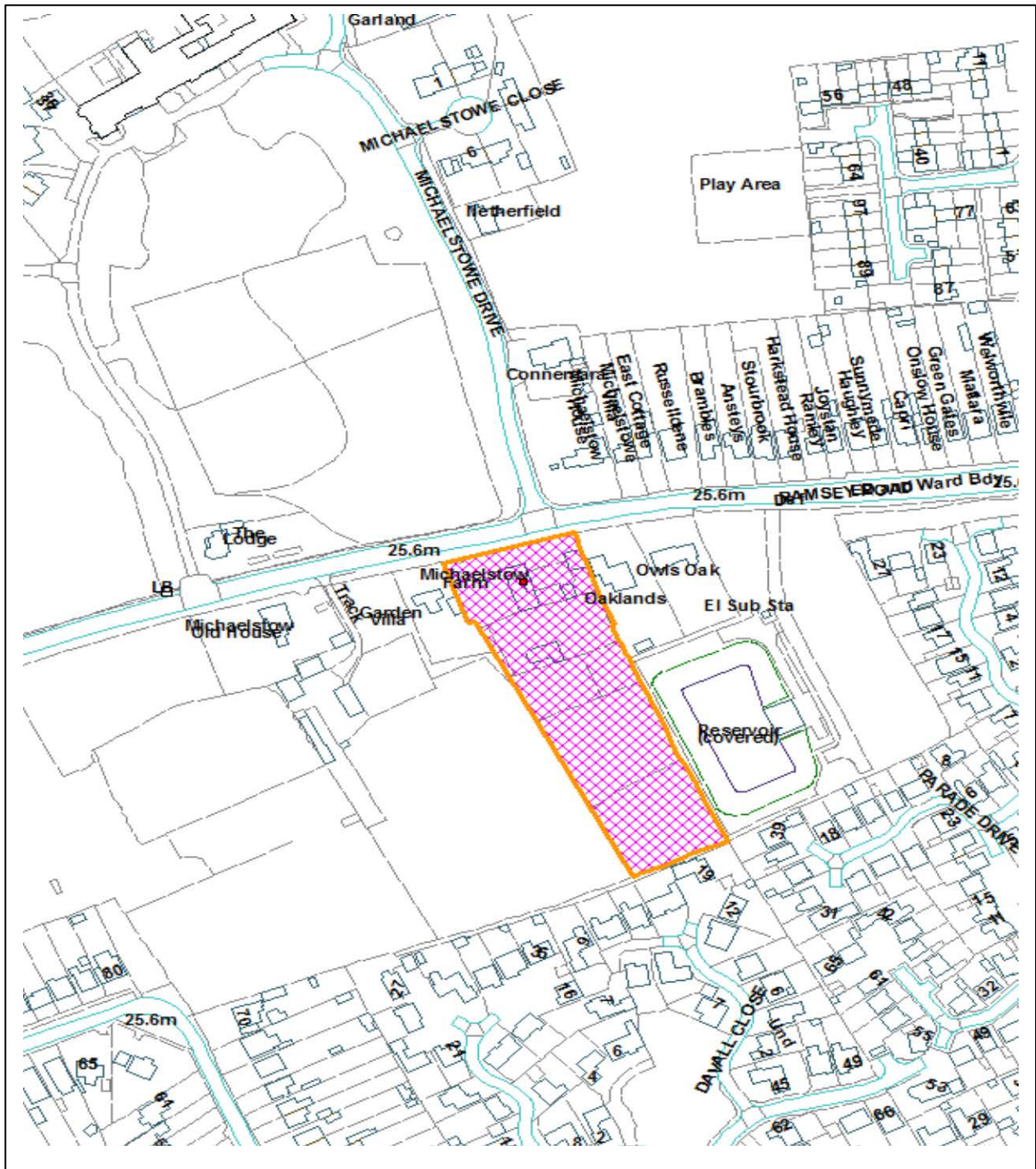


PLANNING COMMITTEE

3 JANUARY 2018

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING

A.5 PLANNING APPLICATION - 17/01811/OUT - MICHAELSTOWE FARM, RAMSEY ROAD, RAMSEY, CO12 5EW



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Application:	17/01811/OUT	Parish: Ramsey & Parkeston Parish Council
Applicant:	Stanfords	
Address:	Michaelstowe Farm Ramsey Road Ramsey CO12 5EW	
Development:	Erection of 14 dwellings - resubmission following non-determination of application 17/00872/OUT	

