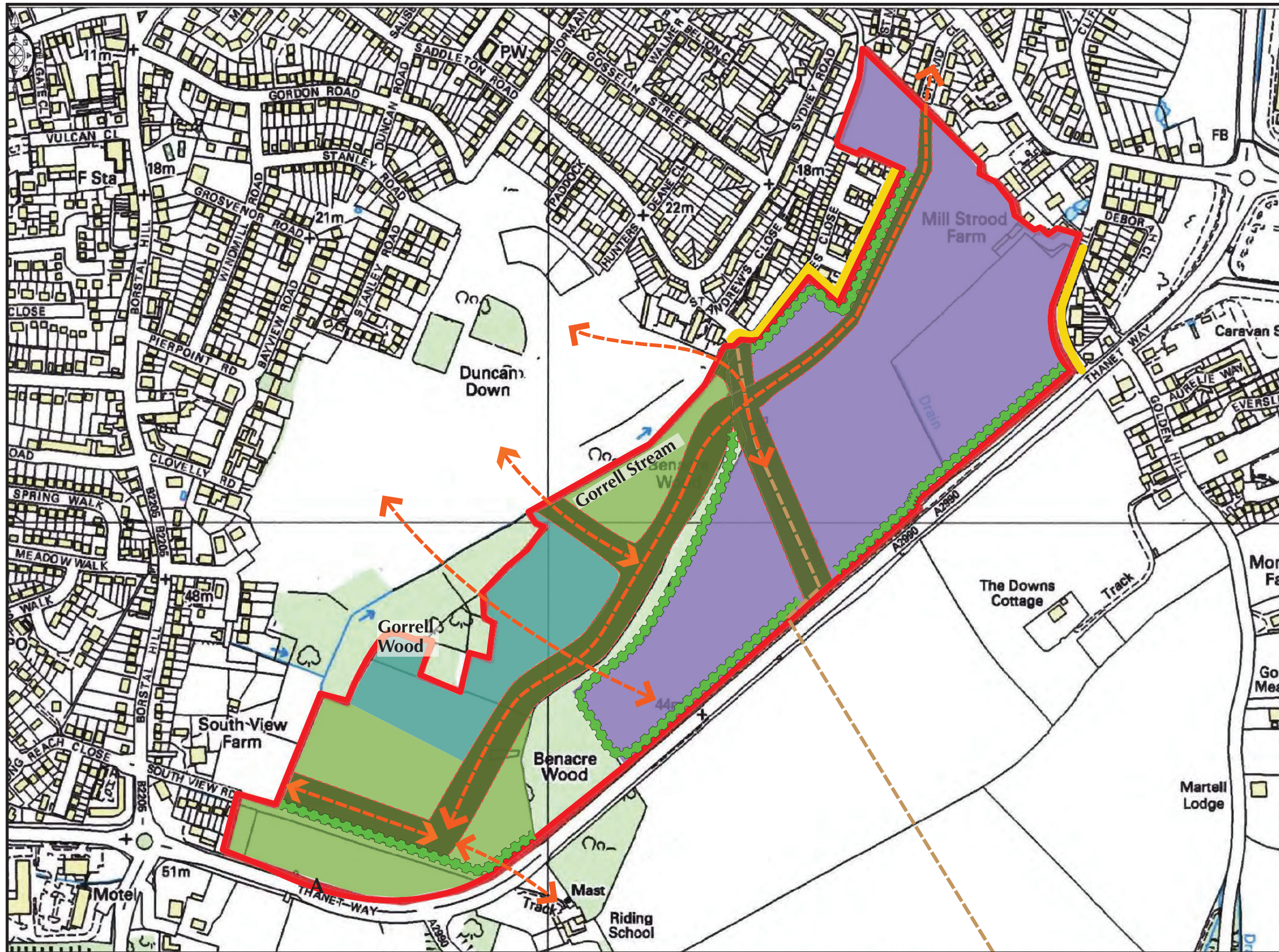
If you do not have time to complete a questionnaire today you can visit the dedicated website for this project at – www.AskWhitstable.co.uk and complete the questionnaire on-line.

Thank you once again for your time.



