

PLANNING COMMITTEE – 6th March 2025**DEFERRED ITEM**

Report of the Head of Planning

DEFERRED ITEMS

Reports shown in previous Minutes as being deferred from that Meeting

2.3 REFERENCE NO - 24/501929/REM		
PROPOSAL		
Section 73 - Application for minor material amendment to approved plans condition 1 (to allow changes to affordable housing tenure, revisions to SDS pond and redesign of public open space) pursuant to 23/501167/REM for - Approval of reserved matters (scale, design, layout and landscaping being sought) for the erection of 231 dwellings (houses and apartments, C3 Use Class) with landscaping, associated highway works, including car parking and open space, pursuant to 16/508602/OUT for - Outline application for erection of up to 250 dwellings with all matters reserved except for access.		
SITE LOCATION		
Site A Land At Preston Fields Salters Lane Faversham Kent		
RECOMMENDATION		
Delegate to the Head of Planning to grant planning permission subject to appropriate safeguarding conditions and the completion of a Section 106 agreement Deed of Variation as set out in the report, with further delegation to the Head of Planning / Head of Legal Services (as appropriate) to negotiate the precise wording of conditions, including adding or amending such conditions and precise Heads of Terms as may be consequently necessary and appropriate.		
APPLICATION TYPE - Application submitted under s73 (material amendments)		
REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE		
Faversham Town Council object to the application and request that it be considered by the SBC Planning Committee.		
Case Officer Ben Oates		
WARD Watling	PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL Faversham Town Council	APPLICANT Redrow Homes AGENT Urbanissta Ltd

DATE REGISTERED 28/05/2024	TARGET DATE 27/09/2024
<p>BACKGROUND PAPERS AND INFORMATION:</p> <p>Documents referenced in report are as follows: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All drawings submitted • All representations received • Affordable Housing Justification Statement • Summary of changes document • Letter from Redrow dated 24/03/2025 <p>The full suite of documents submitted pursuant to the above application are available via the link below:</p> <p>https://pa.midkent.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=SCX0MVTYFOZ00</p>	

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This application was initially reported to Planning Committee on 6 March 2025, with a recommendation that permission be granted. The original Committee report is attached at Appendix A.
- 1.2 The Planning Committee resolved to defer the determination of the application. The minutes from the 6 March 2025 Planning Committee meeting are to be published in the same agenda as this report and are not therefore being duplicated as an Appendix. The application was deferred to gain further information regarding which affordable housing providers were contacted by the developer and justification as to why some associations were not contacted.
- 1.3 The applicant subsequently provided a letter (dated: 24/03/2025) with the requested information, which is attached at Appendix B and discussed in further detail below.
- 1.4 There have been no further representations formally received by the Local Planning Authority.

2. RESPONSE TO THE REASONS FOR DEFERRAL

- 2.1 The Redrow letter sets out a table listing the registered providers (RPs) that currently or previously operated within Swale and have provided commentary against each one confirming if they were approached in 2023 to purchase the S106 affordable housing. The letter also sets out the responses from each of the RPs or provides justification for the RPs that were not contacted by Redrow.

- 2.2 Officers note that the first 11 rows of the table were previously provided in the Affordable Housing Justification Statement which was submitted during the application. As discussed in the original Report to Committee, it sets out that only 3 qualified offers were received from RPs, 1 RP did not respond and 7 RPs declined to bid as they were no longer in the market for S106 units or there was an issue with the affordable housing mix or tenure split proposed.
- 2.3 Several additional rows have been added to the table which provides the applicant's position in relation to other RPs as requested by the Planning Committee. In most cases, these RPs were not contacted as they are either known to no longer operate in the Borough, focus on their own land-led grant funded schemes or are out of the affordable housing market. As such, officers consider that it is reasonable these RPs were not approached by the applicant. One additional offer from an RP is identified but is focused solely on shared ownership dwellings and, as such, is not compatible with the previously approved or currently proposed affordable housing mix and is not preferable to the mix that is the subject of this application.
- 2.4 The Council's Accommodation and Resettlement Manager has confirmed that the letter provided by Redrow aligns with their experience with these RPs and the general state of the affordable housing market in the Borough. They advise that all possible / realistic RP options appear to have been explored to secure an RP for the affordable housing secure in this scheme, which in the current economic climate remains very challenging, but that West Kent Housing Association remain interested in delivery here. As such, the Accommodation and Resettlement Manager continues to support the proposal in order to secure the best possible affordable housing outcome currently available.

