

Representation from Limes Land Protection Group

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (As Amended)

Land between Appledore Road and Woodchurch Road

Tenterden, Kent

**ABC Planning Application Reference
21/00790/AS**

**Appeal Reference:
APP/E2205/W/21/3284479**

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 These are the further representations of Limes Land Protection Group (“LLPG”)¹. There are a number of existing comments and representations made by LLPG in response to the application for planning on Limes Land and the adjoining sports pitches (collectively, the “Site”), which the Planning Inspector (“PI”) will already have for consideration. This document is a further representation which specifically addresses Wates Developments’ (“Wates”) Statement of Case dated 6th October 2021 and supporting evidence (collectively, the “SoC”). The proposal would lead to **significant and demonstrable harm** to the Site and the surrounding area, primarily relating to heritage, biodiversity loss (species and habitat), increased flood risk (off-site) and contribution to climate change. Following detailed analysis of the SoC, LLPG wish to bring to the attention of the PI the many discrepancies, erroneous declarations, omissions and unrealistic/unsupported assertions made within the SoC which seek to illustrate that this site is unsustainable and undeliverable. LLPG disagree with Wates’ assertion that the site represents a sustainable development; it cannot as the proposal does not accord with the NPPF or the Ashford Local Plan. Further, the SoC does not properly address the incredibly important issue of carbon storage of the undisturbed grassland on Limes Land. Most of the grassland on Limes Land has not been disturbed for centuries, therefore the site will contain a high volume of carbon, that once disturbed, will be released into the atmosphere contributing to climate change. The SoC is silent on this issue.
- 1.2 This application relates to 2 pieces of Land in separate ownership. (1) The main part consists of Fields 1 to 12 (Limes Land). For centuries, this land has been used for grazing under tenancy agreements and this has continued until very recently (2021). Grazing has been virtually continuous, except for a few weeks every year. Although mainly grazed by sheep,

¹ LLPG is a group of residents who first came together when Wates made their initial application for planning permission in 2019, for the purpose of preserving the intrinsic character and beauty of Limes Land.

the site has been used in the past for cattle and horses. (2) The second part consists of Fields 13 and 14 (the “sports pitches”). The sports pitches were purchased from Mr Millen in 1932 by Kent County Council (KCC) for educational purposes, who subsequently purchased Homewood School in 1947. They were designated as Playing Fields and for many years the two fields were used as a football pitch (F13) and a Cricket pitch (F14). In recent years the school have used Field 14 for grazing both sheep and cattle from the school farm.

- 1.3 These representations attempt to follow the chronology of the SoC. However, this has not been entirely possible because the SoC has surprisingly adopted a scattergun and disjointed approach to the various issues. It is not clear whether that is intentional on the part of the author of the SoC, or not.

2.0 Limes Land

- 2.1 The historic landscape character of Dunvalingaenn, known today as Limes Land, abuts the Tenterden Conservation Area and the High Weald AONB, is one exhibiting considerable time depth and coherence within the parish, with no historic boundary loss and the survival on site of various historic landscape features, including hedgerows, ridge and furrows, ponds, lynchets, a sub-surface coaxial field system, trackways/drove roads and the notable Gallows Green. The landscape emanates immense historical character which has barely changed over many centuries.
- 2.2 In his book, ‘The Jutish Forest’, K P Witney identified that in a Charter of the year 785, Dovenden (now Limes Land) was a woodland pasture, which was granted to Selethryth and her brother by King Offa, to feed her pigs. Selethryth, a member of the Mercian royal family, then overlords of Kent, was appointed as Abbess of Lyminge Minster shortly after and she was also thought to have been Abbess at Minster in Thanet. Historically, this is one of the earliest recorded links between Tenterden and the church in Thanet who founded the town, reinforcing the importance of the Site to the parish and the borough.
- 2.3 The Historic Landscape Assessment from the previous application (19/01788/AS) clearly acknowledged that Limes Land is an ‘*ancient landscape*’ which exhibits ‘*considerable time depth and coherence, with no historic boundary loss and the survival on site of various historic landscape features pre-dating 1845, including hedgerows, mature trees, ponds and trackways*’. The assessment also confirms that the banks and ditches were indicative of historic field boundaries, and also evidenced the Lynchets which are an ancient form terracing. Historic England state that Lynchets provide distinctive traces of medieval and earlier agricultural activities, with many sites being designated due to national importance. The coaxial field system exposed on Lidar Mapping could potentially be prehistoric, thereby confirming the ancient landscape.
- 2.4 Within the Marriage Settlement of Elizabeth Manclark, there was a covenant safeguarding and preserving the use of Limes Land which restricted ploughing². Most of the historic field divisions present are preserved by this covenant. There is no evidence that this covenant

² Kent Archive - Document Reference EK/U844/T131 – Mansion house messuage with brewhouse, barn etc in Tenterden; small messuage now in 2 dwellings at Gallows Green, and 64 acres of land in Tenterden.

does not survive to this day and this fundamental obstacle has never been addressed by Wates.

- 2.5. In 1963, the site was known as Limes Land Farm and the farmhouse (13-15 Appledore Road) was regarded as Limes Land Farmhouse. Limes Land and the farmhouse can be viewed on the 1769 Andrews, Dury & Herbert map as well as the Tithe Map, and as a historic setting should be protected from the ill effects of development.
- 2.6 Limes Land more than meets the criteria for selection as a Local Wildlife Site (“LWS(s)”) in Kent. However, designation is not possible without the consent of the landowner. The Kent Criteria for Selection and Delineation policy GA2 states that **all** areas of Lowland Dry Acid Grassland up to 0.5 ha in extent should be included as parts of larger LWS, where they are contiguous with other habitats which qualify for designation. Policy GN1 states that **all areas of unimproved neutral grassland should be designated as Local Wildlife Sites**. Policy GN2 states that other areas of neutral grassland should be considered for selection as Local Wildlife Sites where forbs are well represented within the grassland; this is indeed the case with Limes Land. Policy GN4 confirms that where the primary interest of an area of neutral grassland is the network of dykes within the grassland matrix, for simplicity the boundary should be drawn around the site as a whole; this would certainly apply to Limes Land. LP1 states that a site with one nationally rare species should be selected as a Local Wildlife Site if it supports the largest population of that species in a particular National Character Area. Policy AM1a confirms that all sites with an **exceptional population of great crested newts should be selected as Local Wildlife Sites**. Indeed, para 3.116 from the Ecological Impact Assessment from the 2019 application confirmed that ‘the amphibian population within the Zol is potentially of COUNTY IMPORTANCE’, BA4 refers to bats and the regular feeding and foraging sites for an assemblage of 4 species or more; Limes Land has double this. The SoC wholly fails to recognise these valuable attributes, which is of course wholly self-serving.

3.0 The Planning Application – Statement of Case

- 3.1 The outline planning application for up to 145 houses and associated infrastructure will cause **demonstrable harm** to Limes Land, as well as to the local area. Full planning permission is sought for 5 football pitches, carparking, a pavilion, associated infrastructure and a country park, all of which will cause **substantial harm** to Limes Land and the local area.
- 3.2 The SoC remarks that the current application represents ‘*a significant reduction in the overall scale of the housing development proposed on site*’. This is misleading. Although the original application was for 250 houses, it occupied a built area of 5.25 hectares; this planning application states that development would also occupy an area of 5.25 hectares. In terms of physical impact on the Site the current application represents no material change over the original application.
- 3.3 The proposal contravenes Policy N3 of the National Design Codes which is to support rich and varied biodiversity. Kent Wildlife Trust (KWT) has confirmed that there will be a net loss of biodiversity, including the destruction of priority habitat and of unimproved grassland. The proposal will lead to the loss of 50 acres of agricultural land, potentially affecting employment opportunities within farming. Furthermore, the proposal to build blocks of apartments does

not fit in with the neighbouring vernacular of a period cottage (Limes Land Farmhouse) that dates back to 1720 or the historic 18th century Stace House.

- 3.4 There is continued reference planning application 19/01788/AS with Judith Ashton Associates regularly referring to the current application, 21/00790/AS being an appeal scheme for the 2019 application. Wates Developments had the opportunity to appeal against the decision of refusal against 19/01788/AS application, however, they chose not to pursue this. LLPG does not believe it appropriate to regard this application (21/00790/AS) as an appeal scheme for 19/01788/AS. The PI is invited to ignore Wates' attempts to do so.
- 3.5 Paragraph 3.2 does not make reference to all recent significant planning permissions in the local area. There is no mention of recent new builds in the parish which include: 41 dwellings at The Spires, 38 dwellings at Danemore and 36 dwellings at Oak Tree Court, ,or the block of apartments adjacent to the fire station. Planning permission has recently been approved for 54 apartments in Smallhythe Road.
- 3.6 Paragraph 4.6 confirms that the '*site boundaries are all clearly defined and defensible and the site itself is remarkably well contained*'. This was one of the reasons that the site was identified as a potential Local Green Space within the Tenterden Neighbourhood Plan. It was also selected as it was voted the residents most favourite green space and well as being the most ecologically rich site in the area.
- 3.7 Table 1 referred to in the SoC makes no reference to the considered objections of CPRE and KWT which both emphasise that the development would lead to **biodiversity net loss** and not biodiversity net gain, as asserted in the SoC. Both of these reputable organisations opposed the planning application, however, neither have been mentioned in the SoC. This omission, again entirely self-serving, is no doubt deliberate. The question of whether there is net biodiversity loss or net biodiversity gain is, in the view of LLPG, particularly important in the context of this appeal. Remarkably, the SoC (see para 7.5.48) not only asserts that there is net gain, but also that the net gain is in excess of the requirements of the draft (now enacted) Environment Bill. The PI is invited to consider all objections raised, particularly from professional, independent, bodies, when considering the appeal and particularly this very important issue.
- 3.8 Although there are no current plans to illuminate the proposed football pitches (paras 5.19 & 7.8.49), the issue of lighting at the pavilion has been overlooked and will ultimately impact on the dark skies area, as well as bats and other nocturnal species as no lighting exists in this area. There will be limited use of the pitches in the winter months due to lack of lighting, resulting in underuse. It of relevance to note that one of the planning documents confirms that use will be limited to possibly 2 hours per week due to land/weather conditions. Can the harm to the ecological integrity of the site for potentially 2 hours of football per week be justified? We request that the PI note that NO additional land for sport is being provided by the developer, they are simply moving a pitch and providing less land for sport than is currently designated.

- 3.9 In 2017, Tenterden Town Council commissioned KWT to independently survey Limes Land, however, Wates, together with the landowner, refused access for KWT ecological surveys and, instead, insisted that the Town Council, residents and opponent's should rely on the data within Wates' own reports. However, time and again, the residents and other objectors to the planning application have shown that the data within those reports is flawed and inaccurate. The Rules of Natural Justice are a fundamental canon of English law in that each side must have a fair opportunity to put its case, and to equally answer the case for the opposing party. Wates, and the landowners, through their "Act of Prevention" have denied Tenterden Town Council, KWT and the residents of the town the opportunity to test the evidence of Wates on an equal basis i.e. by obtaining equivalent expert evidence of their own. Unfortunately, Wates Developments never came back to Tenterden Town Council with any alternative time to survey. LLPG finally obtained permission for a small tree survey to take place on 28.11.21, however, we would like to point out that only a small number of trees have been formally surveyed due to limited time constraints.
- 3.10 Following a recent request, LLPG has only today (25.11.21) been given approval to have some of the trees formally surveyed. The report will follow. It is unfortunate that it is too late in the year to carry out ecological surveys, primarily on the grassland, however, we have attached a summary of species present on Limes Land.
- 3.11 The proposed pavilion building will result in the loss of an independent facility for the Army Cadets. At present, the cadet force has autonomy over their activities and resources stored in their building, conversely, the proposed pavilion would result in a shared facility limiting their activities and the specialist resources they currently enjoy.
- 3.12 LLPG are struggling to comprehend the suggestion in paragraph 5.19 *that 'new damp grasslands will be created'*. Historically, the site resembles a marshland for much of the year, the native flora substantiates this. For Wates to naively state that they will introduce 'damp grasslands' clearly illustrates their lack of knowledge and understanding of the site.
- 3.13 The illustrative masterplan (para 5.22) refers to irregular blocks of housing with a density of around 40-45 dph which will reduce to 25-30 dph on the edge of the development. Currently, the adjacent properties vary between 9 dph and 12 dph, so it would be erroneous to compare dwellings per hectare to those being built at Tent 1, rather than those on the periphery of the site.
- 3.14 At present, no apartments abut the site; the only apartments near to the site are located within the historic Craythorne House. To introduce apartments, (as outlined in para 5.23) would conflict with the adjacent properties, ultimately increasing the prominence of the new development. One only has to consider the juxtaposition of the Danemore development and how it conflicts with the existing housing in the vicinity. LLPG felt it prudent to stress that knowledge of the proposed heights of the apartments would help the Planning Inspector make an informed decision regarding the suitability of apartments on this site. It is worth noting that the Land Appraisal felt that the site was not suitable for blocks of flats.

3.15 Paragraph 6.10 of the SoC refers to the council not having a 5YHLS. The Secretary of State is aware of the challenges during the last 18 months with a global pandemic affecting the building industry, with many sites and suppliers being closed for prolonged periods, together with the financial impact on global economies. Furthermore, unforeseen delays were due to Stodmarsh and the intervention of Natural England.

The absence of a five-year housing land supply does not necessarily determine which way appeals will be decided. For example, the Secretary of State dismissed CEG Land Promotions' appeal against the refusal of 500 homes in Burley-in-Wharfedale in November 2019 (DCS number: 200-008-918), despite finding that the council had less than two years of housing land supply. The harm to the openness and function of the green belt location outweighed the benefits of the scheme, he ruled. Similarly, in the dismissal of Acorn Braintree's appeal for 1,500 homes at Braintree in June 2019 (DCS number: 200-008- 522), the Secretary of State found no five-year land supply, but decided that harm to the landscape, and reduction of the gap between settlements were adverse impacts which outweighed the benefits of the proposal.