APPENDIX B

2009 CONCEPT PLAN

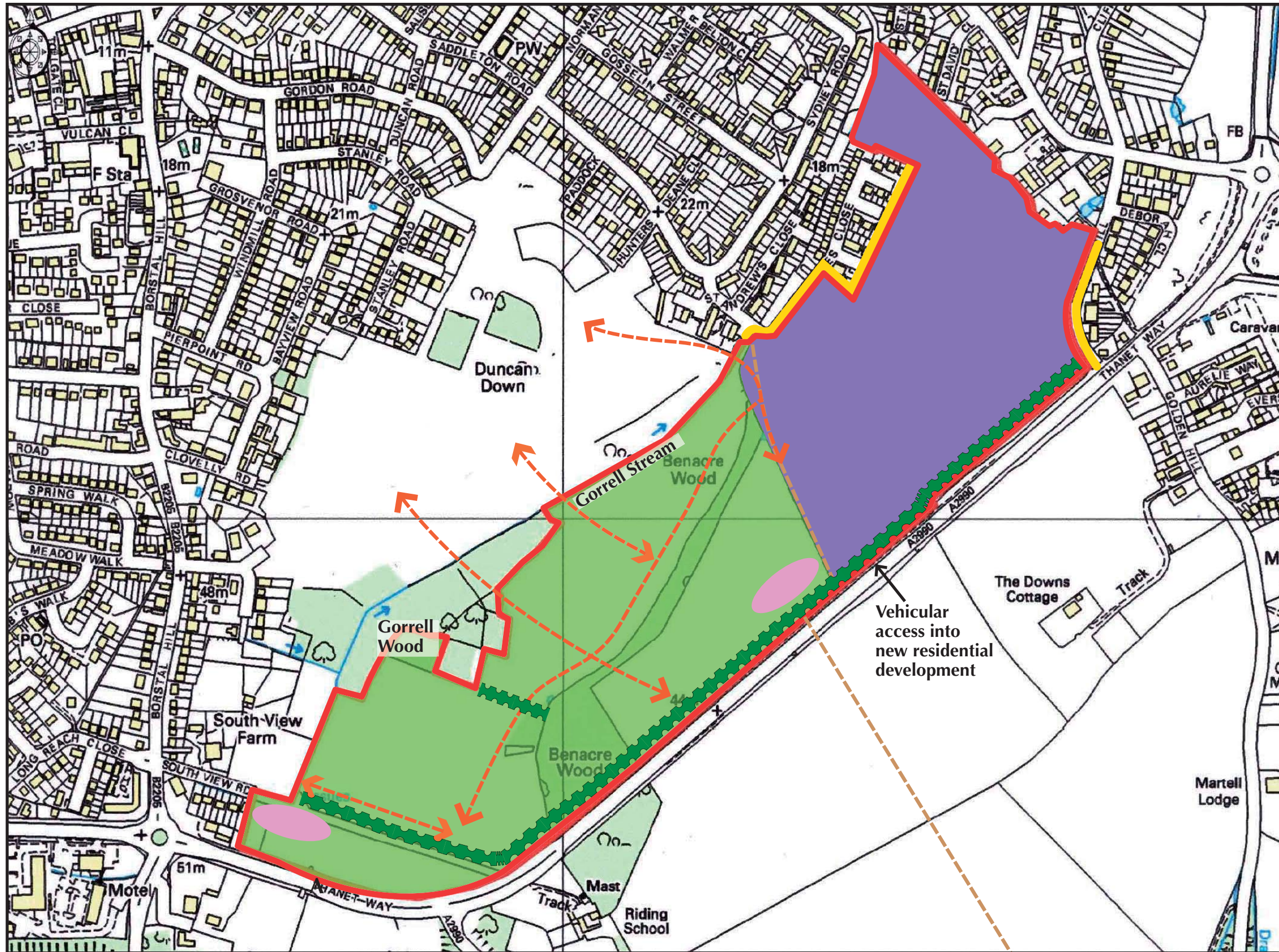


- KEY**
- Site Boundary
 - Visually Harsh Urban Edge
 - Proposed Vegetation Belts/Woodland Buffers
 - Proposed Footpath Connections
 - Areas of Opportunity for Ecological Enhancement and Formal/Informal Recreation
 - Proposed Open Space Corridors
 - Proposed Housing Development Areas
 - Indicative Optimum Location of Habitat Creation for Ecological Enhancement
 - Public Footpath

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APPENDIX C

2010 CONCEPT PLAN



- KEY**
- Site Boundary
 - Visually Harsh Urban Edge
 - Proposed Vegetation Belts/
mounding/ Woodland Buffer
(suggested minimum width of 10m)
 - - - Proposed Footpath Connections
 - Areas of Opportunity for
Ecological Enhancement and
Formal/Informal Recreation
 - Proposed Housing Development
Areas
 - - - Public Footpath
 - Potential Location for Car
Parking for Recreational Users

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APPENDIX D

QUESTIONNAIRE SAMPLE AND SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

Questionnaire

Title:	First Name:	Last Name:
Address:		
		Postcode:
Contact Number:		
Email:		

Key to the vision for the land North of Thanet Way is the possible transfer in ownership of 17.6 hectares (43.5 acres) of open land to enable the expansion of Duncan Down and the creation of a unique Community Park.

- Q1)** Do you think the expansion of Duncan Down would benefit the residents of Whitstable? Yes No
- Q2)** Do you support the principle of expanding Duncan Down to create a Community Park? Yes No

Prior to any transfer in ownership a number of recreational facilities and environmental enhancements could be implemented.

Q3) Please give each of the following suggestions a ranking in terms of preference, with 5 being the most preferable and 0 being the least preferable (please note, more than one suggestion can be given the same ranking, all could be ranked 5 or 0 if you wish)

A community hall & car park	5	4	3	2	1	0
All weather tennis courts	5	4	3	2	1	0
Allotments with potting sheds	5	4	3	2	1	0
A children's adventure play area	5	4	3	2	1	0
Enhancement of existing and creation of additional footpath network	5	4	3	2	1	0
Wide ride paths	5	4	3	2	1	0
Planting of meadow glades	5	4	3	2	1	0
Creation of a wild flower meadow	5	4	3	2	1	0
Planting of native fruit hedge coppice	5	4	3	2	1	0
Creation of green burial ground	5	4	3	2	1	0

Q4) Do you think the suggested enhancements strike the correct balance between nature conservation and recreation? Yes No

Do you have any suggestions for other enhancements/facilities that you would like to see provided?

To enable the creation of the enlarged Community Park an area of land as shown in Figure D has been identified as being suitable for a high quality residential development of approximately 300 new family homes.

Q5) Do you support the principle of development in this location to enable the expansion of Duncan Down and creation of a Community Park?

Yes No

Q6) Do you agree this is the best location on the site for housing?

Yes No

If you answered no, where do you think housing should be located?