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This application is referred to the Planning Committee on the basis that it represents a departure from the saved and emerging local plans due to the site being located outside of any defined settlement boundary.
- 1.2 At present the Council is able to demonstrate a 5 year housing supply. However, to maintain the Council's strong housing supply position going forward and prior to the adoption of the emerging local plan it is acknowledged that sustainable sites on the edge of Strategic Urban Settlements will be assessed on a case by case basis. In this instance the site forms a logical small development site on the edge of one of the principal urban areas.
- 1.3 It is confirmed that safe highway access and egress to and from the site is achievable and that safe access can be provided to facilities within the Dovercourt Urban Area to the east. The indicative layout provided shows that the site can be developed with 14 properties whilst not adversely impacting on adjoining dwellings and is a relatively low density development on the edge of the settlement. Protection of ecological interests and the requirement for a detailed landscaping scheme to soften views of the development will be secured by condition.
- 1.4 In conclusion officers consider that the proposed scheme meets all technical and policy requirements and the application is therefore recommended for approval subject to a unilateral undertaking concerning the securement of a public open space contribution and a range of planning conditions.

Recommendation: Approve

That the Head of Planning be authorised to grant planning permission for the development subject to:-

- a) Within 6 (six) months of the date of the Committee's resolution to approve, the completion of a Unilateral Undertaking under the provisions of section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 dealing with the following matters (where relevant):
 - On site or off-site open space/play equipment.
- b) Planning conditions in accordance with those set out in (i) below (but with such amendments and additions, if any, to the detailed wording thereof as the Head of Planning (or the equivalent authorised officer) in their discretion considers appropriate).

(i) Conditions:

1. Standard conditions for submission of reserved matters and time limit for commencement.
 2. Visibility Splays (2.4m x 90m in both directions).
 3. Parking/turning areas provided prior to first occupation of dwellings.
 4. No unbound materials in first 6m of access.
 5. Carriageway/Estate Road/Footways construction timings.
 6. 500mm overhang strip provided adjacent to carriageway.
 7. Parking/Garage dimensions in accord with parking standards.
 8. Residential Travel Information Packs.
 9. Ecological mitigation/enhancement plan.
 10. Surface water drainage/foul drainage scheme.
 11. Hard and soft landscaping plan/implementation.
 12. Details of refuse storage/collection points.
 13. Archaeology – Historic Building Recording & Field Evaluation.
- c) That the Head of Planning (or the equivalent authorised officer) be authorised to refuse planning permission in the event that such legal agreement has not been completed within the period of 6 (six) months, as the requirements necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms had not been secured through a s106 planning obligation.

2. Planning Policy

Tendring District Local Plan (Adopted November 2007) – as ‘saved’ through a Direction from the Secretary of State. Relevant policies include:

QL1: Spatial Strategy: Directs most new development toward urban areas and seeks to concentrate development within settlement development boundaries. The policy categorises Great Bromley as a village.

QL2: Promoting Transport Choice: Requires developments to be located and designed to avoid reliance on the use of the private car.

QL3: Minimising and Managing Flood Risk: Seeks to direct development away from land at a high risk of flooding and requires a Flood Risk Assessment for developments in Flood Zone 1 on sites of 1 hectare or more.

QL9: Design of New Development: Provides general criteria against which the design of new development will be judged.

QL10: Designing New Development to Meet Functional Needs: Requires development to meet functional requirements relating to access, community safety and infrastructure provision.

QL11: Environmental Impacts: Requires new development to be compatible with its surrounding land uses and to minimise adverse environmental impacts.

QL12: Planning Obligations: States that the Council will use planning obligations to secure infrastructure to make developments acceptable, amongst other things.

HG1: Housing Provision

Sets out the strategy for delivering new homes to meet the need up to 2011 (which is now out of date and needs replacing through the new Local Plan).

HG6: Dwellings Size and Type

Requires a mix of housing types, sizes and tenures on developments of 10 or more dwellings.

HG7: Residential Densities

Requires residential developments to achieve an appropriate density. This policy refers to minimum densities from government guidance that have long since been superseded by the NPPF.

HG9: Private Amenity Space

Requires a minimum level of private amenity space (garden space) for new homes depending on how many bedrooms they have.