Michael Gove, Secretary of State, recently rejected (3.11.21) a planning application for 1250 homes in Rainham, Kent despite Medway Council not being able to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply. Mr Gove stated that the proposal would cause "*significant landscape harm which attracts substantial weight*". Mr Gove agreed with the inspector that the scheme would cause harm to the character and appearance of a "*wide swathe of countryside*" which is considered to be a "valued" local landscape, as well as on its functions as a green buffer. The ancient and relatively untouched Limes Land sits proudly within the Woodchurch Undulating Farmlands Landscape Character Area (LCA23) and development here would cause **significant harm** to the site, the wider landscape character area and the historic town of Tenterden.

3.16 Wates has stated that there is a need for additional housing across the borough. Until 2019, the Borough of Ashford saw the highest growth in Kent of 5.6%, whereas Tunbridge Wells only had population growth of 1.9%, showing disparity between those boroughs which are proactively contributing to development. The Office for National Statistics has confirmed that the population is growing more slowly than projected, with growth being slower now than in any year from 2004.

3.17 LLPG believe that it is disingenuous for Wates to rely on the Lichfield report (para 7.3.2) as it demonstrates absolute bias, notably because that report was commissioned by Wates, exhibiting predisposition in favour of the developer.

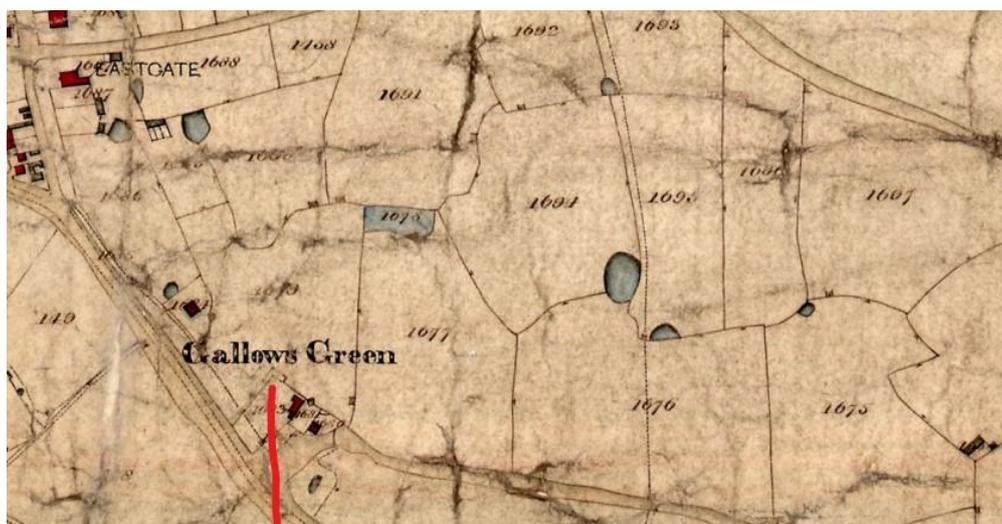
3.18 Para 7.1.3 distorts the existing development commitments within the town as there is no mention of Smallhythe Road (54 apartments) and the apartments to be built near to London Beach (12). In addition, a 64 bed care home has just been granted planning permission in St Michaels, Tenterden (21/00986/AS) which more than satisfies Tenterden's commitment to providing housing for the borough.

- 3.19 It is interesting that a comparison is made with Charing and Hamstreet (para 7.1.4). Both areas are substantially closer to Ashford, and both have mainline stations to support sustainable travel to London/Ashford/Maidstone/Canterbury, as well as bus services.
- 3.20 LLPG believe that it is disingenuous for Judith Ashton and Wates to say that Tenterden is one of the most sustainable locations in the Borough (para 7.1.6). The statement in paragraph 7.1.9 is disputed as it undermines the strenuously tested and examined Ashford Local Plan (“ALP”). Tenterden should only be subjected to planned, sustainable growth as it needs to absorb the current large-scale windfall site (Redrow), together with those sites allocated in the ALP.
- 3.21 Tenterden has already committed to 4 windfall developments, over and above those sites allocated in the ALP, which not only includes 100 dwellings by Redrow at Tilden Gill/Appledore Green, but a 54 dwelling project at Smallhythe Road, 12 dwellings at London Beach and 8 apartments next to the fire station. The borough has committed to 1000 windfall dwellings within the plan period to 2030, therefore Tenterden has already committed to provide more than 15% of the boroughs windfalls to date.
- 3.22 The SoC confirms that the residents adjacent to the site will experience **major/moderate effects** in the first few years *following completion* of the development. The reports fails to make reference to the number of years for the construction of the site, which could possibly be an additional 5+ years.
- 3.23 Para 7.5.12 fails to mention the AB70 footpath which has been used for decades (50+ years) by residents of the town. The footpath currently has an Order raised and, due to the developer and landowner objecting to the formal adoption of the route, a public hearing will take place in April 2022. Many residents are of the view that Wates and the landowner objected to the Order solely because they did not want professional ecologists having access to a large area of the site by using this footpath. For Judith Ashton Assc and Wates to try to conceal its relevance is demonstrating their lack of regard for legal process and fair determination of the appeal. KCC has clearly stated that *‘no development shall take place which would permanently obstruct the route of the footpath AB70.....until either a layout has been approved which accommodates the footpath..... or an application has been made and confirmed to divert the footpath’*.
- 3.24 Table 7 within the SoC estimates that £2,000,000 will be spent in the local community by 145 dwellings if the development goes ahead. LLPG would like to understand further how it would be possible for each dwelling (with 50% being affordable) to spend over £13,000 each year locally when some salaries may be as little as £17,300 per annum. Wates’ assertion is simply unsustainable.
- 3.25 The SoC promotes the social role that the development would support by making a contribution to *affordable housing*. Paragraphs within section 7 inflate the affordable housing needs and imply that much of this is required in Tenterden. The 2020 Tenterden Community Land Trust survey showed that only 4% of the Tenterden population declared a need, so this differs vastly to the borough requirement. It is well documented that new *affordable homes*

often have an inflated asking price when comparing the cost to an older property. A report in 2016 found that the average new home sold for 17% more than a comparable second-hand one. To illustrate, on 16.11.21 a 2 bedroom flat was being advertised for £78,000 for a 30% share of the property, therefore the total cost of the property was estimated to be £260,000. There are currently two more 2 bedroom flats on the market, however, they are vastly cheaper than the newbuild which is supposedly *affordable*, and have asking prices of £195,000 and £215,000 respectively. Therefore, the *real cost* to purchase the newbuild affordable property comes at a potential premium of circa £65,000 over current local values. This is hardly affordable housing, and LLPG is sure that similar premiums will be applied for Limes Land if the appeal is successful.

- 3.26 LLPG is unable to find independent documented analysis that Tenterden has been assessed as needing *5 additional football pitches and a country park*, as highlighted in para 7.6.11, therefore these proposals should **not** attract substantial weight.
- 3.27 The SoC asserts that the proposal is carrying out an environmental role (para 7.6.17) which is preposterous. The development will lead to the decimation of a priority habitat, will endanger the lifespan of veteran/ancient trees and will lead to biodiversity loss, simultaneously contributing to climate change by releasing carbon from the ancient grassland and tree removal. The proposal should therefore **not** attract *substantial weight* as it would cause *substantial harm*.
- 3.28 The proposal will force surface water, which will be contaminated with micro-particles from vehicles and direct this to the ancient Tilden Gill. The gill is already under extreme pressure from the new development adjacent to the site which has recently had sewers overflowing and generalised flooding, consequently feeding sewage into an ancient habitat. A proposal that contributes to climate change does not satisfy the environmental dimensions of sustainable development (para 7.6.20).
- 3.29 LLPG believes that an up-to-date traffic assessment is essential to reflect increases in local traffic following the installation of the roundabout at the junction with the A28. Additional vehicles use this road to access the new development at Appledore Green (100 houses), and the reliance on car use from this development will grow when the development is fully occupied. To say that the proposed development will lead to minimal queuing when there will be parking proposed for more than 350 vehicles (if following minimum parking requirements in ALP) is surprising at the very least. This will exclude the numerous delivery vehicles which will also deliver to the 145 dwellings as well as the pavilion.
- 3.30 The heritage of Limes Land has been completely undervalued for the convenience of promoting this planning application (para 7.8.17). The site is the oldest recorded site in Tenterden with a documented history dating back to the 700's; it precedes the building of Grade I listed St Mildred's Church. The ancient drove road will be decimated by access roads and related infrastructure including swales. A drove road is a distinctive heritage feature within the High Weald and should be protected. The coaxial field system, which is potentially prehistoric, will be destroyed by housing. The historic Gallows Green, the site for

the gallows will be lost to development. Wates and their associates uphold the belief, for the benefit of planning permission, that the site of the gallows has already been developed, however, they fail to record that this site up to the 1920's was heavy marsh and completely waterlogged. To erect a gallows in marshy bog would have been very difficult structurally. The PI will note that these *experts* suggest that Limes Land Farmhouse is Victorian, a further example of material and significant mistake on their part. Indeed, the current owners of the Limes Land Farmhouse can confirm that their grandfather informed them that the gallows was located further into Gallows Green Field towards Rose Cottage, and this correlates with the corner mark indicated on the Tithe Map.



- 3.31 Although Limes Land Farmhouse (13-15 Appledore Road) is not listed as a building of significance, as those identified in para 7.8.21, the PI should know that this is indeed a historic property with deeds dating back to 1720. Requests have been made for its inclusion into the Conservation Area as it is believed to pre-date Stace House. Furthermore, there is an ancient stone trackway still in situ in the front garden across to the access area adjacent to Limes Land Farmhouse. LLPG believes this is the last remaining part of the drove road which crosses Limes Land which should be conserved as part of the town's heritage.
- 3.32 For Judith Ashton Assc and Wates to assert, in para 7.8.35, that the historic landscape of Limes Land is not important because it is not listed or within the Conservation Area is reprehensible. These irreplaceable heritage assets form part of the earliest documented reference of the area and it is hoped that the much of Limes Lane will be included into the Tenterden Conservation Area when it is reviewed in early 2022.
- 3.33 For Wates to proudly promote that they are providing 3 viewing corridors across the site to the church is astonishing. At present, residents and visitors have outstanding views to the church, the AONB, the North Downs and the Romney Marsh. The visual amenity for those using the AB12 PRow will be severely impeded, demonstrating **substantial harm**.
- 3.34 The SoC implies that there will be no adverse impact on the privacy and amenity of residents (para 7.8.47). Residents adjacent to the site and using the footpaths would strongly disagree

with this assertion. Currently, residents' views are of ancient countryside and its heritage features; the proposal would change these views to a housing estate. Within this application, it should be noted that some of the housing is now closer to adjacent housing than those illustrated in the 2019 application, the previously proposed landscape buffer having been inexplicably reduced. The proposed footpath around the outer edges of the site would also affect the privacy of residents and may possibly prove to be a security risk. The proposed pitches would also introduce increased noise levels for nearby residents.

The recent development of 4 houses at Hales Place caused inconvenience and local harm to residents (albeit for approximately 1 year) in Woodchurch Road as the contractors used Woodchurch Road to park their vehicles. This was both dangerous and inconvenient to road users and created regular traffic jams. A development of 145 dwellings would cause untold inconvenience to residents as the prospect of contractors parking on adjacent roads would cause chaos with local traffic movements, which could continue for 5+ years.

- 3.35 The sewage network described in para 7.8.52 is not fit for purpose due to regular flooding and hydraulic overload of the system. Recurring sewage flooding is a continued inconvenience for residents living adjacent to the site, with the most recent being in Woodchurch Road, Appledore Road and at Tilden Gill Road/Appledore Road during October 2021. Footage is available to show sewage pouring out of drains in these locations. An additional 145 dwellings and a pavilion would ultimately overload the system, causing **substantial harm** to residents and the environment.
- 3.36 Table 10 demonstrates the distorted and biased opinion of a developer who would make significant financial gain if planning permission were granted. Despite the asserted 'benefit' of the pitches, the table fails to recognise the long-term maintenance costs involved with these pitches and the environmental damage caused by sowing rye grass, which will ultimately infiltrate and damage other parts of the site – LLPG considers this harmful to the diverse integrity of the site. Although the site does not form part of the AONB, it does form part of the Nature Recovery Network³ and is recognised for its biodiversity, therefore, development here would cause **substantial harm**. Unsurprisingly, Wates do not even acknowledge this. The site lies in the countryside which is valued by local residents and where its intrinsic character and beauty should be recognised in accordance with paragraph 174 b) of the NPPF, as was the case with Planning Appeal APP/A2280/W/19/3223080. LLPG fails to see the benefit of artificial landscape enhancement as there would be *proven biodiversity loss not gain*. The destructive impact and environmental damage caused through the excavation and scarification of grassland, combined with the loss of habitat, would release untold amounts of carbon, contributing to climate change and leading to local and global harm. Over 20 hectares of uncultivated grassland, which acts as a carbon sink, is increasingly rare. In the last 100 years, the UK has lost 97% of its meadows; it is therefore essential that the planning system protects those last remaining ancient pastoral meadows.

³ As illustrated on Magic Maps.

3.37 LLPG is struggling to understand what the improved links are between the site and the wider area - no additional roads are being provided off site and it cannot see any designated cycle paths being provided off site. The proposed surface water strategy will create a torrent of water that will ultimately lead into the ancient Tilden Gill causing environmental damage. Erosion is already taking place there as the Redrow development feeds its surface water into the gill. The creation of bus stops on Woodchurch Road will result in a loss of privacy for adjacent residents, together with causing inconvenience and safety issues when residents are trying to access/leave their driveways, resulting in harm to local residents. LLPG is not satisfied that the development will lead to long-term economic benefits to the town. Over 200 houses have been built at Tent 1a, yet shops have still continued to close in the town. For the developer to say that 145 dwellings will spend £2m per year *locally* is misleading and unsupported. Wates has omitted to include the damage to heritage assets or mention the release of carbon into the atmosphere thereby, contributing to climate change, and neither have they reflected the full impact of traffic movements locally.