Q7) What sort of housing would you like to see provided?

Please give each of the following suggestions a ranking in terms of preference, with 5 being the most preferable and 0 being the least preferable (please note, more than one suggestion can be given the same ranking, all could be ranked 5 or 0 if you wish)

Bungalows	5	4	3	2	1	0
Town Houses	5	4	3	2	1	0
Houses for young people	5	4	3	2	1	0
Houses for the elderly	5	4	3	2	1	0
Family Houses	5	4	3	2	1	0
Flats	5	4	3	2	1	0
Affordable Homes	5	4	3	2	1	0

Do you have any other suggestions for house types you would like to see provided?

Do you have any further comments or suggestions?

Data protection

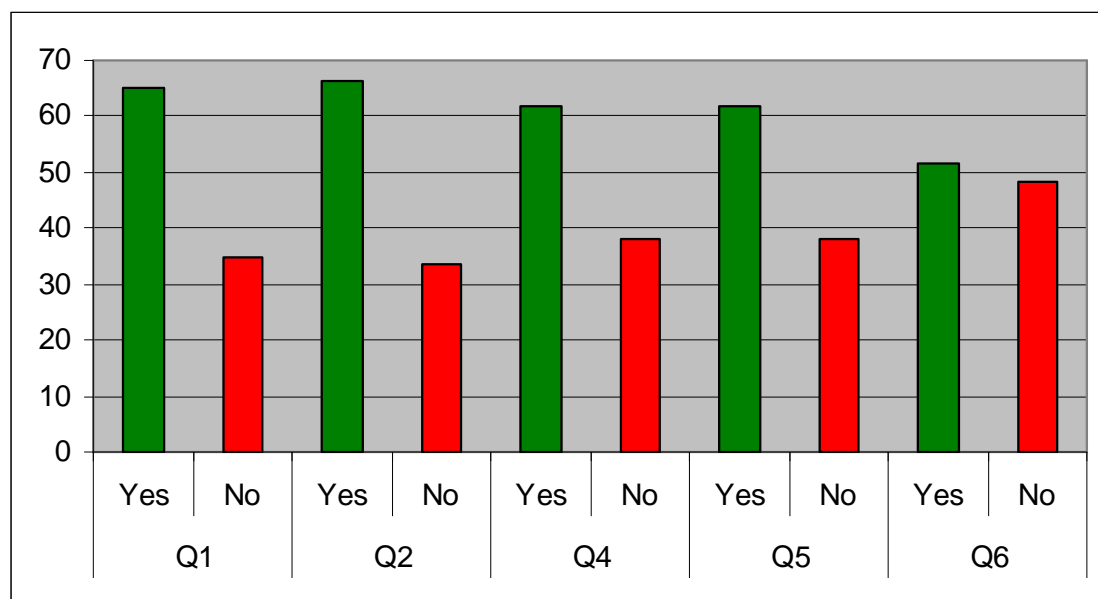
Devine Homes PLC may hold information given by you on computer and may use this information to verify your comments. All personal data will be collected and retained in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. We will not pass this information on to any other third parties.

Devine Homes held a Public Exhibition on Friday, 2nd and Saturday 3rd September 2011, to reveal their proposals for the land North of Thanet Way.

Invitations were sent to 1,944 properties in a 400 m radius around the land and advertisements were placed in the Whitstable Times and Whitstable Gazette.

352 visitors attended the Exhibition over the two days and 145 Questionnaires were completed. The Display Boards and Questionnaire were also made available online from 7 pm on 2nd September to the 26th September. A further 53 questionnaires were completed online.

Key to the vision for the land North of Thanet Way is the possible transfer in ownership of 17.6 hectares (43.5 acres) of open land to enable the expansion of Duncan Down and the creation of a unique Community Park.



Q1 - "Do you think the expansion of Duncan Down would benefit the residents of Whitstable?"

Q2 - "Do you support the principle of expanding Duncan Down to create a Community Park?"

Q4 - "Do you think the suggested enhancements strike the correct balance between nature conservation and recreation?"

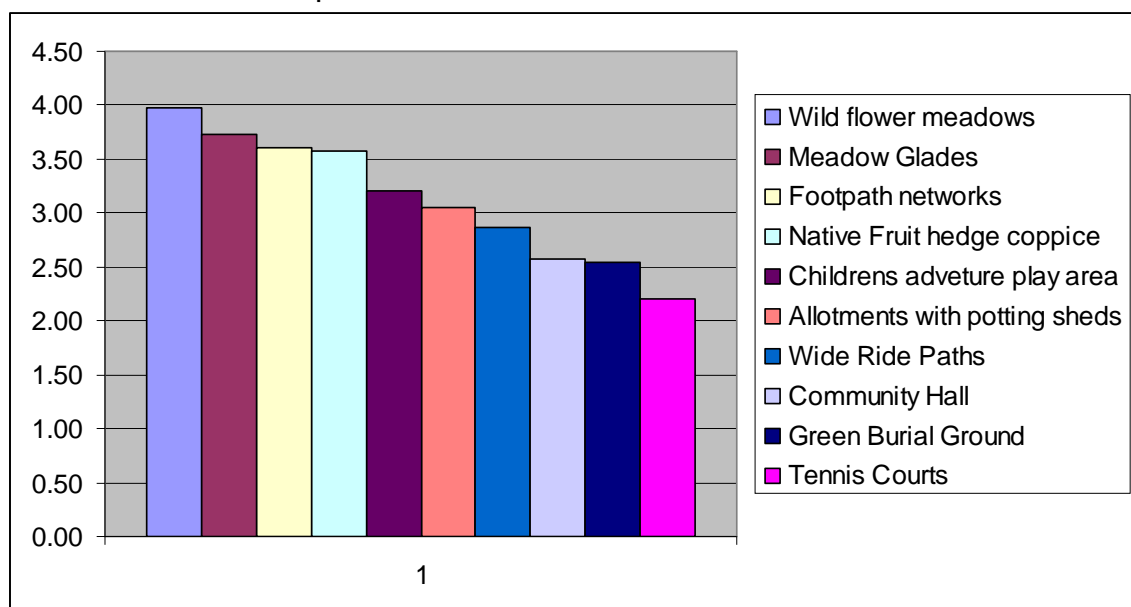
Q5 - "Do you support the principle of development in this location to enable the expansion of Duncan Down and creation of a Community Park?"