HG14: Side Isolation

Requires a minimum distance between detached properties.

COM6: Provision of Recreational Open Space for New Residential Developments

Requires residential developments on sites of 1.5 hectares or more to provide 10% of the site area as public open space, or a financial contribution from smaller developments.

COM21: Light Pollution

Requires external lighting for new development to avoid unacceptable impacts on the landscape, wildlife or highway and pedestrian safety.

COM23: General Pollution

States that permission will be refused for developments that have a significant adverse effect through the release of pollutants.

COM29: Utilities

Seeks to ensure that new development on large sites is or can be supported by the necessary infrastructure.

COM31a: Sewerage and Sewage Disposal

Seeks to ensure that new development is able to deal with waste water and effluent.

EN1: Landscape Character

Requires new developments to conserve key features of the landscape that contribute toward local distinctiveness.

EN6: Biodiversity

Requires existing biodiversity and geodiversity to be protected and enhanced with compensation measures put in place where development will cause harm.

EN6a: Protected Species

Ensures protected species including badgers are not adversely impacted by new development.

EN13: Sustainable Drainage Systems

Requires developments to incorporate sustainable drainage systems to manage surface water run-off.

EN29: Archaeology

Requires the archaeological value of a location to be assessed, recorded and, if necessary, safeguarded when considering development proposals.

TR1a: Development Affecting Highways

Requires developments affecting highways to aim to reduce and prevent hazards and inconvenience to traffic.

TR3a: Provision for Walking

Seeks to maximise opportunities to link development with existing footpaths and rights of way and provide convenient, safe attractive and direct routes for walking.

TR7: Vehicle Parking at New Development

Refers to the adopted Essex County Council parking standards which will be applied to all non-residential development.

Tendring District Local Plan: 2013-2033 and Beyond Publication Draft (June 2017)

Relevant policies include:

SP1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Follows the Planning Inspectorate's standard wording to ensure compliance with the NPPF.

SPL1: Managing Growth

Identifies Great Bromley as a smaller rural settlement where smaller scale development is envisaged as part of a sustainable strategy for growth. However larger sites are exceptionally permitted for affordable housing exception sites where there is identified need for affordable housing or Parish Council support.

SPL2: Settlement Development Boundaries

Seeks to direct new development to sites within settlement development boundaries.

SPL3: Sustainable Design

Sets out the criteria against which the design of new development will be judged.

HP5: Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities

Requires larger residential developments to provide a minimum 10% of land as open space with financial contributions toward off-site provision required from smaller sites.

LP1: Housing Supply

Sets out how the Council will meet objectively assessed housing needs over the next 15-20 years and in which parts of the district.

LP2: Housing Choice

Promotes a range of house size, type and tenure on large housing developments to reflect the projected needs of the housing market.

LP3: Housing Density and Standards

Policy requires the density of new housing development to reflect accessibility to local services, minimum floor space requirements, the need for a mix of housing, the character of surrounding development and on-site infrastructure requirements.

LP4: Housing Layout

Policy seeks to ensure large housing developments achieve a layout that, amongst other requirements, promotes health and wellbeing; minimises opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour; ensures safe movement for large vehicles including emergency services and waste collection; and ensures sufficient off-street parking.

PPL1: Development and Flood Risk

Seeks to direct development away from land at a high risk of flooding and requires a Flood Risk Assessment for developments in Flood Zone 1 on sites of 1 hectare or more.

PPL3: The Rural Landscape

Requires developments to conserve, where possible, key features that contribute toward the local distinctiveness of the landscape and include suitable measures for landscape conservation and enhancement.

PPL4: Biodiversity and Geo-Diversity

Gives protection to internal, European and nationally important wildlife sites and requires existing biodiversity and geodiversity on any site to be protected and enhanced with compensation measures put in place where development will cause harm.

PPL5: Water Conservation, Drainage and Sewerage

Requires developments to incorporate sustainable drainage systems to manage surface water run-off and ensure that new development is able to deal with waste water and effluent.

PPL7: Archaeology

Requires that where development that might affect archaeological remains, studies and works are undertaken to identify, recover and record such remains.

CP1: Sustainable Transport and Accessibility

Requires developments to include and encourage opportunities for access to sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport.

CP3: Improving the Telecommunications Network

Requires that new developments be served by superfast or ultrafast broadband.