LLPG felt it prudent to illustrate the ‘planning balance’ from a Tenterden viewpoint in Table 1.

Table 1

Issue	Wates opinion	LLPG opinion
Market Housing	Benefit	Harm – plentiful supply forthcoming and leads to biodiversity loss and increased risk of flooding
Affordable Housing	Benefit	Artificially affordable and ‘real’ cost more than existing dwellings
Country Park	Benefit	Loss of ancient countryside
Sports Pitches	Benefit	Loss of ancient countryside, harm to ancient tree RPA, increased flood risk
Further Publicly accessible open space	Benefit	Loss of natural open countryside on doorstep
Avoids designated landscapes	Benefit	Builds on site identified within NRN
Avoids Stodmarsh	Benefit	Benefit
Landscape enhancement	Benefit	Loss of mature trees and ancient hedgerows
Ecological enhancement	Benefit	Biodiversity LOSS
Improved links	Benefit	No change to links off site
Surface Water Drainage	Benefit	Currently hydraulic overload to system which will be stretch further, leading to increased flooding
Traffic Calming	Benefit	Could cause congestion and additional pollution from vehicles
Bus Stops	Benefit	Loss of privacy and dangers pulling onto/off drive
Energy efficient homes	Benefit	Mandatory requirement
Short-term economic benefits	Benefit	These will be jobs for people outside of the area, increasing traffic and parking on local roads
Long-term economic benefits	Benefit	No job creation locally
Impact on Landscape Character Area	Harm	Very harmful and loss of ancient countryside
Impact on views from AB12	Harm	Very Harmful

- 3.38 The disingenuous behaviour of the developer has also been demonstrated prior to this application. During excavations in 2017 for the land drainage assessment, Kent Police were made aware that protected species may be harmed as the contractors were not checking the grassland for GCN or reptiles prior to digging and scrapping away areas of soil with a JCB. At the time, Wates informed Kent Police that there were no documented protected species on Limes Land, so they proceeded to dig over 20 x 3m deep trenches. However, it became apparent that during surveys in 2016 for Wates, high populations of GCN were found, yet Wates did not disclose this to Kent Police and misled them by stating that no protected species were present on site. LLPG considers that this behaviour undermines the trustworthiness and credibility of Wates Developments. The PI should not to accept Wates' assertions unless they are supported by truly independent evidence.
- 3.39 Table 10 of the SoC purports to set out the overall planning balance. However, this is inaccurate and not supported by the evidence. LLPG sets out below (Table 1) its own counter planning balance analysis, supported by detailed representations elsewhere in this document.

4.0 Travel

- 4.1 Para 4.10 promotes the limited bus service which serves Tenterden and implies that it is a comprehensive public transport network. On behalf of residents who have lived in Tenterden and have experienced, first-hand, the issues of living in a rural area where public transport is limited and expensive, LLPG would like to confirm that it cannot be relied upon for daily transport needs. The PI should note that many of the buses listed in the SoC only run a '*once per week service*', namely 292, 293 and 299. HS2 and AS2 are school bus services transporting students to and from Homewood School and Norton Knatchbull during term time. They are not public services so '*occasional*' implies they are available for use by Tenterden residents, they are not. School bus services that have been included in the SoC have been used to promulgate the belief that this area is serviced well by public transport. Again, this is wholly inaccurate and misleading.
- 4.2 When focussing on the 2a to Ashford, the SoC fails to mention that the first bus to Ashford is at 0652 and the next bus is at 0856, which gives residents little opportunity to use public transport if they commence work at 0900. The 2a to Ashford takes 55 minutes and the number 2 bus to Ashford takes 1 hour, with the morning bus running at 0725 and 0910 respectively. 7 buses run daily to/from Tunbridge Wells with a journey time of 1.5 hours each way. A bus to Maidstone takes approximately 1 hour and 12 minutes. The 297 to Tunbridge Wells offers a service once every 2 hours, as does the 312 to Rye. There are no Sunday services on routes 2, 312, 292 and 299.
- 4.3 The Tenterden Hopper, also *occasional*, runs Monday to Friday in 3 circles – Route A High Tenterden to High Halden, Route B Tenterden to Rolvenden Lane and Route C Tenterden to Appledore. The circular routes take between 25 and 50 minutes and run twice a day mid-morning and lunch time. Operated in conjunction with KCC and Tenterden Social Hub. This cannot therefore be regarded as a realistic option for commuting to work.

- 4.4 Paragraph 4.11 implies that both Ashford and Headcorn offer high speed rail links; only Ashford offers high speed service, however, there is a significant premium for this service. To imply that future residents would use an irregular bus service to travel a mainline station and then travel by train to London is surprising at the very least. Most commuters travel by car to the station.

5.0 Access

- 5.1 The Statement of Case states that access will be provided as follows:

1. Woodchurch Road - single pedestrian/cycle access only
2. Appledore Road – 1 x emergency, pedestrian and cycle access only
3. Appledore Road 1 x all modes of transport

The exact position of these access points are shown on drawings 0100 and 0101 attached to the original application which was rejected by Ashford Borough Council.

- 5.2 Paragraph 4.6.3 of the SoC states that *'Taking the proposed masterplan into account and the possible walking routes into the town centre, the shorter most logical route is for residents to travel through the site onto Appledore Road (approximately 1.1km vs 1.3km via Woodchurch Road). However, it is acknowledged that a number of residents situated in the dwellings at the far north of the site (5% for assessment purposes) may access the town centre and bus stops via Woodchurch Road; this would equate to one to two two-way trips in both the morning and evening peak hours. Due to the low expected demand, it is therefore not deemed necessary to provide a dedicated footway on the southern side of Woodchurch Road.'* Paragraph 4.6.4 goes on to say that *'alternatively, as detailed previously, a pedestrian crossing is proposed across Woodchurch Road allowing access to the existing footpath on the northern side of Woodchurch Road which leads to the existing bus stops as well as Knockwood Road northwards towards Homewood School and the Sinden Theatre. Given the low number of pedestrians likely to use the link across Woodchurch Road from the site, an uncontrolled crossing facility is appropriate to meet the expected demand.'*

Using the statistics provided in the original planning application (19/01788/AS) where the forecast stated *'this would equate to one to two two-way trips in both the morning and evening peak hours*, LLPG question the logic and cost effectiveness of installing two bus stops and a walk/cycle way? Who would fund the cost of installing, maintaining this pathway and the bus stops? There are already two bus stops in the Woodchurch Road at the junction with Beacon Oak Road. The west bound bus stop is 301 meters from the proposed new west bound bus stop whilst the east bound is 343 meters. These stops are currently used by residents from Shrubcote, Appledore Road and Golden Square. The fact that Kent Highways have made no objection to this proposal is of concern to the Limes Land Protection Group. After careful scrutiny of the site, and using Google Earth, it would appear that the east bound bus stop could result in collisions for motorists travelling east who would use the oncoming carriageway to overtake the stationary bus and be in the path of motorists travelling west coming round the near blind corner.

5.3 If a vehicle travelling at 30 mph covers 13.5 metres per second, who is then faced with vehicles overtaking the stationary bus – the motorist (travelling west) would have 3.7 seconds to react to the hazard. It takes 23 metres to stop at 30mph. Therefore, for the 50 metres visibility the stopping distance would be 27 metres. Higher speeds will obviously take longer – (see later results of i-Transport speed survey and recent Kent Community Speedwatch activity).

The measurement from the apex of the bend (when the bus stops would first be visible) to the bus stop location on the east bound carriageway is 50 metres.



Therefore, a motorist travelling west on the bend at 30 mph would have 2 seconds to see the hazard and apply emergency braking to safely stop by the time they arrive at the bus stop. These stopping distances are relevant for both east and west bound traffic, with possible exaggeration on them because of sun glare for those travelling east in the morning and west in the afternoon/evening.

5.4 On average, thinking time is 1.7 seconds so that leaves 0.3 seconds grace at 30 mph. Recent Community Speedwatch sessions carried out in November 2021 on traffic heading east along the Woodchurch Road and using the data from motorists travelling at 35 mph or above, resulting in them being reported to Kent Police, shows the offenders average speed is 39 mph. Community Speedwatch is carried out by volunteers. These results are similar to the excessive range from the results of the Average Weekday Speeds survey carried out in May 2018 by i-Transport for Wates.

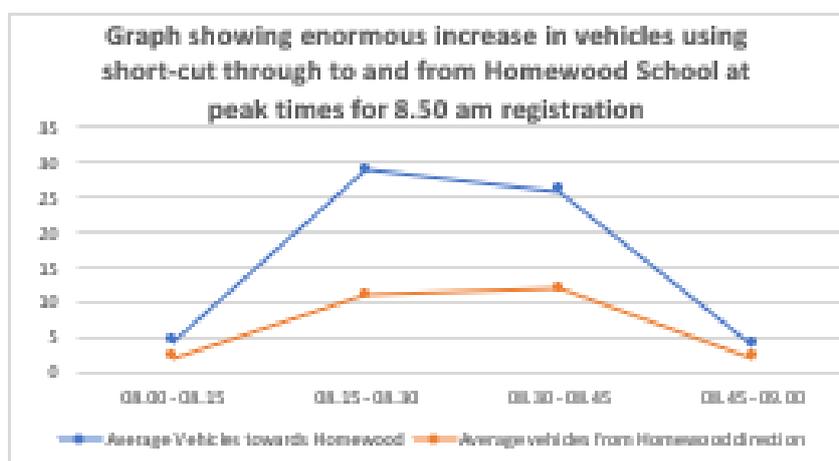
5.5 This table has been reproduced from the original planning application documentation (19/01788/AS) submitted by i-Transport.

Between Greenways and Willow Cottage

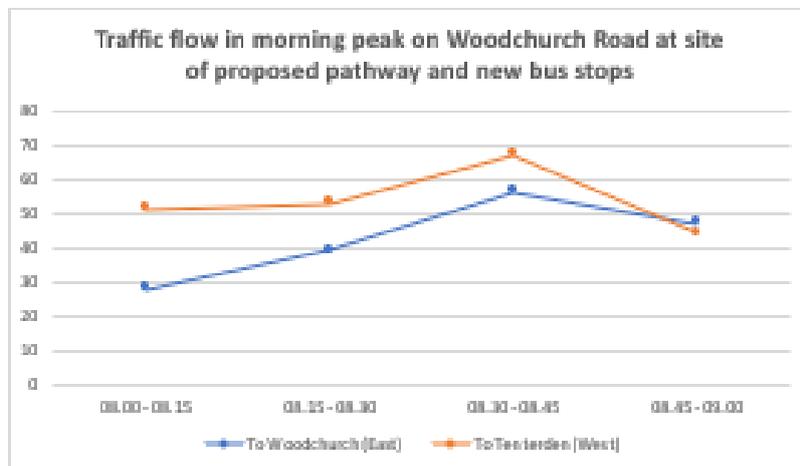
	mph	mph
Time	Eastbound	Westbound
08:00-09:00	38	37.4
17.00 -18.00	37.9	37.5
10.00 -12.00	38.3	38.3
14.00 - 16.00	38.3	38.3
00.00 -24.00	38.7	38

Percentile high speeds were presented within the initial planning application (19/01788/AS) with subsequent objections raised by local residents concerning road safety for pedestrians and other road users. It is of great concern that Kent Highways have apparently made no objections to the siting of the pedestrian crossing or the bus stops on the busy Woodchurch Road.

- 5.6 Concerns raised at the initial stages of the planning process were that there is a conflict where the developer is promoting the use of sustainable transport for the residents of this development and yet their verbose, well-padded professional reports then state that only one or two return journeys will be made via this route. Because the developer has dismissed the concerns and objections of local residents, there has been no re-assessment made in their appeal on this matter. Once again, the question has to be asked on whether KCC Highways have failed in their duty of care to future residents of Tenterden?
- 5.7 From original planning application, and included in i-Transport report, *“Kent Highways and transportation are also satisfied with the pedestrian and cycle access onto Woodchurch Road and the proposed pedestrian crossing across the Woodchurch Road following a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit.”*
- 5.8 Residents in the Woodchurch Road had previously lobbied Kent Highways concerning the excessive speed of vehicles along their road. All KCC Highways are concerned about is the number of KSIs caused by speeding, their analysis of statistics available indicated there wasn't a problem. The Chief Constable was approached and suggested that the community work together and set up a Speedwatch Group. This was done and in September 2015 with regular monitoring sessions carried out in both directions on the Woodchurch Road. Kent Highways were provided with sufficient evidence to indicate that speeding was a problem and the 30 mph roundels were installed on the Woodchurch Road in March 2016. An apparent acceptance that local knowledge and evidence is more accurate than selective data and desk-top surveys.
- 5.9 The chart below has been compiled by local residents carrying out vehicle counts of traffic flow along the Knockwood Road which is a short cut for motorists dropping off students at Homewood School and Sixth Form Centre. Those carrying out the vehicle count operated from the safety of their own properties over a two-week period in November 2021. Figures shown are an average of data collected.