3. UPDATE FROM PREVIOUS COMMITTEE REPORT

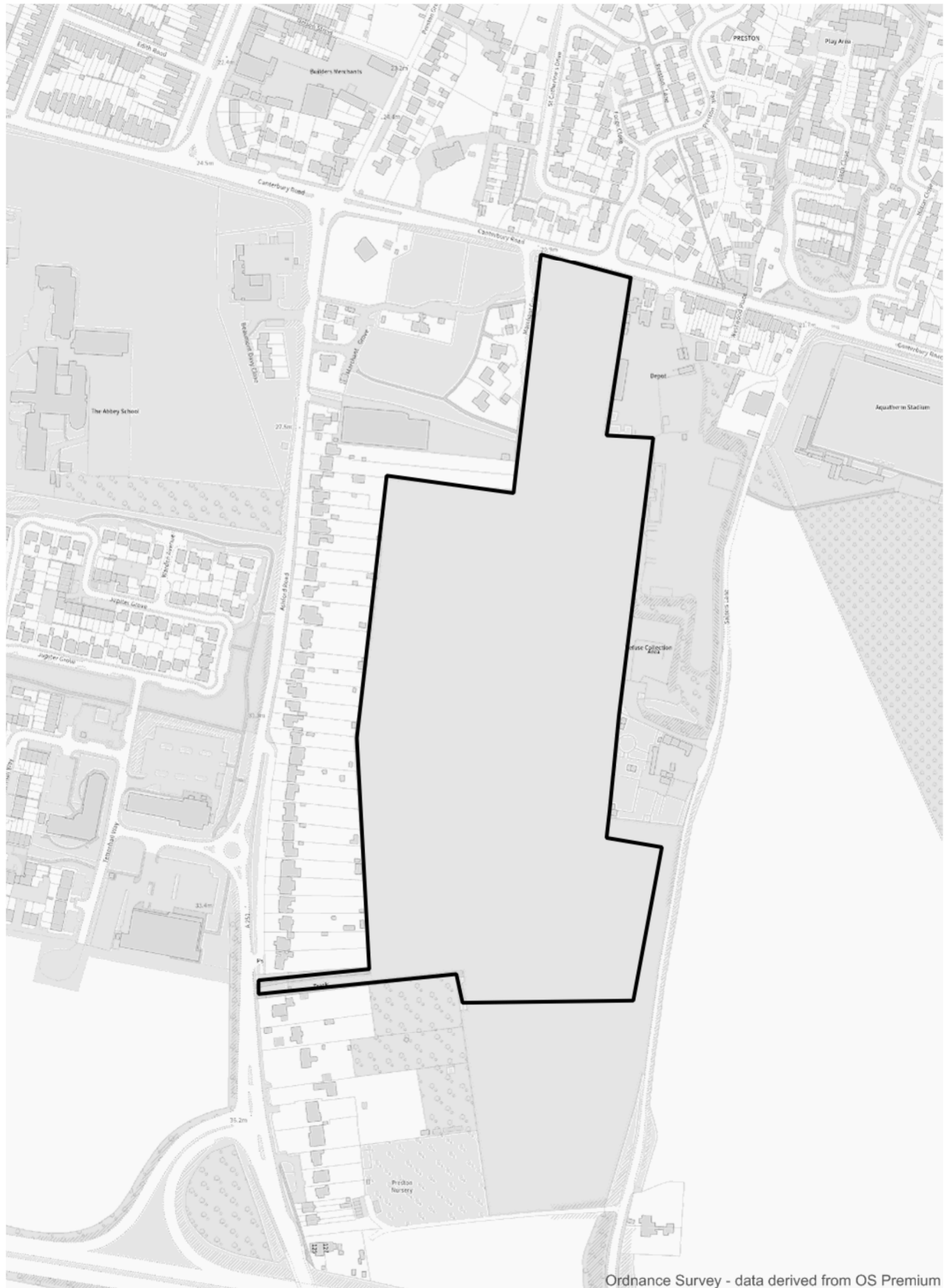
- 3.1 As reported verbally to the Planning Committee on 6th March 2025, a letter from Faversham Community Land Trust was received after the publication of the committee agenda. The matters raised align with the summary provided in respect of previous correspondence from that party and have been addressed in this and the previous report.
- 3.2 On 18th March 2025, Kent Police advised that they have no further comments to make about the proposal.
- 3.3 There are no other updates to report, and all other matters discussed within the Report to the Planning Committee of 6 March 2025 remain as previously reported.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The matters raised via the deferral for further information are considered to be sufficiently addressed. Officers continue to acknowledge that the revisions to the affordable housing tenure mix results in the application conflicting with policy FAV3 Part 2 of the Faversham Neighbourhood Plan and as a result, a single

element of policy DM8 of the Local Plan, which requires the tenure of affordable housing units to be in accordance with the needs of the area. However, the development would continue to provide 81 affordable homes overall, which complies with the percentage requirements as set out in Local Plan policy DM8 and would make a valuable contribution towards providing affordable housing in the borough.

- 4.2 Officers also continue to acknowledge that the proposed changes to the affordable housing tenure mix are due to the difficulties in gaining interest from Registered Providers, which is essential in the delivery of affordable housing. The proposal therefore seeks to overcome the issues obstructing the one RP showing a clear interest, which includes reducing the number of 4-bedroom homes included in the mix and evening out the proportion of affordable rent homes to intermediate tenure. The provision of additional 3 bedroom houses better aligns with the preferred housing mix that is set out within Part 1 of policy FAV3 of the Faversham Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4.3 Officers are also aware that the current economic climate is impacting most RPs whose capacity to take on affordable homes has significantly reduced or ceased. The Council's Accommodation and Resettlement Manager has also, after assessing all the evidence provided as discussed above, considered the proposals to be acceptable.
- 4.4 The application therefore remains recommended for approval as set out in the previous committee report.



Ordnance Survey - data derived from OS Premium