Other Guidance

Essex County Council Car Parking Standards – Design and Good Practice

Essex Design Guide for Residential and Mixed-Use Areas.

Status of the Local Plan

The 'development plan' for Tendring is the 2007 'adopted' Local Plan, despite some of its policies being out of date. Paragraph 215 of the NPPF allows local planning authorities to give due weight to adopted albeit outdated policies according to their degree of consistency with the policies in the NPPF. Paragraph 216 of the NPPF also allows weight to be given to policies in emerging plans according to their stage of preparation, the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies and the degree of consistency with national policy. As of 16th June 2017, the emerging Local Plan for Tendring is the Tendring District Local Plan 2013-2033 and Beyond Publication Draft. As this plan is yet to be examined, its policies cannot carry the full weight of adopted policy. However, because the plan has reached publication stage its policies can carry some weight in the determination of planning applications. Where emerging policies are particularly relevant to a planning application and can be given some weight in line with the principles set out in paragraph 216 of the NPPF, they will be considered and, where appropriate, referred to in decision notices. In general terms however, more weight will be given to policies in the NPPF and the adopted Local Plan.

3. Relevant Planning History

17/00872/OUT Erection of 14 dwellings. Current

4. Consultations

Essex County Council Archaeology	Recommendation - A Programme of Historic building recording and Archaeological evaluation
Building Control and Access Officer	The proposal does not appear to comply with the requirements of B5. Access and facilities for the fire service. - Poor turning facilities for the fire appliances.
Waste Management	No comments.
Tree & Landscape Officer	<p>The site is set to grass and contains several young trees that are situated primarily on the perimeter of the land.</p> <p>The boundary with the highway (Ramsey Road) is demarcated by a scrubby ivy covered hedgerow that has little amenity or other value. The boundary feature contains two trees: a small Elder and a multi-stemmed Sycamore. The Elder makes little contribution to the character or appearance of the area but the Sycamore is a positive feature in the public realm.</p> <p>The indicative site layout shows that the tree is retained and whilst this may be desirable the amenity of the locality may well be best served by the removal of the tree and new soft landscaping incorporating tree planting on the boundary with Ramsey Road.</p> <p>It is not considered necessary or expedient to make a Tree Preservation Order in respect of the Sycamore.</p> <p>Should planning permission be likely to be granted then a condition should be attached to secure details of soft landscaping to soften and enhance the appearance of the development.</p>
Anglian Water Services Ltd	<p>The foul drainage from this development is in the catchment of Harwich and Dovercourt Water Recycling Centre that will have available capacity for these flows.</p> <p>From the details submitted to support the planning application the proposed method of surface water management does not relate to Anglian Water operated assets. As such, we are unable to provide comments on the suitability of the surface water management.</p>
ECC Highways Dept	<p>This Authority has assessed the highway and transportation impact of the proposal and does not wish to raise an objection to the above application subject to the following:</p> <p>- Prior to occupation of the development, the access at its centre line shall be provided with a clear to ground visibility splay with dimensions of 2.4 metres by 90 metres in both directions, as</p>

measured from and along the nearside edge of the carriageway. Such vehicular visibility splays shall be provided before the access is first used by vehicular traffic and retained free of any obstruction at all times.

- Prior to occupation of the development the vehicular parking and turning facilities shall be constructed, surfaced and maintained free from obstruction within the site at all times for that sole purpose.

- No unbound material shall be used in the surface treatment of the vehicular access within 6 metres of the highway boundary.

- Prior to the first occupation of the development, the proposed access shall be constructed to a width of 6 metres to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

- The carriageway(s) of the proposed estate road(s) shall be constructed up to and including at least road base level, prior to the commencement of the erection of any dwelling intended to take access from that road(s). The carriageways and footways shall be constructed up to and including base course surfacing to ensure that each dwelling prior to occupation has a properly consolidated and surfaced carriageway and footway, between the dwelling and the existing highway. Until final surfacing is completed, the footway base course shall be provided in a manner to avoid any upstands to gullies, covers, kerbs or other such obstructions within or bordering the footway. The carriageways, footways and footpaths in front of each dwelling shall be completed with final surfacing within twelve months (or three months in the case of a shared surface road or a mews) from the occupation of such dwelling.

- Prior to the first occupation of the development, a 500mm wide overhang strip shall be provided adjacent to the carriageway.

- Any vehicular hardstanding shall have minimum dimensions of 2.9 metres x 5.5 metres for each individual parking space, retained in perpetuity.