- 5.10 If this developer delivers on its ‘key selling point’ that affordable housing will form part of the new development, then surely the number of school age children residing there could be quite large? To this end, Limes Land Protection Group would prefer to voice their concerns to the review panel about information that has been excluded from the original application but should have a bearing on decision making if local knowledge and commitment to the safety of its community is taken into account.
- 5.11 If planning permission is granted for 145 new homes, it could result in 350–500 additional residents living on the site. From the i-Transport report 5.8.4, Table 5.5 – Residential Modal Split, it is estimated that 79.2% would use motorised transport whilst 19% would be on foot and 1.7% would cycle. Making an assumption that only half the residents would be of school age, there could be 100-150 young people walking or cycling to school with 140 (a conservative estimate), outbound and inbound motor journeys resulting in an additional 280 daily motor journeys on the already busy and congested Tenterden roads using those same statistics cited in i-Transport 5.6 Tilden Gill Road journeys..
- 5.12 With the possibility of a high number of residents walking or cycling to and from the development, it seems fairly cavalier not to take into account the number who may be disabled, elderly or juvenile when looking at the safety aspects of the proposed crossing on the Woodchurch Road.
- 5.13 Furthermore, taking into account the above table of traffic flow using the short-cut through Knockwood and Homewood Roads, where the road is narrow, two-way traffic increases dramatically through the peak school drop-off period, this too should be taken into account when approving the proposed development on Limes Land.
- 5.14 Traffic flow along the Woodchurch Road has also been monitored by local residents from the safety of their own homes to ascertain the traffic flow when pupils may be walking or cycling from the proposed development to Homewood Academy and crossing at the proposed un-controlled Woodchurch Road crossing. Average journey figures have been used. This indicates the enormous volume of traffic travelling along the road at these peak times and LLPG are of the opinion that, if this proposed development is permitted, safety may be compromised.



5.15 The i-Transport Table 3.6 Appledore Road Average Weekday Traffic Flows was provided in the initial planning application (19/1788/AS), but remarkably no such breakdown has been reported for Woodchurch Road from the traffic survey carried out in May 2018. **Where is this important data, which must have been recorded at the time of the survey and why hasn't it been included in the original planning application?**

5.16 Without doubt, the volume of traffic on the A2067 has increased since new developments have been built in both Tenterden and Ashford. Kent Community Speedwatch sessions carried out in Tenterden record the number of vehicles passing and provide the teams with the % of motorists who have exceeded 35 m.p.h. in the 30 mph. limit. The results fluctuate, having been as low as 5% but worryingly as high as 28% reported to Kent Police for their onward action. The highest speed that the Woodchurch Road Community Speedwatch team have recorded was 71 mph. by a motorist travelling east! He was on the left hand side of the road.

5.17 There are tree preservation orders (TPOs) on three large oak trees which overhang the Woodchurch Road, in close proximity to the two proposed bus stops. There are also TPOs on three trees that overhang the proposed pedestrian walkway between Greenways and Willow Cottage. All of these trees are healthy and flourishing, however, we believe that they might be at risk of felling as the developer could possibly imply that they cause heavy shadow during the summer and slippery surfaces after the autumn fall, siting another possible hazard for all road users, pedestrians, cyclists and motorists. We cannot lose further trees to this unnecessary development.

5.18 Appledore Road - 1 x emergency, pedestrian and cycle access only

- i. The route through this exit is nearer the Town and is where the distances are calculated from by the developer. It is accepted that there is currently a crossing point of sorts near the junction between the Appledore Road and East Hill, however, it only comprises two bollards and the width protected is inadequate for either the length of a bicycle or the length and width of a mobility scooter, as are the spaces available between the bollards and the lamp post. This crossing point is a major facility for all pedestrians from this development going in to and returning from the Town and is simply inadequate for the number of users proposed.
- ii. It is stated by Wates that this access point would provide a facility for emergency vehicles but there is no road shown to enable emergency vehicles to enter Limes Land. The minimum width for a road is 3.7 metres to accommodate a fire engine. In addition, there would need to be footpaths for pedestrians.
- iii. There is no suggestion of any street lighting being installed for safety and personal protection at this access point.

5.19 Appledore Road 1 x all modes of transport

- i. As with the other two access points addressed above, this main access point is also shown on drawings 0100 and 0101. There is no suggestion of any street lighting being

installed for safety and personal protection. During periods when matches take place, vehicle traffic and pedestrian traffic will increase the likelihood of accidents.

- ii. This is proposed to be the main vehicular access and egress point for the whole site. 145 units could easily generate an additional 200 cars exiting and leaving the site at least once a day and probably more frequently, especially on days when matches are being played on the pitches.
- iii. Wates propose to make this road 5.5m wide. On either side of the road Wates propose a 2m wide footpath. It is submitted that this is an inadequate width to accommodate two commercial vehicles passing each other, taking account of their wing mirrors. The result would be that either one would have to reverse back into the site or into the Appledore Road or, as would be more likely in practice, one would mount the footpath. This would not only damage any grass verge but would also be a safety hazard to children and their parents walking along them. In any event, a road 5.5 metres wide would not allow a fire engine at 3.7 metres and a medium sized car to pass, let alone anything larger. This is equally true if one of the vehicles is an ambulance.
- iv. Even allowing for the reduction in the speed limit from 40mph to 30 mph, the Appledore Road is a very busy road catering for traffic entering the town from local residents, but also those entering the town by the road systems from further afield such as Appledore and Rye. This volume of traffic and the proposed additional traffic, not just from the Wates site but also those on the other side of the Appledore Road which have not yet been completed and the effects therefore not fully known, will, it is submitted, significantly increase risk of accidents. The PI is invited to try exiting Limes Close and turning right in the peak times for himself, to understand and experience the current issues at this time.
- v. At section 4 of the “Movement of Traffic” report it expressly states that the Appledore Road already has to cope with up to 6800 vehicles per day, most of which will be at peak times. This equates to 283 vehicle movements for each hour of a 24-hour day. In reality, it is greatly in excess of this volume during peak travel times at each end of the working day and could easily be in the order of 700-800 per hour.
- vi. Wates propose traffic calming measures through drawing ITL9289-GA-102, which also formed part of their original planning application (19/01788/AS) which was rejected by Ashford Borough Council. These traffic calming measures will cause significant general traffic congestion. Wates have omitted to factor in the additional traffic from the project known as Tilden Gill comprising 100 houses. Appledore Road only has one lane in each direction and traffic calming measures such as those proposed by Wates will adversely affect the traffic flow rates along the Appledore Road. In addition, there will be the constant noise generated by braking and accelerating in and out of the traffic calming measures area, thereby increasing the noise levels for the existing residents which will make the situation intolerable for them.

- vii. The traffic calming measures coupled with car movements generated by additional new housing at Tilden Gill, in addition to the Wates proposal will significantly increase the delays along the Appledore Road. There is currently only one crossing point to the Appledore Road to the north of the proposed Wates development and this will be wholly inadequate, not just for the reasons adumbrated above but also due to additional accident risks consequent upon the traffic accelerating out of the traffic calming measures, by those having already had their journeys delayed, particularly during peak times when children are going to school, and adults are travelling to work.
- viii. Overall, developments under construction and/or approved but not yet started, coupled with the Wates development, would generate a further 824 units of varying sizes which will generate between 1200 and 1500 additional cars on the very limited roads of Tenterden on a daily basis, and most likely on more than on one occasion per day. Most commuters will be travelling to Ashford along the A28 or Headcorn along the A267. Both are currently very busy roads at most times of the day and certainly during peak periods.
- ix. The developments are set out in the SoC at paragraph 3.2. However, this paragraph fails to include the 54 apartments at Smallhythe Road, 12 Apartments at London Beach and 8 by the Fire Station.
- x. Paragraph 5.8 refers to speed reduction and shuttle systems. Whilst many residents welcome a reduction of the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph, both LLPG and residents alike believe that the traffic calming system would introduce hazards to the road layout.
- xi. LLPG has concerns that if the carparking provision for the pitches and country park is full, visitors may decide to park on the Appledore Road or surrounding roads, increasing accident risk and inconveniencing residents locally.

6.0 Trees

- 6.1 Unfortunately, the 2021 Arboricultural Report merely replicates the previous tree report from application 19/01788/AS, except for retaining trees 110 and 111. This tree report was heavily criticised by The Woodland Trust and prompted their objection.
- 6.2 Judith Ashton and Wates have criticised the Landscape/Tree Officer at ABC. One should question how much time the tree officer was afforded to review this application. Were they able to survey the trees onsite for a 10-day period, as was the case for the SJA Trees? Did the tree officer have the opportunity to survey the site unhindered and without distraction, ie unsupervised? LLPG hope that the ABC tree officer was given equal opportunity to survey the site so not to be at a disadvantage. Confirmation should be sought from Wates.
- 6.3 The trees in Appledore Road, around the football pitch and on Limes Land form a historical landscape feature and important approach to Tenterden, which should not be underestimated or undervalued. Tenterden, the Jewel in the Weald, is known for its tree lined

streets, therefore, to assist with the masterplan, it is in Wates’ self-interest to devalue these trees as much as possible. This is precisely what it has done. The removal of trees along this avenue and on Limes Land will permanently alter the setting of the town and its positioning within the wider context of the countryside and nearby AONB and will have a negative impact on visual amenity. Access requires removal of several trees to create the main access in Appledore Road. In times of a significant climate crisis, the needless removal of mature trees is not acceptable. Proposed compensatory planting would not recompense the loss of trees to create access for an unallocated site.

6.4 The root protection areas of the trees highlighted in the chart below will be compromised. Many of these trees are mature or veteran specimens and should be afforded proper protection. The chart from the SoC demonstrates that it is simply not possible to provide 5 football pitches on the site without compromising the lifespan of these trees.

Tree no.	Species	Incursion	Extent of incursion	% of RPA	Proposed mitigation: above soil solution (Abs) or manual excavation (Man-ex)
39	English oak	Proposed highway footway connection with existing	11.2m ²	2.8%	Man-ex
54	Field maple	Proposed sports pitch and run-off finish level lower than existing ground level by a maximum of 200mm	0.6m ²	0.4%	Man-ex
55	English oak		61.5m ²	13.7%	Man-ex
60	English oak		12.7m ²	7.8%	Man-ex
67	English oak		23.5m ²	7.3%	Man-ex
70	English oak		9.3m ²	2.3%	Man-ex
110	Horse chestnut	Proposed access	67m ²	17.5%	Abs
126	Common lime	Proposed footpath	10m ²	2.4%	Man-ex
156	English oak	Drainage connection to existing manhole	n/a	n/a	Man-ex
175	English oak	Proposed pavilion car park	Max 12.5m ²	Max 12%	Abs
176, 177 and G26	Hornbeam and English oak	Proposed pavilion car park with finished level 300mm higher than existing	Max 46.1m ²	Max 15.9%	Abs
253	English oak	Proposed sports pitch and run-off finish – as above	1.3m ²	0.9%	Man-ex
307	English oak	Drainage connection to existing manhole	n/a	n/a	Man-ex
311	Field maple	Clean out of existing ditch	n/a	n/a	Man-ex
312	English oak	Clean out of existing ditch	n/a	n/a	Man-ex
374	Ash	Proposed pavilion car park	0.2m ²	0.1%	Abs
376	Hornbeam	Proposed pavilion car park	0.8m ²	0.6%	Abs
377	Sessile oak	Proposed pavilion car park	29.4m ²	9.7%	Abs
379	English oak	Proposed sports pitch and run-off finish level lower than existing ground level by a maximum of 540mm	41.5m ²	12.7%	Man-ex
381	Field maple		45.9m ²	15.4%	Man-ex
384	English oak		29m ²	12.3%	Man-ex

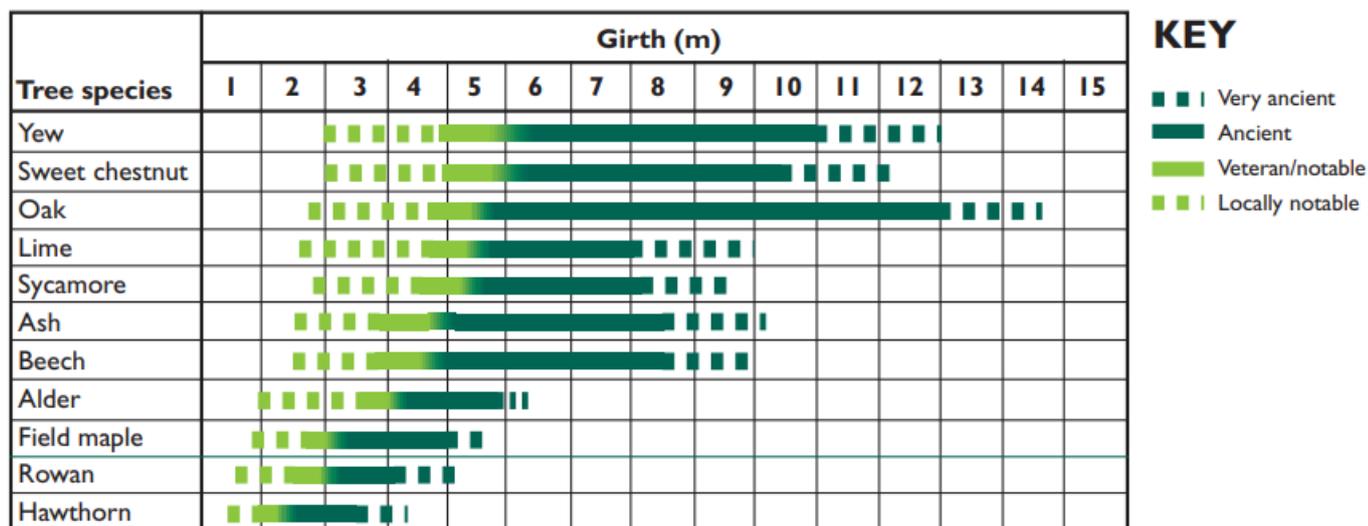
Table 10: Proposed incursions within RPAs

6.5 Tree 43 is a substantial mature horse chestnut which plays an important role as part of the historic avenue of trees within the Appledore Road. Notwithstanding the mature tree is a significant carbon store with a diameter of 790mm, it’s unnecessary removal would lead to the release of carbon, thereby contributing to climate change. To say that this tree does not form a component part of the visual character of Appledore Road (para 7.5.20) completely

overlooks the visual impact for walkers, cyclists and those using the Appledore Road. Despite some trees in Appledore Road being infected with leaf miner, The Woodland Trust have confirm that there is no evidence to suggest that this harms trees, as most of the damage occurs late in the season, primarily affecting its appearance.

