

Vistry Homes (Tenterden) Steering Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 18th November 2024

Present:

Vistry Homes: Paul Dadswell (PD)

SEC Newgate: William Neale (WN)

Kent County Council: Cllr. Mike Hill (MH)

Ashford Borough Council: Cllr. Ken Mulholland (KM)

Tenterden Town Council: Cllr. Mike Carter (MC), Claire Gilbert (Deputy Town Clerk) (CG)

Tenterden Town Council Climate Action Advisory Group: John Crawford (JC)

Tenterden Community Land Trust: Mark Ellender (ME)

Tenterden & District Chamber of Commerce: Lance Hopley (LH)

Tenterden Residents Association, Tenterden Neighbourhood Plan & Tenterden Wildlife: Siggie Nepp (SN)

Limes Land Protection Group: Albert Poole (AP)

Apologies for Absence: Cllr. Mrs. K. Brunger-Randall.

Update from Vistry Homes

1. PD reported that a revised layout had been produced but requires further amendments to include all the comments received. Vistry will then meet with ABC on 2nd December to run through the revisions with ABC's Design and Case Officers. Vistry are looking at submitting amended plans to ABC in late December. WN agreed to circulate the amended plan to the Steering Committee once approved by the ABC Officers and also provide a list of what has been changed. The plans had been amended for the road widths at the request of the Design Officer, however, the narrowing of the roads' conflicts with KCC's requirements. Other changes suggested included moving the play area, however this then places it within the RPA of nearby trees, so requires further discussion.
2. KM asked whether the recent queries submitted to Vistry by local residents were being dealt with regarding the location of the bus stop on Woodchurch Road and ecological matters. PD reported that the lines of communication are not clear between ecologists and individuals and stated that badgers and polecats need licences for dealing with certain elements; confirmation that action is being taken should be included in any communications.
3. KM asked how communications will be dealt with regarding the amended plans. PD reported that the amended plans will be submitted, but there would not be a list of all the changes made by the public; a summary consultation document will be provided for transparency. PD reported that the Steering Group will be sent the amended layout and supporting documents would be accessible via the Planning Portal.
4. AP asked whether the list of questions submitted by Ms. S. Reed would be reviewed at the meeting. PD reported that he had seen the letter and some of the questions had been answered; they will try and respond to the others when possible.
5. AP asked whether there is any impact on the development with regard to the recent newspaper articles about Vistry. PD stated that there is no impact on the Tenterden development and it will continue as planned. Although the issues are in the South, PD's region is fine; unfortunately, it is the other three areas in the South.
6. AP stated that the access road and the width of area taken up to create the road is of interest as, unless the layout has changed, it will run past his boundary. PD reported that

the access road was approved as part of the outline planning consent. PD stated that he suspected it had been adjusted by a couple of meters either side but will confirm.

7. AP reported that the manmade pond next to the access currently fills with water and were there proposals for basins to be installed. He also asked whether the West end near the play area will be dry. PD stated that the surface water attenuation pond is designed to be wet all year round as it collects the surface water, and it is not finished yet. There might not be an out-pool installed yet, but the dry basin is shallower. The Case Officers were not happy with the dry basin, and this will need further discussion. The basin in the play area probably also needs moving.
8. AP reported that a resident had raised concerns over the crossing on Woodchurch Road and AP had challenged KCC Officers as he believed no safety surveys were carried out. KCC do not seem to be very forthcoming. PD reported that the issue had been raised with Vistry's Technical team, but planning approval was already granted. PD stated that when it goes to Highways design, plans do sometimes change and there is a slight shift in location. PD agreed to check with Technical. MH reported that he had looked at the positioning of the bus stop and it meets KCC's design standards in relation to their site standards, however, it is still quite close to the brow of the hill and suggested that it be moved 50m further to the West where there is a safer layby, and a small footpath could be installed to meet the new position.

JC suggested that Vistry could submit a variation to move the bus stop to a safer position. PD reported that the bus stop location had already been approved to be near the new entrance/exit to the development. MH reported that he was still requesting for the bus stop to be moved 50m West for safety purposes. PD stated that he could move the bus stop location to a degree, but it needs to be broadly located to where it was approved. PD agreed to ask Technical to check the location with KCC and MH will liaise with KCC direct. If KCC and ABC align, then Vistry will do the changes but this does need to be checked.

9. MC reported that the current public footpath entrance/exit onto Woodchurch Road requires amendment, including the possibility of closing it off given its dangerous location on the Woodchurch Road. Signage directing people to the other safer access via the new exit/entrance from the development was suggested. PD stated that any land outside of the red boundary line is not owned by Vistry and, if it is not part of the Section 106 agreement already, then they would be reliant on KCC both funding it and carrying out the works. MH reported that KCC might be able to divert footpath to the new access; PD stated that this process is very difficult to navigate, especially if there are objections from the public. PD stated that the other alternative could be to not extend the planned footpath on the development to the current public footpath entrance rather than divert the whole footpath and agreed to investigate. PD further stated that ABC's Design and Case Officers will need to be happy with the amendment.

