

# Land to rear of 17A-D Station Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3DU

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Naith Hanchard  
Halo Ltd

## Overview

This document is produced to support a planning application for a new development to accommodate four (4) starter apartments on land to the rear of 17A-D Station Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3DU.

This planning statement will address the background to the application, and provide the necessary information to enable its determination by officers at the Council.

It will consider the proposal in light of relevant planning policies, previous applications, and other material considerations.

The application concludes that key material considerations and the wider objectives of National and Local planning policy support the grant of permission.

In addition to this planning statement, the application is accompanied by the appropriate fees, planning application forms, and the following documents prepared by Ktech:

- Site Location and Block Plans
- Site Plan
- Proposed Floor Plans
- Proposed Elevations
- Existing and Proposed Street Views

## Site Location and Description

The site is located on Pembury Street, Sittingbourne and sits behind 17A-17D Station Street. It comprises an area of hardstanding which has been used historically as car parking.

The site is located within Flood Zone 1 which carries the lowest risk of fluvial flooding. It is not located within a conservation area and does not contain and is not in close proximity to any listed buildings.

It is approximately 2.5km south west from The Swale, which is a designated Ramsar, SSSI and Special Protection Area.

## Planning History

- Application Ref: 20/501348/OUT – Outline application for the erection of a residential development (All matters reserved except access). Granted 2 July 2020.

- Application Ref: 21/502732/FULL - Full application for the erection of a building accommodating five (5) residential apartments with associated parking. Refused 3 September 2021.
  - Concerns raised pertaining to the scale, height, and layout of the development being out of keeping with the character and scale of the surrounding area.
  - Lack of meaningful daylight to living areas and a reduction in daylight to the occupants of Kember Place.

## Goals

It is the goal of this application to support:

1. The effective repurposing of vacant land for residential use.
2. A positive contribution to Swale's affordable housing strategy for local people.
3. To successfully address the concerns raised in application 21/502732/FULL.

## Development Proposals

The National Design Guide (2019) identifies that “well-designed homes and buildings are functional, accessible and sustainable. They provide internal environments and associated external spaces that support the health and well-being of their users and all who experience them. They meet the needs of a diverse range of users, taking into account factors such as the ageing population and cultural differences. They are adequate in size, fit for purpose and are adaptable to the changing needs of their occupants over time” (para 120-121). Planning, Design & Access Statement [11 May 2021](#)

Regarding the requirements of NPPG Paragraph: 029 Reference ID: 14-029-20140306 in respect of Design and Access Statements, the proposal is described as follows:

**Use and Amount:** The proposed use is for a new four storey building to accommodate four apartments with associated parking, cycle storage and bin stores.

**Layout and Scale:** The proposed building is to be four storeys in height with a pitched roof.

It will accommodate one apartment on each floor. Internally, the accommodation has been laid out to maximise the internal space and light afforded, with each apartment meeting the nationally described space standard.

**Landscaping:** The site does not contain any existing trees. New planting however can be accommodated within the curtilage of the site and is proposed for control via condition.

**Appearance:** The building will be of a modern design with a pitched roof. The proposed materials comprise of yellow brick, white timber boards and white render in keeping with surrounding buildings.

**Access & Parking:** The development seeks to retain 2 car parking spaces to the front of the site which are accessed from Pembury Road. The access to the building is located on the southern side of the building, via gated access from the western side.


## Policy Assessment

### National Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a relevant material consideration to the application. Some weight also needs to be given to the content of the Ministerial Statement, 'Planning for Growth', issued in March 2011.

The theme running through the centre of guidance within the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

- Paragraph 38 of the NPPF states that "Local planning authorities should approach decision on proposed development in a positive and creative way" and "at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible".
- Paragraph 117 of the NPPF comments that planning should "make effective use of land" in "meeting the need for homes and other uses, whilst safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions".
- Paragraph 59 confirms the Government's objective to boost the supply of housing, and paragraph 8 identifies the three objectives of sustainable development, as economic, environmental and social.
- Paragraph 124 identifies that "Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities", whilst paragraph 131 states that "In determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings."
- The National Design Guide builds on the above, and clarifies that "well-designed neighbourhoods need to include an integrated mix of tenures and housing types that reflect local housing need and market demand. They are designed to be



inclusive and to meet the changing needs of people of different ages and abilities. New development reinforces existing places by enhancing local transport, facilities and community services, and maximising their potential use" (para 109).

## Principle of Development

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The site is located within the built-up area boundary of Sittingbourne, where the principle of residential development is acceptable. Policy ST3 of the Local Plan states 'The main Borough urban centre of Sittingbourne will provide the primary urban focus for growth, where development will support town centre regeneration and underpin the town's role as the principal centre'.

The Committee Report for the previous application stated that 'The site is in an appropriate and sustainable location with good access to local facilities, transport links and schools, where good use should be made available of land'.

The use of this site for residential development was approved as part of the previous application for one new dwellinghouse on the site. The principle of development is therefore secured and is deemed to be an entirely suitable location for the proposed development.


## Character and Appearance of the Area

The site currently comprises of hardstanding and is used by 17A-D Station Street for car parking.

The surrounding development comprises primarily of residential development, with apartment blocks being between two and four storeys in height. The proposed development proposed a four-storey building with pitched roof in keeping with surrounding buildings, and to ensure that the scale and massing of the building is not disproportionate to the rest of the street scene.