Q6 - "Do you agree this is the best location on the site for housing?"

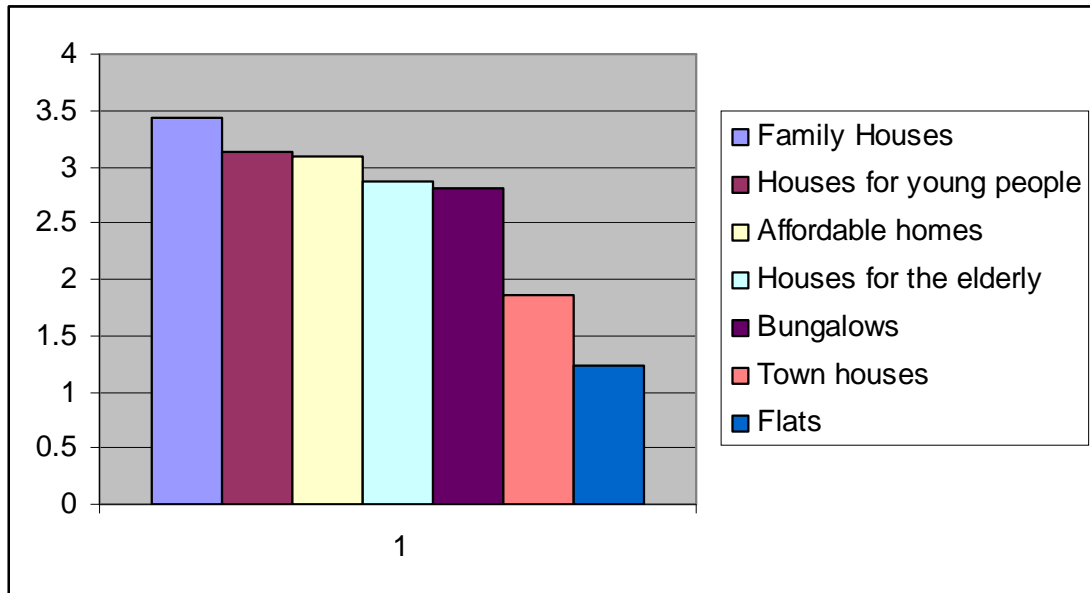
Q4A - "Do you have any suggestions for other enhancements/facilities that you would like to see provided?" The most common suggestions included car parks, more healthcare facilities, seating areas and public toilets. With the online questionnaires, Tankerton FC was mentioned a lot as well as more football pitches. Other suggestions included refreshments, cycle paths and lighting along footpaths.

Q6A - We then asked "If you answered no, where do you think housing should be located?" The majority of objectors felt there were too many large developments and that no further housing was needed. Also that run down houses should be developed, rather than developing on fields. Building on the west side was mentioned as well as placing the development in the middle to be surrounded by countryside. Seasalter and Ashted were other suggestions.

Prior to any transfer in ownership a number of recreational facilities and environmental enhancements could be implemented. Residents were asked to rank these in order of preference.



Q7 - We then asked "What sort of housing would you like to see provided?" Respondents were asked to rank various possibilities in order of preference.



We asked "Do you have any other suggestions for house types you would like to see provided?" Responses included the use of solar panels, units should be in keeping with the area with no high rise units, greenery, the inclusions of good sized gardens, units not "crammed" in. It was felt that there was no need for apartments. Some residents felt that housing was not required.

Finally, we asked "Do you have any further comments or suggestions?" Traffic was the main issue followed by car parking/ schools/ healthcare/ infrastructure/ appearance of the site and drainage. Again some residents felt that housing was not required. Also a number of online submissions suggested that Tankerton Football Club was in desperate need of land and pitches.

Devine Homes held a Public Exhibition on Friday, 2nd and Saturday 3rd September 2011, to reveal their proposals for the land North of Thanet Way.

Invitations were sent to 1,944 properties in a 400 m radius around the land and advertisements were placed in the Whitstable Times and Whitstable Gazette.

352 visitors attended the Exhibition over the two days and 145 Questionnaires were completed. The Display Boards and Questionnaire were also made available online from 7 pm on 2nd September to the 26th September.

Key to the vision for the land North of Thanet Way is the possible transfer in ownership of 17.6 hectares (43.5 acres) of open land to enable the expansion of Duncan Down and the creation of a unique Community Park.

We asked "Do you think the expansion of Duncan Down would benefit the residents of Whitstable?" 65.19% said yes 34.81% said no.

We also asked "Do you support the principle of expanding Duncan Down to create a Community Park?" 66.30% said yes 33.70% said no.

Prior to any transfer in ownership a number of recreational facilities and environmental enhancements could be implemented. Residents were asked to rank these in order of preference.