- Any single garages should have a minimum internal measurement of 7m x 3m. All garages shall be retained for the purposes of vehicle parking in perpetuity.

- Prior to occupation of the proposed development, the Developer shall be responsible for the provision and implementation of a Residential Travel Information Pack for sustainable transport approved by Essex County Council, to include six one day travel vouchers for use with the relevant local public transport operator.

Essex Wildlife Trust

I can confirm that we have no comments to make in relation to this proposal.

Natural England

Natural England has no comments to make on this application.

ECC SuDS Consultee

In the absence of a surface water drainage strategy, we object to this application.

UU - Open Space
Consultation

Due to the lack of facilities in Ramsey & Parkeston it is felt that a contribution towards play and formal open space is justified and relevant to the planning application, in line with Supplementary Planning Guidance, Provision of Recreational Open Space for New Developments, dated May 2008.

5. Representations

5.1 The view of the Ramsey & Parkeston Parish Council is no objection.

5.2 1 letter of observation outlining the following matters;

- No objection to the proposed development as our privacy has been maintained by the design of the development.
- The development would bring security to our property as currently it is very secluded.
- Like to see the bin store positioned in a more secluded position as I am concerned about rodents/smell so close to our boundary.

6. Assessment

6.1 The main planning considerations are:

- Site context;
- Proposal;
- The principle of development;
- Landscape, visual impact and trees;
- Layout and Amenity;
- Highways, transport and accessibility;
- Flood risk and drainage;
- Ecology;
- Open space contribution;
- Heritage.

Site Context

6.2 The application site is located on the southern side of Ramsey Road within the parish of Ramsey & Parkeston but directly abutting the settlement development boundary of the Dovercourt Urban Area in both the saved and emerging local plans. The site is rectangular in shape, extending to 0.73 hectares and with a frontage of 54m direct onto Ramsey Road. It is located opposite the junction with Michaelstowe Drive, between existing houses known as 'Oaklands' and 'Garden Villa' to the east and west respectively. The land is currently used for the cropping of hay. It includes a series of farm buildings in varying states of repair, including a small traditional barn, cart lodge, store and byre. These are located at the front of the site and immediately adjacent to Oaklands.

6.3 The land immediately to the east is used as an underground reservoir, while further beyond a development of 9 dwellings has recently been approved. To the south is an 80's housing estate constructed on a former holiday park. The surrounding area comprises of a mix of dwelling types, age, scale and design.

Proposal

6.4 This application proposes the erection of 14 properties on the site with a breakdown of 11 dwellings and 3 bungalows. The application is in outline form with all matters reserved.

- 6.5 An existing identical outline application was submitted in May 2017. The Council has been advised that the planning application is the subject of a non-determination appeal, however at the time of writing no such appeal has been received.

Principle of development

- 6.6 In line with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2014, planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the 'development plan' unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are a material consideration in this regard.
- 6.7 'Sustainable Development', as far as the NPPF is concerned, is development that contributes positively to the economy, society and the environment and under the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development', authorities are expected to grant permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole; or specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.
- 6.8 One of the NPPF's core planning principles is to "actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable". With this in mind, Policy SPL1 in emerging Local Plan includes a 'settlement hierarchy' aimed at categorising the district's towns and villages and providing a framework for directing development toward the most sustainable locations.
- 6.9 Whilst the site falls within the Ramsey & Parkeston Parish it is located immediately adjacent to the built up area of Dovercourt. Within emerging policy SPL1 the Harwich/Dovercourt urban area (which also includes Parkeston and part of Ramsey) is classified as a 'Strategic Urban Settlement'. These urban areas have larger populations and a wide range of existing infrastructure and facilities, making them the most sustainable locations for growth. For this reason these areas are to accommodate the largest proportion of the District's increase in housing stock.
- 6.10 At present the Council is able to demonstrate a 5 year housing supply. However, to maintain the Council's strong housing supply position going forward and prior to the adoption of the emerging local plan it is acknowledged that sustainable sites on the edge of Strategic Urban Settlements will be assessed on a case by case basis. In this instance the site forms a logical small development site on the edge of one of the principal urban areas. The site will help to contribute towards the housing supply in the area and due to the character of the site and its surroundings would have a minimal impact upon the landscape character of the locality.

