

## 4.0 The Vision for Iwade East

### *The vision for land east of Woodpecker Drive, Iwade*

Land to the east of Woodpecker Drive will form a new part of Iwade East. Closely linked to other residential growth east of Iwade, the new development will form part of the Village Park edge neighbourhood, structured around a network of high quality streets and open spaces, and offer a variety of new homes close to existing local services in an attractive setting that protects and enhances biodiversity interests.

In order to establish development of the highest quality the vision for land east of Woodpecker Drive comprises the following key objectives:

- create a strong sense of place, character and identity through ensuring development of the highest quality and ensuring that there is a mix of houses, suitable for all, including affordable housing;
- enhance accessibility by all modes for all residents and visitors through establishing a clear network of interlinked streets;
- ensure that there is an appropriate relationship between the proposed development on land east of Woodpecker Drive, adjoining development and the rural countryside through the design and layout of development;
- preserve existing site features, such as an area of Old Orchard and important hedgerows, managing and creating a network of habitats; and
- build in the principles of sustainable development from the outset to create a long lasting and valued neighbourhood capable of change over time.

It is envisaged that the management of the areas of ecological interest, the SuDS area and the retained orchard will all be controlled through a resident's management company, which will include parish and district council representatives, as well as a representative of the development company. The details and legal structure of which are to be agreed with Swale Borough through a Section 106 agreement that will facilitate the initial works and will subsequently provide for the future management of these areas for a ten year period following commencement of the use.

### *Development Components*

In line with its Local Plan allocation, land to the east of Woodpecker Drive will be a residential led development. Its design and layout of new residential development should reflect the aspirations of the original IDB and Kent Design in promoting a distinctive character of development set around green spaces. A range of house types and tenures will meet a broad spectrum of housing needs.

Ancillary roads and paths should continue the high standard of design and integrate with existing networks physically and in terms of appearance. In particular strong pedestrian links should be delivered towards the village centre and with adjoining residential development.

The proposals should recognise and respond to the ecological interest present in the old orchard and make provision for new and enhanced habitats to come forward. This might include the design of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs) or other water attenuation features where used in a manner that maximises their contribution towards habitat creation. This should integrate with other proposed biodiversity measures on the east side of Iwade to create the first element of an Iwade Nature Park, a resource managed and maintained for its wildlife interest. Subject to agreement with Natural England, the development will provide for a small area of formal play space within the Old Orchard. This will, together with contributions towards enhanced formal play space elsewhere within Iwade, contribute towards the sites formal play space requirements.

The approach to landscape should create a suitable interface with agricultural land to the east.

A Utility Statement forms part of the supporting information that accompanies the planning application for land east of Woodpecker Drive and confirms that all utilities needed to support the development are present.

## 5.0 Key Urban Design Principles

A number of key urban design principles have been identified which are representative of an overall approach to development which places design excellence at the heart of developing land east of Woodpecker Drive. The principles draw on the findings of the site context analysis as well as best practice drawn from the original Iwade Development Brief (1999), Kent Design Guide (2005/06), Manuel for Streets (2007) and other relevant documents. The principles have been used to shape the form of the plan for land east of Woodpecker Drive.

### *Character, urban density and built form*

Land east of Woodpecker Drive will offer a range of different places to live, from flats and family homes along the main streets using interlinked development forms to create strong frontages along streets and at 'gateways' or entrance points. Elsewhere more detached forms will be employed as appropriate to include a range of family homes. In this way a balanced, sustainable community can be encouraged, one which makes the best use of available land and provides for a broad range of different development densities and housing needs.

An overall urban density of approximately 40 dwellings per hectare is envisaged, with higher density development focused around main streets, as well as 'gateways' into land east of Woodpecker Drive. Relatively lower density development will be focused towards the rural edge of the development, to mark the transition from village to countryside, as well as around the retained old orchard area at the northern end of the site.

A variety of built form will help to establish a clear identity for land east of Woodpecker Drive, one that is related to the interpretation of vernacular forms apparent in the rest of Iwade but that creates a place in its own right. A mix of high quality materials, which, where practical, will be locally sourced, will be utilised in the development of the land to the east of

Iwade. The design approach will be drawn from a detailed character appraisal of the area, and will draw upon the history of innovation experienced in Iwade. The development will encompass a mix of 2 / 2½ storey properties, inter-dispersed with 3 storey buildings used to create focal points within the scheme. Thus the overall in height of the development will be in keeping with surrounding developments.

The site's relationship to the grade I listed Church of All Saints will ensure there is no adverse impact upon the setting of the Church.



*Example of house type: Sandering Way.*



*Example of house type: Sheerstone.*



*Example of house type: Church Mews.*



*Example of house type: Helen Thompson Close.*

## ***Ease of movement***

As set on pages 30 and 31, the land to the east of Woodpecker Drive is highly accessible to a range of facilities and services. A connected network of streets within the proposed development will ensure that everyone may access and enjoy all areas of land east of Woodpecker Drive and adjoining areas easily and safely. The design and layout of development will be important here, focusing on providing access to nearby local facilities, such as existing shops and play areas, which are accessible on foot and therefore creating a 'walkable' network of streets, footpaths and cycleways making it easy for people to get around. This includes providing linkages from adjacent development through the site and to provide necessary linkages to existing pedestrian and cycle routes towards Kemsley and Ridham.