The average scores were as follows (Scoring was 0 – 5 with 5 being the most preferable):

- 3.98 – Creation of a wild flower meadow.
- 3.73 – Planting of meadow glades.
- 3.61 – Enhancement of existing and creation of additional footpath network.
- 3.58 – Planting of native fruit hedge coppice.
- 3.20 – A children's adventure play area.
- 3.05 – Allotments with plotting sheds.
- 2.87 – Wide ride paths.
- 2.57 – A community hall and car park.
- 2.55 – Creation of green burial ground.
- 2.21 – All weather tennis courts.

We asked "Do you think the suggested enhancements strike the correct balance between nature conservation and recreation?" 61.76% said yes 38.24% said no.

We then asked "Do you have any suggestions for other enhancements/facilities that you would like to see provided?" The most common suggestions included car parks, more healthcare facilities, seating areas and public toilets. With the online questionnaires, Tankerton FC was mentioned a lot as well as more football pitches. Other suggestions included refreshments, cycle paths and lighting along footpaths.

To enable the creation of the enlarged Community Park an area of land has been identified as being suitable for a high quality residential development of approximately 300 new family homes.

We asked "Do you support the principle of development in this location to enable the expansion of Duncan Down and creation of a Community Park?" 61.90% said yes 38.10% said no.

We asked "Do you agree this is the best location on the site for housing?" 51.70% agreed 48.30% disagreed.

We then asked "If you answered no, where do you think housing should be located?" The majority of objectors felt there were too many large developments and that no further housing was needed. Also that run down houses should be developed, rather than developing on fields. Building on the west side was mentioned as well as placing the development in the middle to be surrounded by countryside. Seasalter and Ashted were other suggestions.

We then asked "What sort of housing would you like to see provided?" Respondents were asked to rank various possibilities in order of preference (Scoring was 0 – 5 with 5 being the most preferable). The average scores are shown below:

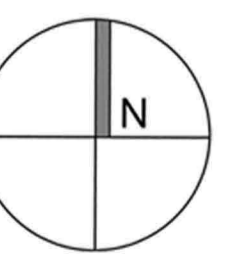
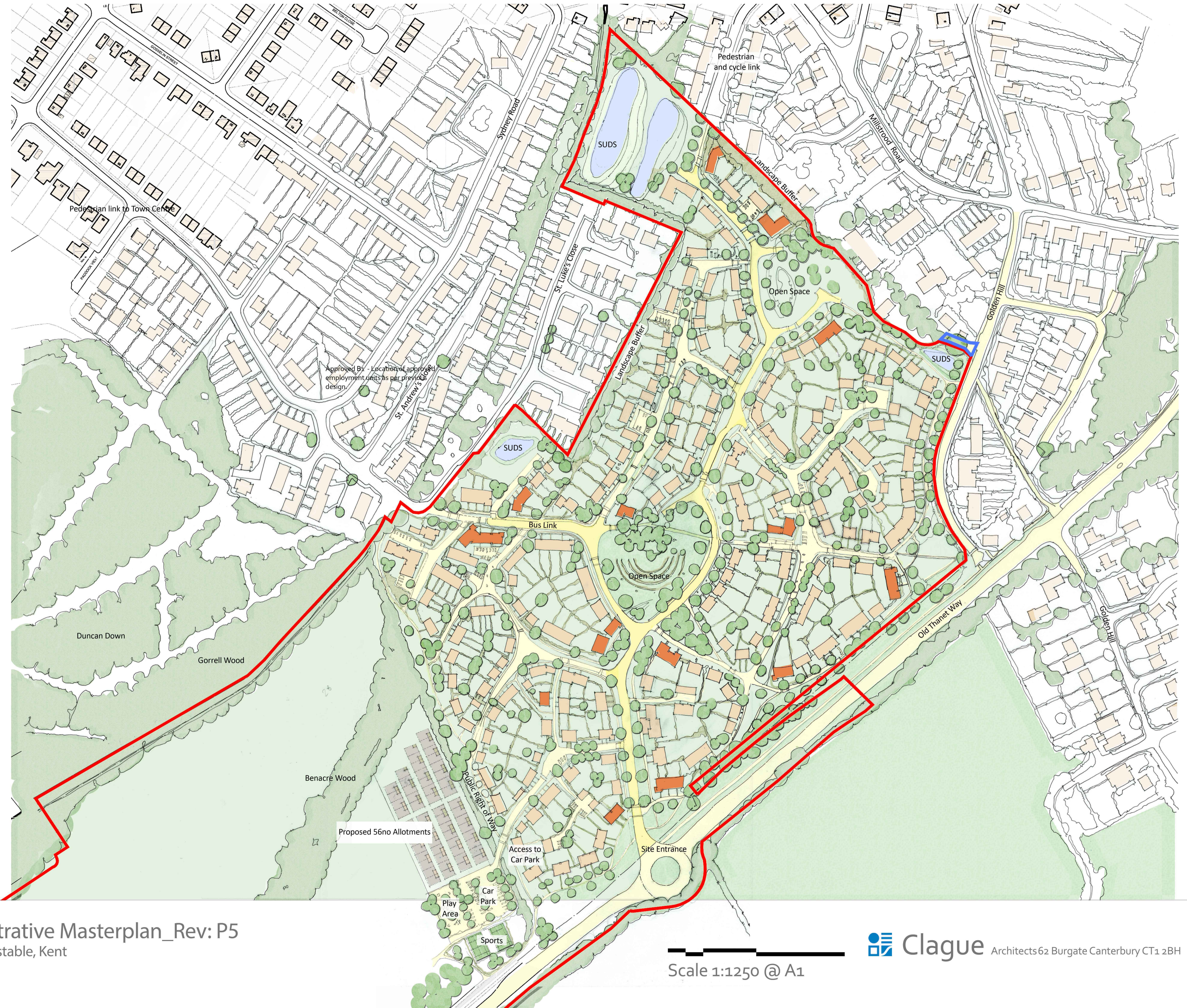
- 3.44 – Family houses
- 3.14 – Houses for young people
- 3.09 – Affordable homes
- 2.87 – Houses for the elderly
- 2.81 – Bungalows
- 1.86 – Townhouses
- 1.24 – Flats