Landscape, visual impact and trees

- 6.11 The site is currently used for the cropping of hay and includes a series of farm buildings in varying states of repair, including a small traditional barn, cart lodge, store and byre. The site also contains a number of fruit trees and some minor trees that have self-seeded. Present to the frontage of the site is a mature hedgerow, which will be trimmed back to afford appropriate vehicular visibility splays to the intended access point. To the east, west and south of the site are residential properties of varying size and style.
- 6.12 Policy EN1 of the adopted Local Plan and Policy PPL3 in the emerging Local Plan seek to protect and, wherever possible, enhance the quality of the district's landscape; requiring developments to conserve natural and man-made features that contribute toward local distinctiveness and, where necessary, requiring suitable measures for landscape

conservation and enhancement. Policies QL9 and SPL3 also require developments to incorporate important existing site features of landscape, ecological or amenity value such as trees, hedges, water features, buffer zones, walls and buildings.

- 6.13 As stated above the site is located on the edge of the Dovercourt Urban Area and contains several agricultural buildings. The location of the site means that it is surrounded by residential properties and therefore the proposed housing would be viewed in this context. To the west along Ramsey Road glimpses of the development would be afforded to the rear of Garden Villa, the curtilage of which is quite open in character. However views of the housing would be seen against the backdrop of existing residential development to the east and the south and with the implementation of soft landscaping to the perimeters of the site views of the development would be further softened. Views of the development from the east would be screened by existing built form and mature vegetation present on the side boundary of Oaklands directly to the east of the site. The retention of the majority of the frontage hedgerow will assist in screening views of the development from the north along Michaelstowe Drive.
- 6.14 The Council's Tree and Landscaping Officer has confirmed that whilst a Sycamore Tree present on the boundary represents a positive feature it is not of sufficient merit to warrant formal protection. Notwithstanding this point the indicative site layout shows that the tree is retained and whilst this may be desirable the amenity of the locality may well be best served by the removal of the tree and new soft landscaping incorporating tree planting on the boundary with Ramsey Road.
- 6.15 It is therefore recommended that planning conditions are imposed which will require the provision and implementation of a detailed landscape scheme which shows the planting of hedges/trees to the western boundary to soften views of the development in views from the west.
- 6.16 Overall it is considered that the site can be developed as proposed without adversely harming the character and appearance of the locality.

Layout and Amenity

- 6.17 Although all matters are reserved, the indicative layout provided shows a single point of access from Ramsey Road running along the western boundary of the site. Immediately off the access road would be a private drive serving three detached dwellings directly addressing Ramsey Road. This suitably continues the ribbon development along Ramsey Road and allows for the retention of the majority of the frontage hedge due to the absence of individual access points on Ramsey Road. To the rear of these dwellings would be a mews style arrangement of bungalows served via another private drive. The presence of single storey properties in this location is proposed to avoid the loss of privacy to the residents of Oaklands to the north. Towards the rear of the site are 8 detached dwellings which will address the access road and turning head. These have been positioned to meet the back to back distances outlined in the Essex Design Guide, aside from a property located to the south in Davall Close which is set close to the rear boundary of the plot but contains no facing windows.
- 6.18 The indicative plan also shows that each property would be served by at least 2 no. parking spaces with further visitor parking provided adjacent to the access road. The properties would also be set within good sized plots which allows for private rear gardens measuring between 101sqm and 250sqm in size. This is in excess of the requirements of saved policy HG9.

- 6.19 Overall the indicative plan provided shows a spacious development laid out in manner which would provide each property with sufficient amenity space and parking whilst maintaining existing resident's amenity.

Highways, transport and accessibility

- 6.20 Paragraph 32 of the NPPF relates to transport and requires Councils, when making decisions, to take account of whether:
- the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up depending on the nature and location of the site, to reduce the need for major transport infrastructure;
 - safe a suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people; and
 - improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limit the significant impacts of the development. Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.
- 6.21 Policy QL2 in the adopted Local Plan and Policy CP1 in the emerging Local Plan seek to ensure that developments maximise the opportunities for access to sustainable transport including walking, cycling and public transport. Although the site is located in one of the district's smaller rural settlements that have limited access to jobs, shops, services and facilities, the location benefits from having easy access to the A120, the village is served by an existing bus service and there are existing footpaths which link the site to the centre of the village. The village primary school and church are just a few hundred metres from the site.
- 6.22 As noted the site is served by a single access from Ramsey Road with two private drives located off the main access road. The Highway Authority have not raised objection subject to the imposition of a number of detailed planning conditions which include the provision of visibility splays to the access, the dimensions of parking bays and garages, the construction of the access/footways prior to occupation and the implementation of a residential travel pack for sustainable transport. These conditions are included as part of the recommendation.
- 6.23 As mentioned above, the indicative plan shows that each property would be served by a minimum of 2 no. parking spaces either through open bays or garaging. 3 additional spaces for visitors would be made available adjacent to the access road. This provision accords with the requirements of the current parking standards.