- 6.6 Many trees were felled to make space for the development by Redrow Homes, and the cumulative ecological impact will only be compounded environmentally by this proposal if planning permission is granted. Felling more trees for an unwarranted development is in direct conflict with the NPPF, the local plan and contradicts with the Governments 25-year plan, especially as this site is not deliverable.
- 6.7 Tree 315 is classified as a category 'B' tree by SJA Trees. This is a classic example of a veteran tree which has been deliberately downgraded to suit the masterplan of Wates. The tree has the notable characteristics of a veteran tree, ie dead wood, rot holes, loose bark, hollows and is of high conservation value as a bat roost. SJA Trees has only afforded a 13.5m root protection area, however it should be at least 16.8m. The pond immediately adjacent to this tree will be dredged which would ultimately damage the root system of this impressively architectural oak, therefore full supervision is essential. To compromise this tree would result in **substantial ecological harm**. Furthermore, this tree is featured in the notable book written by Hugh Roberts 'Tenterden, The First Thousand Years' so is of local cultural importance.
- 6.8 Tree 267 is clearly a veteran oak tree yet is described as mature. This is another example of the mislabelling of a tree on Limes Land. The large crack/crevice, combined with the other features, is indicative of a veteran tree
- 6.9 In determining age, Lonsdale states (page 27) "surveyors should try to make use of available historical or other evidence as to whether the tree concerned is very old, relative to others of the same species". The following features may be used to determine whether a tree meets the criteria for an ancient tree: • A girth that is very large for the species allowing for local growing conditions • Extensive decay or hollowing in exposed parts of the central wood • A crown structure characteristic of post-maturity • A crown that has undergone retrenchment. A tree that does not meet the criteria for an ancient tree may still be considered a veteran tree if **some** of the following attributes are present: • Major trunk cavities or progressive hollowing • Naturally forming water pools • Decay holes • Physical damage to trunk • Bark loss • Large quantities of dead wood in the canopy • Sap runs • Crevices in the bark, under branches or on the root plate • Fungal fruiting bodies, particularly those associated with heart rot fungi species • High number of interdependent wildlife species • Epiphytic plants • An old look • High aesthetic interest.

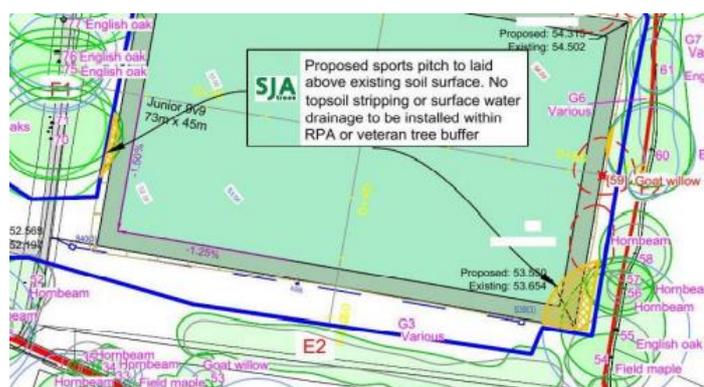
The Woodland Trust also provide this table for guidance to identifying ancient/veteran trees.



6.10 Tree 312 is identified as a veteran tree and has only been afforded a root protection area of 15m, however, with a diameter of 1535mm, the RPA **should be at least 23m**. Wates believe that it is reasonable to morph the RPA of this aged veteran oak. Again, requests were made within residents’ objections to radar/xray the root system to accurately identify where the root system ends. LLPG believes that Wates’ reluctance to digitally assess the root system strengthens our argument that the roots spread further than initially thought. Para 7.5.32 states that ‘*the grassland to the east and west is likely to have historically been ploughed*’ implying that the tree has already had its roots compromised. The Dowry of 1822 restricted ploughing on Limes Land and residents whose ancestors lived adjacent to, and also farmed the land, confirm that this is not the case. To compromise Tree 312 would result in **significant and irreversible harm**.

6.11 Tree 345, the magnificent ancient oak, has a recorded diameter of 2070mm and has been afforded an **RPA of 15m, when the minimum RPA should be 31.05m, double that professed by SJA Trees and Wates**. This is clearly unacceptable and ignores all guidance regarding *minimum root protection areas*. Affording this tree a miniscule root protection area clearly highlights the arrogance of the developer who considers development more important than an ancient oak tree. Permitting development will lead to **substantial harm** to this tree.

Tree 55, a mature and quite possibly veteran tree, has a trunk diameter of 1000mm and the charts show an RPA of 12m, however, the plans show that the RPA of this tree will be decimated to allow for the construction of a football pitch. It is interesting to note that on the plan below, mention is made of *veteran tree buffer*, implying that either tree 55 or tree 70/71 are indeed *veteran*, although no mention is made of this within the RPA/Tree tables. We believe that tree 70/71 is one tree and is veteran. The RPA should be calculated at 15 times the diameter and not 12. With a combined diameter of 1282mm, the RPA should be 19.23m. The development will cause **substantial harm** to tree 70/71, more than likely leading to it’s death, thereby contributing to climate change.



6.12 Government guidance clearly states that a buffer zone around an ancient or veteran tree should be at least 15 times larger than the diameter of the tree, and this is a *minimum* figure. The buffer zone should be 5m from the edge of the tree’s canopy if that area is larger than 15 times the tree’s diameter. LLPG question why the veteran oak tree. Tree 197 has been afforded an RPA of 15m when it **should be 15x1510mm=22.65m**. This is clearly unacceptable and puts a veteran tree at risk caus **substantial harm**, which cannot be mitigated against.

6.13 A number of the trees on the existing football field are veteran trees, however, SJA Trees have only identified ONE tree (T197) as veteran. Once again, the downgrading of these trees is entirely self-serving to benefit Wates’ masterplan, as a line of veteran trees would interfere/affect the location of the proposed road and pitches. Several comprehensive objections have been submitted regarding the inaccuracies with the Arboricultural Report. Residents have also raised concerns regarding trees being classified as a *lower category* trees, many of which are exhibiting ‘veteran’ features. Residents have requested that independent tree surveys take place⁴ to identify veteran trees before they are put at risk. Table 2 illustrates many trees in question.

Indeed, within the *Updated Faunal Species Work 2021* report, it clearly states that there are ‘**large veteran oaks in the dividing hedge between the south fields**’, ie the football pitch and the other Homewood School field. Veteran trees warrant greater root protection areas to ensure that the integrity of the tree is kept, so the larger RPAs would not complement the masterplan and would *not* allow for the positioning of the junior pitch.

6.14 A veteran tree may be a young tree with a relatively small girth in contrast to an ancient tree but bearing the ‘scars’ of age such as decay in the trunk, branches or roots, fungal fruiting bodies, or dead wood. These veteran features will still provide wildlife habitat. Many trees within the application site/affected by the proposed development have decaying branches, holes, dead wood and fungus growing on them, all indicators that they are indeed veteran trees. It is in the interest of Wates to have a limited number of veteran/ancient trees on the site as the root protection areas are much smaller for general trees, ie 12 times the diameter rather than 15 times the diameter of the tree as a *minimum*, as per the guidance outlined on the Gov.uk website. Many of the trees within the arboricultural report are described as

⁴ LLPG is making urgent enquiries to see if it is possible to have an independent tree survey undertaken, even at this late stage. Given what appear to be fundamental errors in the report of SJA, the PI should treat their conclusions with extreme caution.

dying/failing/dangerous. There is an important distinction between retrenchment and trees appearing to die back from serious disease or wounding damage. If a tree is undergoing natural retrenchment, individual branches are shed or die back but the remainder of the crown continues to flourish and remain healthy. This may happen on many occasions, and often leads to development of another crown.

Table 2

Tree No	Status (SJA Trees)	Features	Diameter	Current RPA	Correct RPA
381	Ancient	Ancient field maple coppice	18 stem 734m	9.72	11.01m
345	Ancient	Oak	2070mm	15.00m	31.05m
315	Mature	Veteran tree	1125mm	13.3	16.87m
70/71	Mature	This is a 5 stemmed veteran tree	575,430,610,620,395	11.28/8.28m	19.23m
197	Veteran	Veteran	1510	15m	22.65
312	Veteran		1535	15m	23.05m

6.15 Tree 449 is a classic example of a veteran, or possibly ancient tree. A large cavity sits within the trunk area, deadwood and crevices are clearly obvious. Tree 230 - there appears to be a discrepancy between data. Within the Arboricultural Implications Report April 2021, one table states this tree is oak and the other states ash. Tree 346 – again, there appears to be a discrepancy between data. One table states that this tree is ash and the other oak.

6.16 Residents were astonished to read that **46** trees are to be removed, including 5 category B trees, 31 category C and 10 category U. Clarification should be sought to establish how many trees are actually being felled as para 7.5.23 states that '*in addition, seven groups of trees would need to be removed*' (this appears to be on top of the 46 trees). One must question, is there any justification for removing so many mature trees, let alone when we are in a climate crisis. Untold levels of carbon would be released, and it could potentially take at least 40 years before any new trees begin to sequester carbon. Additionally, the removal of trees and hedges would exacerbate flood risk, which conflicts with SP1.

6.17 LLPG stress that although the tree plans within the Arboricultural Report appear, superficially, to be comprehensive, some trees are missing, and others have been wrongly identified (eg ash instead of oak). To fully comprehend the plan, one has to overlay the drainage plan to clearly identify the additional risks to many more trees, ie swales/SuDS. When viewing both plans simultaneously, trees 302, 303, 313 and 327 would be severely impacted by the proposal and will cause **significant harm** to the integrity of these trees. A swale is proposed between trees 327 and 328, however, the RPA of these trees almost touch, thereby leaving little space for invasive drainage works to be carried out without harming these oak trees.

6.18 Tree 303 has a diameter of 868mm so therefore requires a minimum RPA of 10.42m, not the 9.6m allowed by Wates, no doubt in order that a swale SuDs system adjacent to the tree can be introduced. Tree 302 has a diameter of 1035mm and should be afforded an RPA of 12.4m, however, Wates have allowed an RPA of 7.2m, which will ultimately lead to the demise of this mature specimen. Tree 313 has a diameter of 1130mm and ordinarily should be afforded an RPA of 13.56m, however, an additional 20% allowance into the field was implemented at the time of the TPO being instated. Wates has only allowed a 12m RPA when it should be 16.72m. The root protection areas of trees is the 'minimum' area

calculated in accordance with the British Standard and is the minimum area which should be left *undisturbed* around each tree.

6.19 Paragraph 7.5.29 refers to tree 381, an ancient field maple. Tree 381 is at risk of permanent root injury, possibly leading to the death of this ANCIENT tree due to a completely inadequate RPA. The allowed RPA of 9.72m is ludicrous for an ancient tree, and this can be fully realised when viewing the tree plan showing the severed root protection area. Ancient and veteran trees are considered to be irreplaceable habitats, yet Wates and their consultants are ignoring Government guidelines and the British Standard that defines root protection areas and *was created by the UK's national standards body to protect trees*. In the British Standard, an RPA is called a 'layout design tool'. It suggests the **minimum** area around a tree that holds enough roots and rooting volume to maintain the tree's viability. Wates have ignored the British Standard and the NPPF, and the importance of this ancient tree, in favour of their development plans. It is universally documented that RPAs are there to protect the tree; this is especially important when assessing veteran and ancient trees. Morphing an ancient tree's root protection area should not be considered without proper ground radar/xray assessment of the root system of the tree to identify exactly where the roots are growing. Wates have provided no evidence to suggest that that this approach has been adopted at all, let alone in relation to one of the oldest trees on site.

There is no mention of the recreational pressures and stresses that will be introduced to the tree. Footballs hitting branches from the adjacent adult sized football pitch will contribute additional stress, thereby causing **harm**. Bat staining is visible on this tree, so it is therefore not appropriate to harm bats, or their roosts, by situating an adult football pitch next to this irreplaceable habitat.

In Cornwall, appeal decision within APP/D0840/W/18/3194503, the Planning Inspector Neil Pope considered root protection areas very important so much so that in assessing the proposal, the inspector considered that even though works would only affect **one per cent** of a trees RPA, he believed this was still harmful. By definition, the minimum root protection area was that deemed necessary to contain sufficient roots and rooting volume to maintain the tree's viability and was where the protection of roots and soil structure was a priority. He felt the outcome of both the works to trees, as well as hedge removal, would seriously adversely affect the distinctive character and appearance of the hillside location. He also held that the proposed compensatory new hedge planting would take years to mature and would not offset or adequately mitigate the harm identified.

The RPA of tree 381 has been decimated to shoehorn in the adult football pitch. LLPG does consider that Wates appreciate the importance of ancient and veteran trees, which is reflected in the suggestion, at para 7.5.32, to increase the soil level near the tree. Increasing soil levels around root systems compromises the oxygen levels within the soil, ultimately impacting the viability of the tree. A Statement of Policy for England's Ancient & Native Woodland produced by Defra and the Forestry Commission clearly states that ancient woodland and trees can suffer from disturbance where development is built right up to the margins, which includes changes to drainage, as well as recreational and access pressures, which would indeed be the case with the football pitches (and associated drainage infrastructure) and tree 381, together with other trees in the hedgerows adjacent to the

itches. Soil disturbance and removal around trees, together with pollution and the clearing of vegetation can bring with it mycorrhizal armageddon and one cannot expect trees to exist in the same state as they would in an undisturbed and far more nature environment. This deterioration can be seen with many urban trees, therefore, it is essential that trees on the periphery of urbanised areas abutting the countryside should be afforded additional protection from the pressures of development.