We asked "Do you have any other suggestions for house types you would like to see provided?" Responses included the use of solar panels, units should be in keeping with the area with no high rise units, greenery, the inclusion of good sized gardens, units not "crammed" in. It was felt that there was no need for apartments. Some residents felt that housing was not required.

Finally, we asked “Do you have any further comments or suggestions?” Traffic was the main issue followed by car parking/schools/healthcare/infrastructure/appearance of the site and drainage. Again some residents felt that housing was not required. Also a number of online submissions suggested that Tankerton Football Club was in desperate need of land and pitches.

APPENDIX E

ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN



APPENDIX F

LETTER FROM FRIENDS OF DUNCAN DOWN

4TH MAY 2010



An award winning Village Green for the local community jointly managed by Canterbury City Council and the Friends of Duncan Down



Secretary:
Ashley Clark 2, Hilltop, Stanley Road, Whitstable, CT5 4QE
Tel 01227 264063 CLARKSATSEASIDE@aol.com

Honorary Wardens: Ashley Clark, Felicity Cornish, Mary Lerigo, Paul Wood

Mr C. A. Posgate
Managing Director
Devine Homes plc

05 MAY 2010

Dear Mr Posgate,

Whitstable, 4th May 2010

Further to my last communication I have now had opportunity to consult with a significant part of our 180 membership at the Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Duncan Down. Council officers and the local police were also present.

At that meeting my key question related to what we regard as the logical and natural extent of the area that locals refer to as Duncan Down. The general consensus was that it included the hay meadow that we have discussed coupled with the cereal fields on both sides of the spine of Benacre Wood.

As you are aware Benacre Wood is the only piece of ancient woodland close to Whitstable and as I write the value of that statement is underlined by a most spectacular display of bluebells. There was a general feeling that any housing in too close a proximity to the wood could present difficulties in terms of light, noise and human pressure that would threaten such a fragile environment.

Accordingly we would regard the boundary as being the Old Thanet Way and the line of the public footpath and hedgerow that runs from St Andrews Close up to the Old Thanet Way. If this area were to be protected we feel that we would not object to a well thought out development in the remaining area to the east and we are mindful that the residents of such a development might be attracted by co-location to a prestigious site that to date has won 4 successive green Flag awards and a Home Office award for the promotion of respect in the community (2007).

Our group is well connected within the local community and with key officers and members of the City Council so we are fully au fait with local community needs. Public open space is a paramount consideration in a town that has seen its population double in the last 50 years and the conversion of farmland into amenity/nature reserve would create a valuable community asset. As you are probably aware from press reports we have been researching viable alternative uses of the land that would both preserve essential wildlife elements as well as fulfilling community needs in order to raise the quality of life in the area. This has involved a

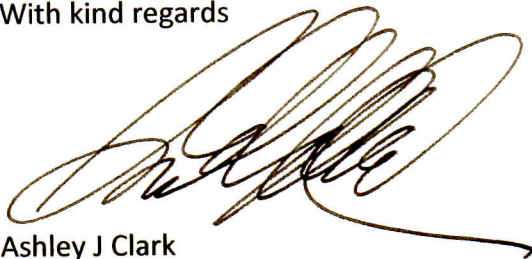
good deal of research and consultation with key individuals and that process is continuing. As a result of this we are now in a position to supply you with a draft of our "Duncan Down Village Green Community Plan Concept" and this is enclosed by way of a sketch over aerial photo and a ground plan coupled with an explanatory page. **I must stress that at this stage the document remains something of a vision of what might be achieved but it should serve as a useful starting point.**

In many ways our vision echoes what you have already produced but we have taken into account our detailed knowledge of the site and the wider community. We feel the plan is something that will work on the ground but importantly will go some of the way in fulfilling housing requirements in the district as well as catering for your commercial considerations and the general well being of the local community. In our deliberations we have been mindful of the fact that the LDF plan is still being considered although the preferred option at present appears to be in the south Canterbury area. The current development of a former industrial site (Huyck) approximately 800 metres to the east takes some pressure from any requirement to build further in Whitstable so any further development would need to show considerable community benefits to meet with approval. We feel that this plan could achieve that objective. The atmosphere of uncertainty and pessimism that currently prevails could be transformed into one of hope and light to the benefit of this and future generations.

We are aware that are likely to submit certain proposals in respect of the LDF plan and we feel that it might help if these are compatible with what we have suggested. If this were the case then there are indications that an appropriate level of political support might be forthcoming.

I trust that our observations are helpful to you. In circumstances such as these I feel it always better to look for what unites rather than what divides. Given your welcome initiative to meet with us we feel that an equitable solution is well within our grasp. Accordingly, we remain receptive to meeting again at a mutually convenient time and place if you feel that such a step would have positive benefits.