Successful neighbourhoods are generally characterised by a convenient and accessible network of good quality, pedestrian friendly routes. These take the form of shared streets that accommodate both cars and pedestrians in a way that the latter is not made subservient to the former. This can be achieved through well surfaced pavements, the use of street trees, conveniently placed crossings that follow logical desire lines, and animated frontage development that addresses the street. Ensuring that front doors, balconies, and the windows of habitable rooms are placed facing the street helps make the route both interesting and safe.

In addition, a network of cycleways and footpaths will be fully integrated into the street network allowing people to take a direct or indirect route should they wish and contributing towards making an active, healthier alternative to motorised transport available.

The approach to promoting ease of pedestrian movement needs to be balanced with maintaining appropriate levels of access to retained and new nature conservation areas.

## ***Continuity and enclosure***

New development at land east of Woodpecker Drive must ensure that there is a clear definition between public spaces, such as streets, and private areas, such as gardens or parking courts. This helps to make places feel safer and more 'legible' i.e. easy for people to find their way around without feeling confused or getting lost, and can be achieved by designing buildings that clearly front onto a street, footpath or open space.

Broad, 'perimeter blocks' of development will be the principle building component for land east of Woodpecker Drive, facilitating the definition of public streets and spaces, which are accessible to all, and private back gardens or parking courtyards which will have very limited access. Quality brick walls rather than close boarded or others types of fencing should be used to enclose spaces that are visible from public streets and open spaces. Planting in the form of well planned hedgerows, climbing plants and tree/shrub planting could help to soften brick wall, timber fence or railings. This further contributes to the character, quality and security of the development.

## ***Public realm***

The public realm comprises streets, footpaths and open spaces which are contained by buildings and other structures. The design, quality and appearance of the public realm are an important component in defining the character of a place. It also influences and shapes people's perceptions of place: well designed and cared for places are always more attractive than ordinary or 'anywhere' areas.

The public realm also has an important role to play in linking together land east of Woodpecker Drive both visually and physically, helping to make it easy for pedestrians to move around and visually distinguishing different parts of the development through the use of surface materials, street furniture, tree and shrub planting for example. Residential streets and

open spaces provide extended living space which people value and identify with. The use of neighbourhood squares along the main street through the development could help provide a local focus and contribute to character and identity as well as subtly calming through traffic.



*Example of public art in Iwade.*

## ***Legibility***

The public realm and urban environment should be readily understood and navigable both by residents and those visiting it for the first time. The layout of streets, spaces and development blocks is key to the success of this with development arranged around an interconnected network of local streets. The width, character of buildings, and detailing and layout of the public realm and open spaces must distinguish the various types of street so people readily identify with a 'local street', or 'neighbourhood square' for example.

These important places should also be further distinguished by the location of different uses – for example open space will be located close to the development. Construction materials, decorative detailing such as bays or balconies and even basic features such as windows and doorways assist in making a place legible providing identifiable local landmarks and places that are memorable and distinctive.



*Examples of materials used in Iwade.*

### ***Diversity and mixed use***

Built form and layout must demonstrate design diversity to ensure that an attractive and vibrant streetscape is created. This means that the layout of the development should be able to accommodate a suitable mix of building types, such as different sizes of house and flats. This can be achieved by ensuring that buildings can be changed and adapted over time, through extension for example, helping to make sure development is long lived and therefore more sustainable. Providing a mix of different house types, to accommodate different households from single people to larger families, will mean that communities have the opportunity to grow over time in the same location, should they wish, without needing to move elsewhere.

### ***Traffic management***

Land east of Woodpecker Drive will be safely and conveniently accessible to all. In terms of the design and layout of streets, pedestrians and cyclists will be given priority with the design of the street layout helping to keep traffic speeds down without the need for additional speed restraint measures. Parking will be provided in a variety of ways, both on and off street as well as in small parking courtyards. It is important to retain some on-street parking as this contributes to life and activity within the street as well as increasing overlooking and surveillance of the public realm. Future residents will be within 400 metres of bus stops.

### ***Building in sustainability***

Sustainable development aims to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability for future generations to meet their own needs. In practice this means ensuring that new development makes the most efficient use of resources such as land, building materials, energy and water and protects features of intrinsic environmental value. It also means

designing places which are 'walkable', where local services are available close by, thereby reducing reliance on motorised transport.

The development will, in accordance with Policy E21 of the Local Plan, be constructed to the latest standards of resource efficiency, demonstrated not only through the design process but also the construction phase and subsequent occupation – the whole 'lifetime' of a home. The development will seek to respond and comply with the minimum relevant environmental guidance including the Code for Sustainable Homes (2006) in operation at the time of development. Specifically, the development should seek to achieve a minimum of Code Level 3. Design measures to be promoted will include for water and energy conservation, waste minimisation and the use of renewable or recycled materials in both the construction process and the life of the development.

Sustainable drainage methods will be employed in the development to ensure where possible the natural drainage patterns are mimicked by the use of porous pavements, swales and attenuation facilities. The use of sustainable drainage systems can offer wider benefits such as water quality, biodiversity and local amenity.