- 6.20 Not all trees on site are shown on the tree plan. It is therefore difficult to ascertain how the proposed country park will impact on the many mature and veteran trees. Footpaths, play areas and increased recreational pressure constricted by a smaller area of green space will ultimately impact these trees.

A veteran/ancient goat willow which could potentially be 300 years old and is thought to be tree 449, is graded as a 'U' tree and the report states that the tree is *of little potential*. The huge crack in the trunk of the tree provides a perfect habitat for invertebrates and potentially bats, so to say that the tree is of little potential is short-sighted, and, misleading. The tree is a unique feature of the ancient site and represents its historical past. At the very least this tree is veteran and should be protected under the NPPF and the ALP.

- 6.21 The Government, Natural England and the NPPF para 180(c) clearly state that '*development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy*'. LLPG does not consider a windfall site to be a wholly exceptional reason.

Government guidance clearly states on Gov.uk that 'a buffer zone around an ancient or veteran tree should be at **least 15 times larger** than the diameter of the tree. The buffer zone should be **5m from the edge of the tree's canopy if that area is larger than 15 times the tree's diameter**.

- 6.22 SJA Trees confirm that in terms of landscape value, it is oak that dominates and provides the main arboricultural character. It is surprising, therefore, that Wates wishes to endanger the future of many of these trees by reducing RPAs.
- 6.23 It is clear from this document that Wates' tree report needs proper scrutiny to ensure that an informed decision can be made on this appeal insofar as trees are concerned. It is simply unacceptable for so many trees to be put at risk for a proposed windfall development, which would ultimately contravene the NPPF and ALP. This proposal would lead to the needless removal of trees and would also endanger the lifespan of veteran, ancient and mature trees.
- 6.24 Trees 176 and 178 are both thought to be veteran hornbeams and bare resemblance to those protected in Epping Forest. It is essential that further specialist assessment is allowed to ensure that they are not harmed by the building of the carpark which currently have compromised RPAs (illustrated on the tree plan). The RPAs are based on the trees only being mature and not veteran, therefore, LLPG would urge a cautionary approach and afford veteran RPAs of 15x the diameter.

7.0 Ecology

- 7.1 KWT has objected to this planning application due to the negative ecological impact and harm it would cause. The development would lead to **substantial biodiversity loss**, contravening the ALP and the NPPF.
- 7.2 Although para 7.5.41 confirms that the site is not situated within any statutory or non-statutory designated area, CPRE and the High Weald AONB Unit have made an application to Natural England requesting that the High Weald AONB be extended to include Limes Land. CPRE recognise that the site is indeed an excellent example of ancient countryside which warrants protection. Furthermore, the site sits within the Nature Recovery Network and is identified as a Network Enhancement Zone (1). Natural England has also confirmed that the grasslands are classified 'Good-Quality Semi Improved' on the Priority Habitat layer, although this is not emphasised with the ecological reports.
- 7.3 Residents have repeatedly requested that an independent professional grassland survey takes place to substantiate the presence of unimproved grassland. During ecological surveys carried out by the Biodiversity Group of the Tenterden Neighbourhood Plan, a high percentage of fine leaved grasses and herbs were recorded, disproving that the grassland is forb species poor.

Furthermore, a Grassland Ecologist walked part of the Site and identified areas of unimproved grassland, a rare but ecologically diverse habitat, and recommended further independent surveys take place to formally record the importance of Limes Land. The Ground Appraisal Report from the 2019 application confirmed that the site is covered in large anthills and much of it has remained undisturbed for a long period of time.

Much of the ancient grassland on Limes Land will be destroyed either by development, infrastructure, and by the creation of the adult pitch and pavilion. Additionally, the proposal to scarify the remainder of the grassland, ultimately destroying ancient anthills and habitat, will cause untold harm to the site, thereby decimating ancient countryside and damaging the mycorrhizal fungi. The anthills form part of the food chain for many species, so the destruction of these increasingly rare phenomena would be harmful to the local ecosystem.

- 7.4 Mycorrhizal fungi are critical for the survival of trees of all ages and exists within the soil wherever there are trees (and other plants). By enabling a tree to introduce additional nutrients and water from the fungi, in addition to providing connective networks linking many trees together by enabling them to trade resources, the overall tree health is greatly improved by their presence. Scarifying the grassland and digging up the remainder would sever these networks which have co-existed for millennia.
- 7.5 LLPG questions the legitimacy of para 7.5.43, which asserts that increases in recreational pressure on Knockwood will be mitigated through on-site measures. Residents living in the 145 dwellings, visitors to the 5 football pitches and the pavilion using roads and carparking will have a devastating impact with the ancient habitat of Limes Land *and* the ancient woodland of Knockwood, as it will increase footfall in both areas. By reducing the green space currently available would put untold pressures on the adjacent woodland.

- 7.6 It is simply impossible for the priority habitat grassland to be '*largely retained*' despite the assurances in the SoC. Moreover, the removal of grazing sheep will negatively impact on the grassland and general site diversity, as confirmed by KWT in their existing objection.
- 7.7 LLPG refutes Wates' claim that the development will provide biodiversity net gain (BNG) (paragraph 7.5.48), as corroborated by KWT who confirmed biodiversity loss. It should be noted that reliance alone on the biodiversity metric can be a flawed approach to establishing baseline and net gain calculations. It is essential to consider the species on site to establish the true impact of development alongside the BNG metric. Hundreds of species have been recorded with KMBRC, however, a significant number of these have not been recorded in Wates' ecological reports, thereby distorting their results.
- 7.8 LLPG are surprised that in para 7.5.48 there is reference to conservation initiatives set out for the Low Weald when the Site is in the High Weald.
- 7.9 Para 7.5.50 *implies* that the dormouse was found some distance from the site, yet the actual record relates to a dormouse found in a garden abutting Limes Land. Many of the tubes used for identifying the presence of dormice were hung at the ends of branches, regularly swinging in the wind and open to predation, which is not following the CIEMM guidance. Furthermore, LLPG cannot find, in the SoC, reference to results of the 2021 dormouse survey as additional tubes were placed around the site this year.
- 7.10 The SoC states that the presence of notable and protected species has been carefully considered, however, the ecological data recorded with KMBRC and KWT confirms that the ecological consultants have omitted to include significant numbers of species on site. The ecologists have recently stated that there was no evidence of badgers on site, yet residents have CCTV footage clearly showing badgers coming into gardens from Limes Land as recently as November 2021.

Polecats have also been recorded on Limes Land, yet the reports fail to reveal this. Nightingales have been recorded during the last two summers, yet there is no mention of this species. Rare leucistic slow-worms breed on the site, and although they are afforded no more protection, it illustrates the diversity of the site. Over the last few years, 64 bird species have been recorded, 18 of them 'red list species' as of highest conservation priority, 15 'amber list species' and 12 species protected under Section 41. Many of these do not appear in the planning documentation, thereby raising concerns over baseline figures. Further, no winter bird surveys have taken place to ascertain those species using the site for migratory purposes.

Within the ecological reports in the 2019 planning application, the ecological consultants confirmed that the recorded numbers of great crested newts and slow worms was of county/district importance, yet the most recent surveys make no mention of this despite the numbers being higher than before. These inconsistencies illustrate that the statement '*protected and notable species have been carefully considered*' lacks credibility and demonstrates that the baseline assessments cannot be relied upon. For the Ecological Assessment to conclude that *development proposals will avoid or minimise potential adverse effects* can only be described as misleading at best, fabrication at worst.

- 7.11 LLPG disagrees with para 7.5.53 as the development does not accord with policies ENV1, ENV3a, ENV4, ENV5, ENV9, HOU5e,f and SP1b, as outlined in section 10. Indeed, the proposal would also contravene ENV6 as it would increase to flood risk elsewhere (Appledore Road, Shrubcote and Tilden Gill).
- 7.12 LLPG is concerned regarding the proposed planting of trees to form an orchard on a piece of grassland that has not been disturbed for hundreds of years; such actions would ultimately release carbon from the soils and contradicts expert guidance in relation to planting trees in grasslands, as confirmed by Natural England. Grasslands contain around 34% of the world's soil carbon stock and can be more resilient carbon sinks than woodlands/forests.
- 7.13 There is a clear disparity between the ecological reports and the Historic Landscape Assessment. The latter clearly states that 'the historic landscape character of the site is one exhibiting **considerable time depth and coherence**, with no historic boundary loss and the survival on site of various historic landscape features pre-dating 1845, including hedgerows, mature trees, ponds and trackways'. This corroborates the comments made by an independent grassland ecologist referred to above, that much of the Site is 'unimproved grassland'. The ecological reports appear to detract from the historical landscape and imply it is neglected, rather than ancient. Moreover, the KMBRC records document the existence of waxcap fungi within grassland which is also an indicator of an ancient, undisturbed landscape. Autumnal grassland surveys appear to have been avoided so that these species are not recorded, thereby avoiding the opportunity to document undisturbed and unimproved grassland pasture and the 99 vascular plant species that have been recorded for the Site.
- 7.14 Tree 200 – There is a discrepancy between the ecological data and the arboricultural data. The tree report confirms that the tree has a high suitability for bats, however, the EPR report states that the tree has medium potential. When looking at the tree, it is clear there are cavities, furrows, decay and root damage of an unknown nature indicating high suitability as a bat roost, so one has to question why its bat roost potential has been downgraded in the tree report.
- 7.15 There will be a loss of approximately 25+ acres of neutral meadow grassland due to development, with the remained being destroyed and levelled with scarification. The grassland is a Priority Habitat and therefore warrants protection. Additionally, the proposed orchard which is adjacent to the AB12 will affect the acid grassland which is identified on the KLIS maps and is also highlighted as a Kent BAP.
- 7.16 Semi-natural grasslands provide provisioning, regulatory and cultural ecosystem services and as such are considered to have a high conservation value (Bullock and others 2011; Bengtsson and others 2019). Limes Land comprises of a mix of semi-natural and unimproved grassland.
- 7.17 The planning documents confirm that the developer wishes to remove many sections of the ancient hedgerows and reduce the height/width of the remaining. Natural England state that allowing existing hedges to get bigger could double overall carbon sequestration capacity (the process of capturing and storing atmospheric CO₂). Unfortunately, the proposal

of Wates to reduce the size of the hedgerows will ultimately contributing to climate change leading to **substantial harm**.

7.18 The Natural England Research Report NERR094 - Protect existing Semi-Natural Habitats, confirms that most of England has been intensively managed for a long time and semi-natural habitats, of all types, are *rare fragments* containing many of our native species that are not found elsewhere. Many of these, *including grasslands* and heathlands, also store appreciable amounts of carbon in their vegetation, undisturbed soils and sediments. The rare habitat on Limes Land should therefore be preserved to avoid **substantial harm**.

8.0 Football Pitches

- 8.1 The proposal for five football pitches is excessive for the town, ultimately drawing in players from areas outside of the parish, subsequently leading to increased traffic movements in the town. If all of the pitches are used at one time, then the carpark will not be sufficient, and vehicles will park in adjacent streets. The football pitch provision should remain in the centre of the town where there is already a pavilion (changing rooms), adequate parking at the leisure centre and where the footfall will support local shops within the high street. There is no demand for all of the proposed facilities as those that currently exist more than meet the needs of Tenterden.
- 8.2 The Playing Pitch Strategy identifies pitch requirements for the whole borough. It should not be interpreted that the approximately 50% of the boroughs predicted pitch provision should be in Tenterden, when it has been agreed in the ALP that the *majority* of development will take place in Ashford.
- 8.3 The area of the school land is calculated as 3.42 Ha which is designated as playing field. Approaches were made to the Homewood School from the Tenterden Town Council in March 2018 to lease the land which is the current football pitch. (See Link:- <https://www.kentonline.co.uk/tenterden/news/shockas-school-seals-deal-161644/>). This was rejected due to a Promotion Agreement between Wates and the Schools Trust dated February 2018 which prohibited this opportunity to use the land for the Community. Wates' proposal offers 3.3Ha of sport provision, which is *less than currently exists* within the school land. As it stands, the current proposal *does not* demonstrate how the sports provision associated with the development is achieved, other than making the land available. LLPG considers that the Schools Trust has deliberately neglected the site to create an illusion that the site that does not meet the needs of its pupils. If so, this is unscrupulous behaviour.
- 8.4 Wates do not say that they will be providing these facilities. At paragraph 7.5.58, in response to exception 4 highlighted by Wates, it is said that *"The area of playing field to be lost as a result of the proposed development will be replaced, prior to the commencement of development, by a new area of playing field:"*. Providing the playing fields alone is a vacuous statement. Even if the football pitches were provided, they will be unusable without the pavilion and full infrastructure being provided to support them, along with the plant and machinery required for the maintenance of the pitches, including, but not limited to machinery for grass cutting and white lining, together with goal posts, corner flags and nets and storage

facilities. There would need to be proper access to the football pitches inclusive of the parking.