With kind regards

A handwritten signature in brown ink, appearing to read 'Ashley J Clark', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Ashley J Clark

DUNCAN DOWN VILLAGE GREEN COMMUNITY PLAN CONCEPT

--- RIDE/SERVICE TRACK
--- FOOTPATH





Duncan Down Village Green Community Plan Concept

KEY

-  Meadow Glades (3 ha)
-  Wide ride paths and parking
-  Lake
-  Forest screen (0.25 ha)
-  Native fruiting hedge/coppice
-  Green Burial (1.5 ha)
-  Allotments (1 ha)
-  Wildflower Meadow (3.4 ha)
-  Footpath

- Devine Homes Housing area**
(13.1 ha incl. screening/buffer zone)
- Meadow Glade field** (4.2 ha)
- Wildflower Meadow field** (5.35 ha)
- Burial Allotment field** (5 ha)

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This map is produced on behalf of the Friends of Duncan Down and does not represent any view of the council.

Duncan Down Village Green Community Plan

Society is a “partnership between those who are living, those who are dead and those who are yet unborn” – Edmund Burke

1. Fields to the north and south of Benacre Wood will be designated as Village Green
2. The burial area and allotment zone will not be so designated but public will have full access to the burial site with perimeter footpaths and a service ride/track provided.
3. The burial area will remain as a wildflower meadow with an annual hay cut with some stands of trees providing views are not unduly obstructed.
4. The western tip of Benacre Wood opposite the riding school will be planted with forest trees to a depth of some 30-40 metres to act as a screen and to reduce traffic noise.
5. The allotment area will usually be accessed via Southview Road and a small gravelled parking area will be provided to service this. Access will be restricted via a locked barrier. Water supply will come via Southview Road. Up to 100 plots are envisaged. This will increase if some are half sized.
6. The burial area will extend to the crest of the small ridge that crosses the field so as to optimise views of the Downs and sea. It will be screened from the allotment area along the ridge by a coppice wild harvest screen eg hazel, sloe, sweet chestnut etc (5-10 metre width)
7. Income generated from burials will be used to fund maintenance and enhancement of the whole site.
8. The spine of Benacre Wood will be widened at intervals by scalloped plantings of native species of the type currently found there. The footpath along the spine of the wood remains.
9. The lake will be constructed along the line of the stream by the construction of a low lying dam from the clay spoil. A reed bed will be planted upstream to reduce silting and provide further habitat.
10. The wildflower meadow will be park land with stands of native trees and annual hay cut to impoverish the soil so as to encourage wild flowers.
11. The meadow glade area to the south of Benacre Wood will be planted with mainly native species with some red oak and maple for autumn colour with Scots pine and yew for winter greenery. The hedge row bordering the road will be thickened to up to 30 metres to provide a screen.
12. A small gravelled car park (20 places) will be provided at the eastern end of the gladed area.
13. The tracks will be used for walking, cycling and service vehicles. They will serve as an informal route between the new development and allotments as well as Sherwood Estate and Estuary View (Medical Centre). They will also provide walking routes to Tesco and the Community College.
14. There may be a requirement to gravel part of the main transverse route but not the ride down to the lake.

APPENDIX G

LETTER FROM FRIENDS OF DUNCAN DOWN

11TH NOVEMBER 2014



An award winning Village Green for the local community jointly managed by Canterbury City Council and the Friends of Duncan Down



Secretary:

Ashley Clark 2, Hilltop, Stanley Road, Whitstable, CT5 4QE
Tel 01227 264063 CLARKSATSEASIDE@aol.com

Anna Palmer Senior Environment Officer
Canterbury City Council

Whitstable, 11th November 2014

Dear Anna,

RE: Meeting with Devine Homes October 2014

I am writing this in my capacity as Secretary to the Friends of Duncan Down. This is further to a meeting that took place at the Seasalter Christian Centre on Monday 6th October 2014 at the request of Devine Homes. You will be aware that Devine Homes have engaged with the Friends of Duncan Down and the local community for some considerable time and part of this involved the staging of a public exhibition attended by some 352 person in September 2011. This was widely reported in the local press. (See <http://www.askwhitstable.com/>)

Representatives from the Friends of Duncan Down, the Thanet Way Residents Association, the Whitstable Society and the Chair of Whitstable Umbrella attended (she resides in St Andrews Close Whitstable).

The meeting was conducted in a positive and supportive manner and Devine Homes indicated a willingness to provide support in respect of some of the landscaping, boundary control and facilities for the extended area of public open space. There may be some requirement for further ponds along the Gorrell Stream to slow the passage of surface water from the proposed development and the Friends are sympathetic to this providing they blend in and improve wildlife habitat.

The Thanet Way Residents Association expressed views regarding the density and landscaping of the housing development and access to the built up area from the Saddleton Road direction so as to avoid excessive use of Milstrood Hill. Devine Homes have yet to produce an outline estate plan but mentioned a likely figure of 300-350 homes and this was more favourably received than the 400 that some Council sources have suggested

The Whitstable Umbrella Representative spoke of a desire for facilities in terms of a hall for residents of the St Andrews/ Grimshill area but clearly any move in such a direction could only be supported if a viable community group existed to manage such a facility. Currently this is not the case. In the past there had been ideas mooted relating to a move to the area by a local church with a sound track record of

community involvement but in recent months the church has found an alternative location.