Flood Risk & Drainage

- 6.24 In accordance with paragraph 103 of the NPPF, as the site is less than 1 hectare, no flood risk assessment is required. Therefore whilst the absence of a surface water strategy has attracted an objection from Essex County Council Suds Team, the size of the site is below the site size threshold to be classed as a major development, so the provision of a suitable SUDs strategy can be conditioned for later consideration.
- 6.25 Anglian Water has confirmed that the foul drainage from this development is in the catchment of Harwich and Dovercourt Water Recycling Centre and that it has available capacity for these flows.

Ecology

- 6.26 Paragraph 118 of the NPPF requires Councils, when determining planning applications, to aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Where significant harm to biodiversity cannot be avoided, mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated for, Councils should refuse planning permission. Policy EN6 of the adopted Local Plan and Policy PPL4 of the emerging Local Plan give special protection to designated sites of international, national or local importance to nature conservation but for non-designated sites still require impacts on biodiversity to be considered and thereafter minimised, mitigated or compensated for.
- 6.27 An ecological appraisal of the site has been submitted which concludes the following;
- With the exception of nesting birds and foraging bats, which are addressed by appropriate timing and methodology of works, the site is unlikely to support any protected species, and no further surveys are recommended.
 - There are opportunities to enhance the site and the immediate surroundings for local wildlife, and a number of ecological enhancement measures.
 - To avoid any cumulative significant adverse impact upon the Stour and Orwell Estuaries SPA / Ramsar and Hamford Water SPA / Ramsar, the site developer must make an agreed proportional financial contribution to the local and regional mitigation strategy for this internationally designated site.
- 6.28 In terms of nesting birds and foraging bats the survey recommends a scheme of mitigation which includes;
- all weatherboarding being removed by hand;
 - all crevices in the underside of beams being checked for bats immediately prior to removal;
 - in the event of bats being discovered all works ceasing and an ecologist contacted for further advice;
 - use of sensitive lighting wherever possible; and
 - clearance works being undertaken during October to February to avoid bird nesting season.
- 6.29 A full ecological mitigation/enhancement plan, which shall include the recommendations outlined above and the provision of bird and bat boxes within the development, will be secured through condition. In addition, Essex Wildlife Trust has reviewed the application and has no objections.

Open space contribution

- 6.30 Policy COM6 in the adopted Local Plan and Policy HP5 of the emerging Local Plan require residential developments of over 1.5 hectares to provide at least 10% of land as public open space or otherwise make financial contributions toward off-site provision. In this case the site is less than 1.5 hectares and it is more appropriate to seek an off-site financial contribution.
- 6.31 The Council's open spaces team has requested that due to a shortfall in open space provision a financial contribution is to be secured by unilateral undertaking and this money would be spent at the closest play area securing the enhancement of the play area managed by the Ramsey Memorial Trust.

- 6.32 A unilateral undertaking is yet to be agreed, however the recommendation makes provision for an extended time period to secure this contribution or in the failure of securing the contribution the refusal of the planning permission. An update in this respect will be provided at the Planning Committee.
- 6.33 There is no requirement to provide affordable housing as the proposal falls below the threshold of 15 dwellings given its location on the edge of the urban settlement of Dovercourt.

Heritage

- 6.34 The site is not located within a conservation area or in close proximity to any listed buildings and is therefore not considered to adversely affect the setting of any heritage assets.
- 6.35 However, Essex County Council Archaeology Advice notes that the site may have been associated with the medieval manorial site of Dovercourt known as Michaelstow. The site is likely to have been the farmstead associated with the Hall and may be medieval in origin. As such they have recommended a programme of historic building recording and an archaeological evaluation is carried out prior to commencement/demolition works take place. These programmes of work will be secured through condition.

Background Papers

None