- 8.5 The construction of the pavilion would have to consider all the service requirements, *inter alia* the provision of water, electricity, surface water drainage and the disposal of sewage. These facilities are a major requirement taking account of the fact that none exist at the present time on or adjacent to the area of the proposed pitches. There is no indication of how these services would be provided. It is a major concern given the limitation of existing services and the ever-increasing demand on them. Even the Wates submission recognises this at paragraph 7.5.80, stating “*In addition remedial works and repairs will be carried out to the existing surface water sewers in Appledore Road to improve their hydraulic performance. These sewers are known to be in a poor state of repair and are thought to have contributed to the historical surface water flooding that is known to have occurred previously in this area.*”. It is naive to expect that the problem with the surface water sewers of this magnitude is limited to the Appledore Road. It is a general problem in the whole area even before any additional load is imposed through additional housing.
- 8.6 Wates have excluded flood lighting to the football pitches. The Inspector is respectfully reminded that football is primarily a winter sport and taking account of school closing times, allowing for time to get to the pitches and prepare to play, it will be getting dark even before the games commence. Is it therefore realistic to propose football pitches in such a location? Wates have highlighted the resurgence of Tenterden Tigers, who are a junior side. This is just one club which currently trains in part in Rolvenden and in part, due to light and weather restrictions, at Homewood School using their all-weather pitch with flood lighting. Putting aside the cost of hiring the Homewood pitch, there is no proposal from Wates to deal with adverse weather conditions which make the new pitches unusable. There is no indication of any other clubs emerging or a requirement for the proposed additional facilities. In reality, if they are not required or are underused, they will fall into disrepair and revert back to grassland. Given that Wates do not propose transferring ownership of the land to another party not involved with the application it is likely that it will result in a subsequent application for more housing development.
- 8.7 At paragraph 7.5.20 (both bullet points), Wates recognise that the Community Facility Management Scheme must be approved by ABC prior to the commencement of the development. This is, of course, a reference to the construction of any housing. Further, that a suitable organisation must be formally appointed prior to first occupation. Wates recognise that this is a formal appointment but go on to say that “*a contract may be too rigid*”. To suggest that such an arrangement without a contract could be set up is nonsense. No company would enter into an arrangement without knowing what it would be paid, when it would be paid and the terms and conditions applicable to their work i.e. without a contract.
- 8.8 The PI is referred to block plan number 7657 03 01, Revision 0, produced by NSSP Architects. It identifies a total proposal of 70 parking bays inclusive of just 4 disabled bays in addition to only 4 bays for motorcycles. Taking account of those that Wates suggest might

use the proposed country park, separate to, or in conjunction with the 5 football pitches and the other suggested facilities, the extent of the proposed parking is wholly inadequate.

- 8.9 Visiting teams may arrive in buses, yet there does not appear to be any parking for larger vehicles. In contrast, when comparing the parking facilities at both Ashford Hockey Club and Ashford Rugby Club, a large expanse is set aside for parking.
- 8.10 The parking facilities must include provision for charging points to meet government targets for reducing CO² emissions, but none are proposed.
- 8.11 Furthermore, the school does not have permission from the Secretary of State to dispose of the land and its disposal will see the school children lose grazing land for their school farm animals. There is restriction in place in favour of the Secretary of State for Education which requires consent prior to disposal of this land. This restriction is specified on the Land Registry Title document for K984450 and this will have a serious impact on the **deliverability of this site**. For information, an application was made by Wates at the time of the previous application 19/01788/AS but no evidence was offered and the case was subsequently closed.
- 8.12 Taking all the above into account, it is submitted that the appeal is fundamentally flawed with regard to the proposed football pitches alone without which, Wates' own case, no development at all could proceed. The application should be rejected.

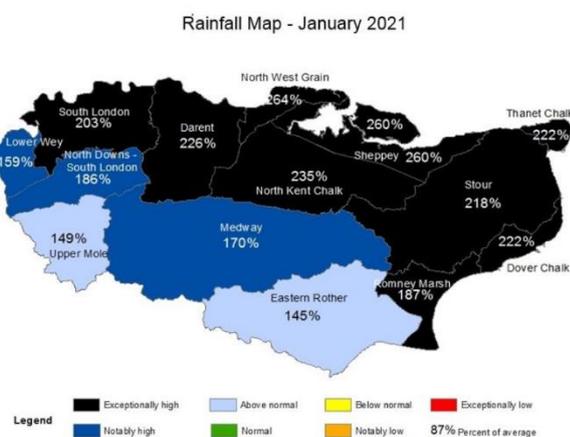
9.0 Drainage

- 9.1 It has been identified that the surface water system in verges adjacent to Appledore Road is in very poor condition with debris and root damage. This is impacting its performance and is an issue, whether or not this development is granted permission. To date there has never been a comprehensive survey of this system to establish its route, links to land drainage and highways drainage. Consequently, there is no clear ownership of this sewer. Is it Southern Water, Kent County Council, Land Drainage or Riparian Owners along Appledore Road? Wates have stated that they will carry remedial works and repairs to these sewers. If there is no clear ownership of these systems, who will specify this work, who will manage the contract and who will sign off its completion to a satisfactory standard? The improvement of this system is key to the reduction of risk of flooding in Appledore Road and should be included in any obligation under the 106 Agreement. A condition of planning permission, if granted on appeal, should be that any remediation of the surface water sewer in Appledore Road should be completed before any onsite works are carried out. This will ensure that the risk of flooding is reduced in the local area.
- 9.2 The drainage proposals are likely to undermine the physical structure of the historic Limes Land Farmhouse as it will be surrounded by swales, which could ultimately affect its structural integrity.
- 9.3 The ancient ditch to the rear of Limes Land Farmhouse, within Catchment Area 2, will be partially destroyed by the introduction of a road and SuDs drainage features.

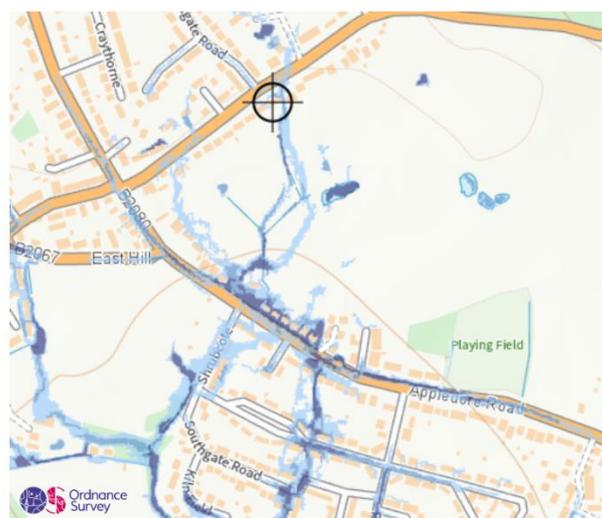
- 9.4 The drainage proposals will compromise the RPA of mature trees on and off the Site, ultimately leading to the deterioration of several mature trees. LLPG request that a qualified arboriculturist is present to supervise all drainage works near to tree roots, if the PI grants the appeal.
- 9.5 The management of surface water should be treated as a whole. It is particularly perturbing that the Proposed Surface Water Drainage is shown on separate drawings from the Critical Hydrological Drainage Features. This makes interpretation of the interconnection of all these systems very difficult. The Proposed Surface Water General Arrangements show PROPOSED SURFACE WATER SEWER (PIPE), SURFACE WATER SuDS FEATURE (SWALE/POND etc) and EXISTING SURFACE WATER SEWER. The first and second of these features are shown to be linked. Prior to any development, all of the surface water runs off the Site using the existing ponds and ditches via the current outfalls. The proposal creates a separate surface water sewer to take all of the surface water running of the developed areas ie. roofs, paved areas and roads. Run-off from the green area is expected to be via existing ditches. These run-offs are shown to be linked before leaving by the same outfall. The run-off from the developed areas will inevitably be quicker than the green field runoff and will be controlled by some form of flow restrictor (hydrobrake). It is not at all clear what happens when the surface water exceeds the restricted flow. It must find its way into the green areas by routes which may be unpredictable.
- 9.6 LLPG met with the Land Drainage Engineer from KCC providing a dossier of evidence of flooding history on the site. Many photos and videos were supplied showing what happens in extreme rain events. The whole system becomes overloaded leading to a rising water level in the field to the north of Rose Cottage. This rising water overflows into the natural pond in the garden of Rose Cottage. There is an overflow from this pond to the outfall to the east at node 15 on Drawing Ref 133187 RSK C ALL 05 03 02. Effectively the pond in Rose Cottage is an existing SUDS feature. The KCC Drainage Engineer stressed that this overflow should be retained in any design of the system. However, there is no reference to this overflow in any of the drawings. It appears that all off Site features such as this pond are excluded from any designs proposed by Wates/ RSK. This is not acceptable given the advice of the KCC Drainage Engineer.
- 9.7 The Critical Hydrological Drainage Features Drawing No.133187-C-ALL-05-07-01 shows a number of features i.e. proposed cellular storage, proposed swale/ditch, proposed attenuation pond, possible attenuation feature for sports pitches and existing ditches to be retained and form part of the site wide drainage strategy. There is concern that cellular storage is not suitable for clay soils so we therefore wish to raise this as a query with the Planning Inspector as this will need to be examined further to establish the suitability of this drainage system.
- 9.8 It is noted that the attenuation basin on the southern boundary has been shortened to avoid the RPA of TPO Oak Tree 313. Until the RPA of this tree has been properly assessed it is not clear that this reduction of this basin is sufficient to prevent damage to the tree.

- 9.9 It is noted that there are possible attenuation features for sports pitches; these are additional features. It is assumed that this is to address *known* water logging of these fields which makes them difficult to drain for football pitch use. No explanation is given for these extra features. Also, the attenuation feature in Field 10 is through the proposed car park.
- 9.10 Given that most of the SUDS detail is based on an outline plan, there can be no guarantee that any of this proposed design will be implemented. In this event the information supplied by RSK is academic. The assumption made when designing SUDS is that these will reduce the risk of flooding.
- 9.11 The Met Office has this month issued a warning for above average rainfall during the winter period and has warned householders to review flood risk maps with the Environment Agency. The Met Office stated that increased flooding in and around new developments is due to planners only referring to ‘historic’ rainfall rates and not those associated with climate change, which we are currently experiencing. They have warned that erratic weather systems and heavy downpours will become the norm, therefore, current SuDs policy is not fit for purpose.

The Kent and South London Groundwater map below, produced in February 2021, clearly illustrates that the area has sustained above average rainfall.



- 9.12 The Environment Agency Map clearly illustrates areas prone to surface water flooding in and around Limes Land. The planning proposals are doing little to alleviate the sustained flooding in the local area. Any development will however exacerbate the flooding locally by forcing water into three output channels thereby overloading the drainage system in Appledore Road.



Extent of flooding from surface water

● High
 ● Medium
 ● Low
 Very low
 ⊕ Location you selected

9.13 Findings from the Agricultural Land Classification Map and Report (April 1997) showed high quantities of gleying, which is essentially the process of water logging, therefore demonstrating that much of the site is impermeable to water.

10.0 Ashford Local Plan

10.1 The ALP states that the ‘majority of new housing development will be at Ashford and its periphery, as the most sustainable location within the Borough, based on its range of services and facilities, access to places of employment, access to public transport hubs and the variety of social community infrastructure available’. This policy was scrutinised and was endorsed by the Planning Inspector examining the Ashford Local Plan in 2019. The Inspector concurred that the majority of development should be around Ashford town and accepted this methodology to ensure sustainable distribution of housing development across the borough until 2030.

10.2 During the ALP examination process, Judith Ashton Associates, on behalf of Wates, persistently encouraged both Ashford Borough Council and the Planning Inspector to include Limes Land as an allocated site within the ALP. However, the Planning Inspector disagreed with JAA and Wates and refused to do so.

10.3 Despite Wates asserting that the Site is now available (para 6.13), no evidence has been provided to corroborate this. It is simply not sufficient to say that availability is *self-evidence by virtue of this* appeal. As of 4th November 2021, the Department for Education has confirmed that NO application had been submitted by the Schools Trust to dispose of the playing pitches, therefore, the site is not deliverable. The school would need consent from the Secretary of State before they could sell the land, and this is reinforced by a restriction on the registered title in favour of the Secretary of State. It is therefore misleading to imply that the site is available.

- 10.4 During recent consultations for the Tenterden Neighbourhood Plan, Limes Land was identified as the No 1 Local Green Space by the community, which has been used and cherished by generations of families in the area. LLPG believe that this planning application is a *strategy* to gain planning permission before the Neighbourhood Plan is ‘made’ as obtaining planning permission after the site is designated will prove more difficult.
- 10.5 Paragraph 2.51 of the ALP states that *‘the high quality of Tenterden’s landscape setting and its intrinsic historic character are factors that suggest that new development in the town should be limited, phased and very carefully planned. Therefore, no more major new development is planned in Tenterden itself, apart from the completion of the master planned southern extension to the town and the permitted extension to housing at Tilden Gill Road on the Shrubcote estate. Combined, these can fulfil the town’s development needs over the Plan period without adversely affecting the character of the town’*. The Planning Inspector agreed with this strategy to development, however, Wates continue to disregard the reasoning for controlled development. For context, over 70 acres of land in Tenterden is either being developed or has been designated for development through planning permissions or site allocation. The built-up area of Tenterden is approximately 550 acres, therefore this proposal would mean a further 38 acres of countryside, or circa 7% of the built-up area, adjacent to the built confines would be lost to development, ultimately affecting the landscape setting of the town.
- 10.6 Policy SP1 of the ALP clearly sets out the strategic objectives for the borough. This planning application would not focus development at the sustainable location of Ashford, thereby contravening SP1a. KWT has confirmed that the development will lead to net loss in biodiversity, contravening SP1b. The development would destroy the numerous heritage assets which includes a drove road, gallows green, a coaxial field system, medieval hedgerows, an ancient stone track which runs across the front of Limes Land Farmhouse (13-15 Appledore Road) and would potentially damage tree roots of veteran trees, all of which would contravene SP1c. The Historic Landscape Assessment from the previous application (19/01788/AS) clearly acknowledged that Limes Land is an ‘ancient landscape’ which exhibits ‘considerable time depth and coherence, with no historic boundary loss and the survival on site of various historic landscape features pre-dating 1845, including hedgerows, mature trees, ponds and trackways’. The assessment also confirms that the banks and ditches were indicative of historic field boundaries, and also evidenced the Lynchets which are an ancient form terracing. Historic England state that Lynchets provide distinctive traces of medieval and earlier agricultural activities, with many sites being designated due to national importance.
- 10.7 The SoC refers to the Tenterden Conservation Area Appraisal (“CAA”) which was carried out in 1995 and prioritised grassland in the AONB; it did not properly assess the historic landscape of Limes Land. Unfortunately, the CAA failed to record Gallows Green or indeed the ridge and furrow which is clearly visible. It is therefore misleading to quote from a 26-year-old document. A request for an updated CAA has been made to both ABC and TTC.