Questions

1. JC asked whether now that the Tenterden Neighbourhood Plan has been adopted by ABC, do Vistry see any issues with their current design in complying with the Tenterden Design Codes. PD stated that they are currently updating the application and there are elements where they do not comply. When the revised scheme is produced, it will be more closely aligned. PD agreed to check with their architects on the references to policies and will include this in the Design & Access statement. There are divergencies from the original outline planning permission as it is a unique site.
2. JC commented on the ecological buffer between existing properties and the housing development and asked whether this will be included in the new design. PD reported that the design is not much different from what was envisaged. There were comments regarding a minimum depth of the buffer, but the proposed buffer is sufficient. The

proposal does still align with the outline planning permission. JC reported that natural screening should also be included as this was not the case in places. PD commented that there are no vast openings, with the vast majority of the buffer planted with dual purpose, i.e. ecology, habitat creation and screening. If there is the odd gap, this is due to be it being requested. Enhancement across the site has been improved significantly with tree planting.

3. AP stated that the proposed buffer will never be enough for his situation given the location of his property. In reference to tree planting, ABC's Tree Officer visited the site to look at the trees, and AP asked whether Vistry had taken on board his comments on planting in the new layout. PD confirmed that Vistry have taken this on board and there is more planting included. PD stated that there needs to be a balance across the whole site to ensure that they do not go overboard. PD reported that there needs to be a back-to-back distance of 21m accessible in planning, but the site has a greater distance. SN reported the need to protect any veteran or TPO trees so agreed that care needs to be taken with overcrowding. SN was pleased that the site will have a wildness to it which is welcome compared to other sterile developments in the parish.
4. AP reported that at the last meeting, PD agreed to send contractors to check the drains at the rear of his property; this had not taken place. PD agreed to chase this up.
5. PD reported that the intention is to put kerbs in just before Christmas on the access road and tarmac in the New Year. PD confirmed that currently they are pumping surface water into the basin, not the ditches and this is to clear the pitches. AP asked whether there were any results from the drain surveys. PD reported that there were no results yet, but there will be issues with tree roots. One option would be for a machine to cut the roots, but they are also exploring the option of putting in a new drain on Appledore Road. PD stated that either option would sort out the current issues faced by residents with flooding.
6. SN asked about the animal relocation process and, as this has now come to an end where are they currently working on. PD confirmed that all of the relocation works had finished. The Country Park is not to be trapped, but the trapping for the entrance road, pavilion and pitches has been completed. PD stated that the Reserved Matters application requires approval before they can carry out more trapping for the residential half of the development, which will possibly be next year/early 2026.
7. LH had been asked by Tenterden Town Football Club to find out what is being built with the junior pitches as there seems to be some confusion and is there a confirmed completion date. PD reported that the pitches were approved in detail so plans will be the same as the outline planning permission. The pitches will be finished towards the end of 2025 and there will be a one-year maintenance contract before they can be handed over to an organisation, which could be the Football Club, rather than the management company. Vistry would rather hand the pitches and pavilion to a local group/organisation along with a sum of money to manage it. The question was also asked about local groups taking on the Country Park. SN reported that she is Trustee for Tenterden Wildlife and would need to know the figures before committing, but this could be of interest if in conjunction with the Town Council. PD stated that the management of the Country Park and Pitches/Pavilion can be separated out to different organisations/groups; it does not need to be the same one.
8. JC asked how Vistry see BNG being financed. PD reported that if they were to hand the Country Park to a local wildlife group, they would also hand over a sum of money; it would be the group's responsibility for 25 years to look after it. SN reported that Tenterden Wildlife might be keen to partner up with the Town Council for longevity. PD reported that their Consultant is trying to talk to other parties, which means there is a bit of a hold up in the process on Vistry's side. SN reported that Tenterden Wildlife have good connections

with Kent Wildlife Trust and suggested that Tenterden Wildlife, the Town Council and Kent Wildlife Trust meet to discuss whether this would be of interest. It was suggested that the Country Park could be protected as a special wildlife site, however, it was reported that part of the mitigation of the site was that the Country Park is a community facility and its use should not be hindered. PD confirmed that the Country Park should be open to public use in perpetuity. SN reported that there is a need to be sensible and increase biodiversity as the habitats had been reduced on the rest of site therefore it needs protection.

9. LH raised a query regarding the football pitch specifications as the Football Team were not sure of the sizes. PD confirmed that the sizes were confirmed and included in the original approved planning permission. PD agreed to forward the information to LH via WN. LH stated that TTFC needs the pitch to be fit for purpose for them.