For sometime there have been proposals to incorporate an area of garden allotments at the eastern end of the open space area. In addition there is a proposal to allocate an area towards the centre of the open space for green burial as this would not detract from the wildlife benefits (in fact it would create a useful wildlife corridor) and provide the possibility of an income stream to help maintain the site for the future. Other proposals for a children's adventure play area and all weather tennis court/five a side pitch on the east of the site and close to the new development are regarded as acceptable. Vehicular access would be from the A2990 Thanet Way via the Devine Homes estate roads.

We are aware of a vociferous, ill informed, tiny group of disaffected individuals who have demanded public toilets for the site. Quite frankly, persons going for a walk in their local neighbourhood should have taken care of that sort of thing before going out. Maintenance costs and the potential for anti social and criminal behaviour make such a proposal totally unrealistic.

A limited area for parking would service the allotments and provide a facility for those who currently visit the existing site and whose use of unadopted roads causes upset to some residents (NB Borstal Avenue and Clovelly Road).

All parties were supportive of a proposal that all land other than that earmarked for allotments, car parking, green burial and a children's adventure play area should be registered as Village Green under s 15(8) of the Commons Act 2006 as this would ensure total compatibility with the current 52 acres of Village Green. It would provide consistency in management and avoid the confusion of different status particularly as Benacre Wood which finds itself in the middle of the proposed new area already has full village green status. This requirement should be made part of the planning conditions. DEFRA guidelines already make provision for this:

"You are a developer who is required to provide a recreational area on part of a development site as a planning condition or planning obligation— or a planning authority that considers it appropriate to require such registration as part of the agreement".

<http://archive.defra.gov.uk/rural/documents/protected/common-land/gpg-vdtvg.pdf>

At present the site is managed by the Friends of Duncan Down and the Council acting in partnership. This has proved to be the most successful partnership in the District. The Friend's management committee consists largely of professional individuals, several of who have both formal qualifications and a wealth of practical experience directly relevant to managing a site of this size. This is evidenced by the award of 9 successive Green Flag Awards. The Friends have been so successful that they are now exporting their expertise in some areas (bench making) to other parts of the District. In the circumstance it may well be the best course to continue with what has proven so successful although the formation of a trust would become appropriate if ownership of the land were to pass to the Friends of Duncan Down.

Please find below our bullet pointed wish list for the new area of open space. Those in italics will only apply in the event of the provision of allotments, play area, etc. The

other matters are regarded as absolutely essential. We are of the view that most of this could be provided by the developer:

- **Provision of car parking at the new eastern entrance to the site. This should cater for 25 vehicles. It need only be rolled type 1 and of a similar provision to what is supplied at the entrance to Clowes Wood (with sympathetic tree planting).**
- **Provision of a deer fence or double stock fence along the entire boundary with the old Thanet Way (to prevent dogs straying onto the road)**
- **Provision of lockable barriers at the eastern end of the site and at Southview Road. This will afford access for maintenance purposes only. Foot access through motorcycle barriers.**
- **Tree planting of native trees on the entire area between the long spine of Benacre Wood and the Thanet way. An area some 40 metres wide to be planted opposite the riding stable area so as to mask unsightly aerals. There should be a kissing gate access here.**
- **Provision of a forest track (topsoil removal and rolled aggregate) from the car park area to the proposed green burial area with turning circle at the south western end. This is for maintenance and hearse access (if required)**
- **Creation of grass and wildflower meadow in the field between Benacre Wood and Gorrell Wood. (The Friends can deal with the planting of stands of trees)**
- **Some provision of funding for information panel s, dog bins,tools, signage etc**
- *Security fencing of any allotment area*
- *Provision of sheds, water supply (possibly using run off) in the allotment area and appropriate footpaths*
- *Creating of a fenced children's adventure play area*
- *Provision of an all weather 5 a side pitch/ tennis court with fencing*

A drawing is attached to illustrate these matters.

Devine Homes confirmed their intention to stage further consultations along these lines with the directly interested parties as their development plans evolve.

I hope this information will be of assistance to you and your colleagues

With kind regards

Ashley

Ashley J Clark

Secretary to the Friends of Duncan Down

APPENDIX H

LETTER FROM STAGECOACH

15TH MAY 2015

15 May 2015

Mr Aled Roderick
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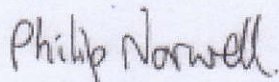
Dear Aled

I can confirm that the company considers the most appropriate way to offer a local bus service to the site would be to enable access from Thanet Way and the ability to cross into the residential area to the north of the site. This would be restricted to allow buses only to reach Sidney Road. It is accepted that buses use the roads proposed north of the site, however they are infrequent and parking would need to be considered subject to the hours of operation and proposed provision of full size buses.

The route would link to Whitstable town centre, the Estuary View Medical Centre and Canterbury. This would offer a range of journeys most likely to be of benefit to residents and those that will help the service become commercial over time. It is envisaged a 30 minute service to be provided in each direction during the day. Access for buses needs to be provided as early as possible during the build to promote the PT option before alternate travel patterns are established. Timing of the development would determine contribution to the service, which would cover any increased cost of operation to provide a new route or to divert an existing one. The suggested cost at £350k over three years would provide for the diversion of an established route to the specification suggested - dependant upon timing of the build this amount might vary to offer greater spread of day etc. In addition the company would offer a month's free travel pass to each resident as part of the welcome pack. Final detail would ensure best value and the most sustainable provision.

The company would wish to influence infrastructure within the site to standards expected by the travelling public and provided across east Kent. I am sure that the proposed development could be provided with a sustainable bus service if all of the suggested elements are incorporated in any solution.

Yours sincerely



Philip Norwell
Managing Director