The proposed development seeks to infill a gap within the street between Station View Court and 55a Pembury Street. Pembury Street has a mix of building styles and heights as demonstrated on the submitted plan showing existing and proposed street views. The proposed design of the building is therefore deemed to be in keeping with the street scene and improves an under-utilised piece of land in this location.

Following the refusal of the most recent application, the design of the proposals has been amended in response to the reasons for refusal.



**Daylight access:** The living area to each of the flats has a full height double width window at one end in addition to the high-level windows located on the flank elevation (south-facing). The size of the windows on this elevation have also been increased in comparison to the previous application.

The stairwell also has windows to two flanks, one of which is a full height window.

**Individual residential unit scale:** All of the apartments meet the minimum gross internal floor areas as set out in the Nationally Described Space Standards.

Located within the town centre, this site presents a considerable opportunity to introduce high quality accommodation in a highly sustainable area whilst making the most efficient use of the site.

## Residential Amenity

Policy DM14 of the Local Plan states that all development proposals will 'cause no significant harm to amenity and other sensitive uses or areas'.

According to the plans submitted as part of planning application SW/07/0449, the windows on the side elevation on Station Court are secondary windows for the living area of the flats. 55a Pembury Street has no windows on the side elevation that abuts this site.

The layout and design of the proposed building has therefore taken this into account to ensure that there is no impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties. The windows on the southern flank are proposed to be high level and there are no windows proposed on the northern facing side elevation.

To ensure no loss in residential amenity to the occupants of Kember Place, this scheme falls within the proposed footprint of the approved dwellinghouse. Note the footprint of the approved dwellinghouse application does project further back than the proposed apartment block.

The approved dwellinghouse was deemed to have sufficient spacing between it and the neighbouring properties. As the proposed development is in a similar footprint, it is considered that there is no impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring buildings.

The building has sufficient spacing between it and neighbouring properties.

This broadly follows the illustrative layout of the 2020 application, whilst although was outline in nature, the approach was deemed to be acceptable.

The proposal is therefore considered to not cause any harm to neighbouring amenity in line with Policy DM14.

## Trees and Landscaping

The site does not contain any existing trees. It is proposed that a soft and hard landscaping scheme is proposed as part of a condition.

It was stated in the committee report for the 2020 application that:

*"At present the site comprises of previously developed area of hardstanding and no trees or areas of landscaping are identified on site. As such, the future submission of a landscaping scheme will only be a welcomed benefit to the existing situation..."*

The future provision of a landscaping scheme is therefore deemed to be acceptable and in line with Policy DM14 of the Local Plan.

## Transport and Parking

Two parking spaces are proposed to be retained at the front of the site.

It was stated in the committee report for the previous application that:

*"...this is a Town Centre Location with suitable transport links and a number of accessible public car parks are located within close proximity of the site and therefore in a prime location where zero parking provision is generally considered acceptable."*

The level of parking is therefore considered to be entirely acceptable for this location and is in accordance with Policy DM7 of the Local Plan.

Secure cycle parking is provided in the rear of the site for use by all future residents. It is in a convenient, safe, secure and sheltered location in accordance with Policy DM7.

## Refuse Provision

Bin stores for all flats are located at the rear of the site.

## Drainage and SuDS

The site is located within Flood Zone 1 which carries the lowest risk of fluvial flooding. The site measures less than 1 hectare in size. As such a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) is not required. The proposed development will not result in flood risk elsewhere and is therefore in accordance with Policy DM21 of the Local Plan.

## Sustainability and Energy

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF supports the transition of development to a low carbon future. The national Code for Sustainable Homes has now been abolished, however it is proposed that the development would conform to Part L of the Building Regulations which as of 2010 requires a 25% reduction in carbon emissions over the 2006 standards. This is equivalent to Code level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. By way of contributing to the reduction in carbon, the proposal would also achieve current building construction standards with added sustainability measures through;

1. The limitation of the amount of inherent material, structure and embodied energy through the employment of good building standards to create an excellent SAP rating;
2. Use of locally sourced, recycled materials and labour where Practicable;
3. Reduced internal water consumption of 110 litres per person per day through the incorporation of water efficient sanitary fittings, including low flow toilets and water efficient taps for wash basins;
4. Refuse, recycling and composting facilities to be provided to work with the Council's existing waste and recycling collection service;
5. Secure cycle provision to encourage sustainable modes of transport;
6. 'A' rated electrical appliances and energy saving light fittings;
7. 'A' rated double glazed windows with natural cross ventilation provision;
8. Recycling of waste construction materials where practicable;

The proposal is therefore considered to comply with sustainability objectives in this respect.

## Affordable Housing


The proposal comprises four new apartments. This does not meet the threshold for providing affordable housing as per policy DM8 of the Local Plan.

## Conclusion

This statement has demonstrated that the proposed development is acceptable in principle and makes an efficient use of land.

Material planning considerations have been carefully considered and analysed, as evidenced in this statement and the supporting plans and documents. It is considered the proposed development would contribute an appropriate windfall site to the Borough's housing supply, without adverse effect on the character of the area or the amenity of neighbouring residents.





It is considered that the proposed scheme complies with relevant Development Plan Policies and is further supported by National Guidance. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.