10.8 There is no evidence to suggest that the development would provide employment opportunities in the parish when the development is complete, thereby contravening SP1. At paragraph 7.6.7 of the SoC, it states that “*the proposed development would result in the creation of both construction jobs and additional indirect and induced construction related jobs during the build period.*” The table set out in this paragraph also refers to additional jobs generated on completion. The development would however impact on the farmer who grazed the land, ultimately reducing his potential to earn a wage if he cannot find replacement land to graze.

10.9 Wates state (table 7) that the economic benefits stemming from the development would include 103 direct and 156 indirect construction jobs as well as 20 additional jobs on completion. There is no factual evidence whatsoever to support this hypothesis. Furthermore, Wates do not explain the difference between direct and indirect construction jobs. The opposite is the case as demonstrated below.

10.10 Wates have never stated that they intend to involve themselves with the actual construction process. Their *modus operandi* has always been that they specialise in obtaining planning permission alone.

Even if Wates could demonstrate that the scheme would generate the alleged new construction jobs, there are no skilled operatives to fill them. In their October 2021 edition of Construction Manager, The Chartered Institute of Building recently reported a substantial shortfall in skilled operatives under the article heading “New work offers optimism as labour shortage bites”. This, says Kris Hudson of Turner & Townsend, the author of the article, will lead, as it is doing, to increased costs of wages and incentive bonuses, which will be passed on to the purchasers of the properties insofar as market forces allow. The alternative is the reduced quality of the buildings.

In any event, most main contractors, that is the company(ies) that would actually build the houses sub-contract the vast majority, if not all of the works. Sub-contractors in turn then often sub-sub-contract the works again on a piecemeal or price work basis. There are still no operatives to carry out the work.

This is equally true of the projected “general jobs”. The current demand for local tradesmen is far in excess of their availability. Even for relatively simple work such as decorations, people are having to wait many months before the work can be started.

10.11 Everything said by Wates at paragraph 7.6.7 is misleading and, it is submitted, unsubstantiated and untrue. Any scenario can be made to look attractive but detailed analysis usually shows the hypothesis to be inherently flawed.

Whilst this matter may not be a primary reason for refusal of the appeal, it is of cumulative secondary importance. The Inspector is invited to take this into account in his deliberations as another reason to reject the appeal in its entirety.

- 10.12 The development would also contravene SP1i as it would contribute to climate change with the release of carbon from the unploughed, ancient grassland and the felling of trees. It would also lead to pollution of ancient ditches which feed into Tilden Gill.
- 10.13 Policy SP2 states that the majority of development should take place in Ashford. A windfall development at Limes Land would contravene SP2 as the policy states that windfall development will be permitted where it is consistent with other policies of the ALP. This is not the case, therefore para 7.5.3 in the SoC, *the development fully complies with the adopted spatial strategy enshrined in policy SP2*, is purely a distorted, and self-serving opinion of the developer. Despite Wates' attempts to have the Site included in the ALP, the Planning Inspector rejected their attempts during the examination process.
- 10.14 Policy HOU5a states that the services must be able to absorb the level of development and the day-to-day service provision available. The doctor's surgery has publicly confirmed that they are unable to cope with the number of patients requesting appointments and referrals.
- 10.15 HOU5e states that a windfall site must conserve and enhance the natural environment; KWT has that the proposed development does not do this. HOU5e also states that heritage assets should be preserved; in fact, they would be destroyed leading to **substantial harm**. The proposal would not sit sympathetically within the wider landscape (HOU5f.i) and would not conserve biodiversity interests on site (HOU5f.vi).
- 10.16 LLPG disagrees with para 7.5.53 as the development does not accord with policies ENV1: the proposal **does not** safeguard features of nature conservation interest and should include measures to retain, conserve and enhance habitats, including BAP (Priority) habitats, and networks of ecological interest, including ancient woodland, water features, ditches, dykes and hedgerows, as corridors and stepping stones for wildlife, for the reasons outlined above.
- 10.17 The proposal does not accord with ENV3a as it fails to demonstrate proper regard to the type and composition of wildlife habitats (unimproved grassland and downgraded veteran trees), and proposes to destroy the historic landscape features, ignores the qualities of the site as a landscape character area (LCA23). Where the case hinges on landscape character, the degree of impact is crucial in determining the outcome. In dismissing Wates' appeal for 700 homes in Fleet, Hampshire, in November 2019 (DCS number: 200-008-911), the Secretary of State ruled the effect of the scheme on landscape character would be significant and adverse. Despite the site being not designated or considered a 'valued landscape', he ruled the visual effects of the proposal would be prominent and would unacceptably diffuse the "clear and crisp transition between town and country". Limes Land is designated as a Landscape Character Area and is also part of the National Character Area 22.
- 10.18 The proposal would cause significant adverse effects on the visibility of the night sky or its intrinsically dark landscapes which can be views from the Site. Developers are well aware that residents swiftly install external lighting in garden areas, irrespective of the rules, as

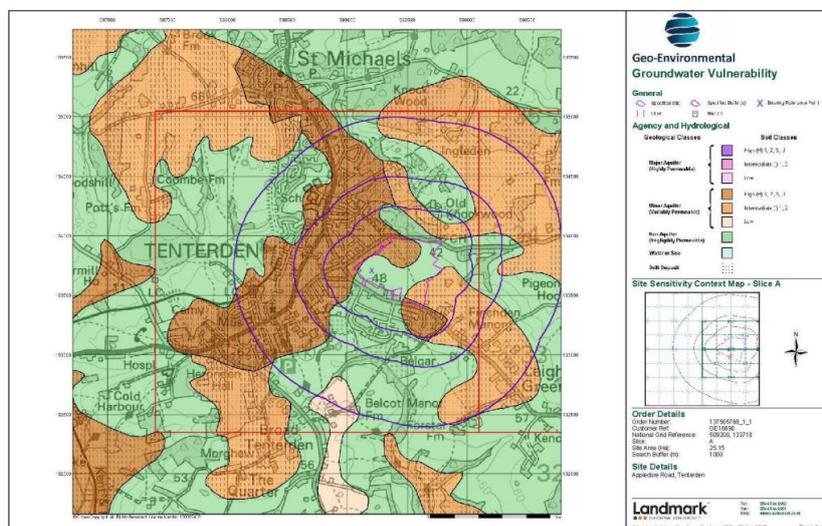
there is little governance to ensure that excessive lighting is kept to a minimum following occupation of properties; this is amply demonstrated at the Tent 1 development.

10.19 The proposal would not protect or enhance the tributaries – ditches and streams which feed into the Tilden Gill, it would adversely impact the views and enjoyment of the AB12 public rights of way and would destroy historic landscape features that help to distinguish the character of the local area of Tenterden and the High Weald, thereby contravening ENV5.

10.20 With the proposed surface water being channelled into 3 pipes which ultimately feed into the drainage system on Appledore Road, it is only a matter of time before more houses experience flooding in this street. The existing drainage system is not fit for purpose, therefore, increasing the levels of surface water through an already failing system can only be described as negligent and would conflict with ENV6. Proposals to make improvements to the surface water drainage system are viewed by residents as ‘quick fixes’ and will not solve the issue that the drainage system frequently experiences hydraulic overload.

10.21 LLPG are also surprised to see on the drainage plan that large soakaway crates are proposed to retain rainwater. It should be noted that use of this system is not recommended on clay, which is predominantly the geology of the development site. The Ground Appraisal Report from the 2019 application confirmed that the site is not suitable for soakaways and alternative surface water disposal methods should be used, however, the Wates masterplan indicates surface water soakaway crates. The report also stated that the presence of shallow groundwater presence is a high probability, therefore contamination of the groundwater supply could take place. The report suggests low rise development due to the soil conditions – there is no mention that the site is suitable for a block of flats.

10.22 The Ground Appraisal reports clearly illustrate that part of the site where development will take place lies within a Groundwater Vulnerability Zone and also sits over a Bedrock Aquifer and Secondary Aquifer (see below). This confirms that much of the Site is not suitable for development otherwise it would conflict with ENV8 and potentially pollute below ground aquifers.



Policy Framework, which seek to ensure that developments are sympathetic to the landscape setting and recognise the countryside's intrinsic character and beauty.

Here, the proposed development of Limes Land would negatively affect the intrinsic ancient character and beauty.

11.2 Planning Appeal APP/A2280/W/19/3223080

In this appeal the Council provided a copy of the Medway Landscape Character Assessment (the LCA). In the LCA the appeal site fell within the Moor Street Farmland area within the North Kent Fruit Belt character area.

Here, Limes Land falls within the Woodchurch Undulating Farmland LCA23 and is also part of the NCA 22.

The Inspector stated that the introduction of a housing estate on the appeal site would be harmful to the existing rural character and appearance of the area changing it from countryside to part of the urban area. It would also be contrary to paragraph 170 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) which indicates that planning decisions should recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

This would also apply to Limes Land, being that it is ancient countryside, predominantly undisturbed.

The Inspector also took account of paragraph 177 of the Framework which indicates that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on the habitat of site.

Development on Limes Land would have a significant effect on the priority habitats and unimproved grassland contained within the site.

11.3 Planning Appeal APP/H1705/W/21/3274922

In Para 30 of this Appeal Decision, Mrs J Wilson states *'the area is not subject to any statutory protection neither is there any particular landscape designation provided in the current development plan. The appeal site does not form part of a 'valued' landscape in the context of Framework paragraph 174 a), **but that is not to say that it is not valued by the local community.** The site lies in the countryside which is valued by local residents and where its intrinsic character and beauty should be recognised in accordance with paragraph 174 b) of the Framework. In this regard I find that the appellants contention that there would be a landscape and visual benefit as a result of the proposal, to be less than credible.'* **[emphasis added].**

Limes Land lies within the Woodchurch Undulating Farmlands LCA23 and is highly valued by residents, so much so, it was voted No 1 site in the Local Green Space assessment for the Tenterden Neighbourhood Plan. Furthermore, paragraph 2.51 of the ALP considers Tenterden to have intrinsic historic character.

Para 33 of this Appeal Decision commented that *'the site would be set in 6 upper and eastern parts of the field which are the highest and most exposed parts of the site. The existing planting on the field boundaries, would not sufficiently mitigate the effect of the built*

form proposed. It would, for these reasons have a significant and irreversible effect on the landscape character’.

Although Wates propose to retain some of the ancient field boundaries on Limes Land, development would cover much of the sloping fields from the ridge down to Appledore Road and LLPG believes that the field boundaries would not mitigate the effect of the built form, especially in fields 1B, F3 and F4 which do not have any hedgerow screening, therefore, the reliance on historic boundaries would not apply here. The whole site would be particularly exposed to residents using the PRow and living adjacent to the site during winter months.

Para 34. found ‘development here would cause significant and harmful change to landscape character’ and in para 38 it states that the development would ‘*fail to recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside as required by paragraph 174b of the Framework to this extent there would be conflict with both the development plan and the Framework to which I attach substantial weight*’. Notably, para 70 confirmed that ‘*development would not affect a landscape designated as ‘valued’ it would nonetheless significantly affect the setting of the settlement harming views across, within and out from the site. As such development of the scale proposed would be materially harmful to the setting of the settlement and to the experience of users of the established PROWs*’.

At Limes Land, the experience of users of the AB12 PRow would be significantly impeded with views being obstructed both east and west at the lower section, together with views being obstructed to the west at along the ridge. Furthermore, if the AB70 is formally adopted, the route would be decimated by development and views will be thwarted by houses and flats.

12.0 Conclusions

- These representations highlight:
 - the **unequivocal substantial harm** that will occur if the development takes place on the Site, and
 - together with the many objections submitted by LLPG, residents and other stakeholders, the representations highlight the **numerous discrepancies, errors, and contradictions within the SoC and purported supporting evidence**.
- Wates Developments has chosen to saturate not only the local planning authority (LPA), but also the residents of Tenterden, with a prohibitive number of repetitive, lengthy reports, which are filled with self-serving conclusions not borne out by the fact put forward, and which often contradict each other. LLPG considers that the weight of documentation produced is likely to have been a deliberate ploy to overwhelm both the LPA and residents.
- The chaotic approach to report writing has caused confusion and has created a great deal of additional work on the part of those wishing to analyse and understand the

evidence put forward. This could have been avoided had the reports been succinct and accurate, as one might reasonably expect of professional experts.

- The initial impression of the documents is that they appear comprehensive, with logical conclusions. However, it is only when the individual reports are analysed in detail, and “fact-checked”, that significant flaws begin to emerge. For example, material data is missing within the ecological reports, which in turn distorts the baseline calculations, leading to the momentous conclusion that the development would result in biodiversity net gain, when it is clear that upon consideration of the correct facts the development will lead **to a catastrophic, and irreplaceable, loss of biodiversity.**
- Ancient and veteran trees will be put at risk, conflicting with the NPPF and the ALP because inadequate RPA’s have been afforded to allow for more infrastructure, development and football pitches. Wates Developments are deliberately ignoring the minimum RPA guidance as defined by the British Standard.
- It has been established that untold amounts of carbon will be released from the ancient grassland if development is permitted, thereby contributing to climate change. Wates Developments appear to have glossed over this issue.
- Increased flood risk will result as the development will stretch an already overloaded drainage system.
- Historic landscape features will be destroyed, thereby denying future generations the opportunity to experience a truly special and ancient site on their doorstep.
- The residents of Tenterden, together with LLPG, question whether it is justifiable for planning permission to be granted when the proposal is *not sustainable or deliverable, and will lead to substantial harm?* Currently, hundreds of dwellings are being built in Tenterden, with hundreds more allocated in the Ashford Local Plan. The Ashford Local Plan clearly states that the majority of development should take place in Ashford as it is a sustainable location, yet this is being ignored by Wates Developments.