

The Cranbrook Plan: Examination

Matter 18 Town Centre Policies

Statement on Behalf of East Devon New Community
partners

Matter 18: Town Centre Policies

Issue 32: Is the Cranbrook Town Centre Policy CB22 Justified and effective?

Provision of facilities

Q217. Is Policy CB 22 consistent with National Policy?

1. In its support for a town centre where a mix of uses and activities is encouraged then Policy CB22 is consistent with national policy. The question however is posed in relation to the delivery of facilities, and in this regard the proposals for the town centre in policies CB22 and CB23 are not consistent with national policy for the reasons set out below – nor justified or effective. Before setting down those reasons and addressing the remaining questions set out by the Inspector it is relevant and important to set out the context for the town centre proposals.
2. First and foremost, Cranbrook was never conceived as a self-contained town. Cranbrook is located very close to Exeter, which provides a broad range of high order services and employment including health and leisure. It was planned such that it must have a railway station with ready access to such facilities. That station has been provided. Moreover the rapid growth of employment on the east side of Exeter including the Met Office, the Airport and the planned developments at Skypark (40 hectares), Science Park (25 plus hectares) was the catalyst for Cranbrook's location – providing housing in a sustainable manner in a growth point experiencing and planning a rapid expansion of jobs. The employment provision has since this time been bolstered by the provision of the Regional Distribution Centre and further planned employment on the old rail freight site, opposite Skypark, and less than 1km from Bluehayes.
3. The following references from the Councils Economic Development Strategy for Cranbrook – part of the Cranbrook DPD evidence base - capture the point:
 - *“Much of its [Cranbrook's] working population will find employment elsewhere in the Growth Point, or in Exeter” (page 5)*
 - *“Unlike many new towns, Cranbrook sits next to some major employment sites where there are extensive employment opportunities for people across the Growth Point and beyond. Two sites are under construction just outside the boundaries of the town:
 - *Skypark is a new commercial and industrial centre intended to be a locally and regionally significant employment location which could provide up to 6,500 jobs when completed. So far, it has provided bespoke premises, the Ambulance Special Operations Centre building and E.On Energy Centre (the hub for the district heating network into Cranbrook and Skypark) are open, and the new depot building express delivery service DPD Logistics is under construction.*
 - *Exeter Science Park is a major new development for innovation and technology businesses, with the Met Office (which is soon to gain a new supercomputer) and the University of Exeter among the partners behind its development. The Science Park Centre, a managed workspace, is under construction, and Eagle House (the first building on the park) is fully occupied by Blur Group, a global technology company” (page 6)**
 - *“The new town at Cranbrook is a core component of the Exeter and East Devon Growth Point. The Growth Point also includes strategic urban extensions for Exeter, strategic employment sites, city centre regeneration, and other new housing sites, along with*

higher and further education investment. These developments have been supported by large-scale infrastructure projects including energy, transport, education and community facilities. The projects making up the Growth Point include developments in East Devon, Exeter and Teignbridge. (Further details are given in Annex 1.) The Growth Point programme is expected to deliver around 20,000 new homes and over 25,000 jobs in the period up to 2026”.

4. Cranbrook was not, is not, and was never intended to be a self-contained or self-sustainable town. Its inherent sustainability comes from its relationship with the growth point not its internal dynamic.
5. When the planning application that was subsequently approved for what is now Cranbrook, was submitted in 2003, a substantial town centre was designed of some 12.5 hectares. This was approved in 2010. The town centre was designed flexibly with the description of development that is conditioned in the approval referring to a range of uses. The overall description of development was “*a new community comprising up to 2900 residential dwellings; a town centre and a local centre including retail, residential and employment;...*” plus other uses landscaping, infrastructure etc. IE the Town Centre was approved as including residential within its 12.5 hectares – with no restrictions on the form that such residential use should take place.
6. That the town centre was to include residential development was reiterated in the detailed Description of Development also conditioned. It was never intended to exclude residential development. On the contrary, it is common ground, and that some 200 dwellings would be accommodated within the town centre. Indeed, it is not possible to accommodate all the approved 3500 dwellings at Cranbrook outside of the town centre.
7. The policy basis for Cranbrook upon which the application was approved was the Devon Structure Plan 1999 and the East Devon Local Plan 2005. Both anticipated that Cranbrook would be expanded beyond that planned for at that time and as such the master planning of the town anticipated substantial expansion beyond 3500 including in the town centre.
8. Also there was a very different market at that point in time, with the expectation that large retail format foodstores (5000sqm plus) would wish to locate in the town. For flexibility a significant element of office space was also permitted and marketed. The section 106 agreement made available some 1.7 hectares of land to meet the identified community needs in the town – health and well being hub, town council offices, library, children’s centre, youth centre etc. (but not including leisure centre).
9. EDNCp have worked hard to deliver elements of the town centre – putting in the High Street infrastructure and making available serviced parcels of land. A public house has been secured. The public service agencies have been working up proposals for the community elements which has been given new impetus in particular by the decision of the County Council in November 2019 to press ahead with a multipurpose public sector community building in the town centre (see Appendix A). At this point in time some 10.5 hectares of serviced parcels of land remain (of which some 1.7 are required for the agreed section 106 community uses).
10. EDNCP have worked with variety of potential partners and occupiers to deliver the commercial elements of the town centre. In particular EDNCp have and are presently working with Henry Davidson Developments (HDD) which are a retail lead mixed use development specialist, established in 1992. The HDD team are arguably the UK’s leading developer of District Town

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- Centres within new residential urban extensions, having delivered over 85 projects of varying sizes. A representative will be available on the Town Centre day of the examination to assist the Inspector as appropriate.
11. HDD's knowledge of the scale and quantum of retail required to make these schemes work is unrivalled as they are active in the sector and at the forefront of discussions with occupiers. Their advice in respect of the Town Centre is set out in Appendix B.
 12. In terms of general commercial trends much has changed since the original plans for Cranbrook Town Centre were conceived and approved.
 13. The high street is under pressure to reflect changing shopping patterns and habits and over the past three or four years as the residential elements of the large urban developments throughout the country reach a critical mass. HDD and their partners have been involved in re-shaping the Town Centres in these locations to make them fit for purpose and in particular to take into account the changing retail landscape.
 14. The BDO Town Centre Report entitled "Adapt, Embrace and Innovate. Looking for Opportunities in the Turmoil" dated December 2019 states: -

"Town centre sales continue to decline as consumers shift their spend to other locations like retail parks and supermalls. These locations offer a wider product choice, free parking and a better all-round experience, with food service and leisure being a key focus alongside retail. However, despite being on a downward trajectory, essential product sectors, namely food & grocery, and health & beauty will help prop up the location."
 15. Indeed in the Exeter context, only last week a major retail park was approved on the eastern edge of Exeter (the Moor Exchange scheme) to further undermine the Cranbrook town centre.
 16. It is pretty much universally accepted that the quantum of retail in town centres needs to be reduced but it is important that the town centre uses are concentrated to ensure vibrancy, which in turn will create a safe environment and a sense of place. The "race for space" in the supermarket sector (evident at the time of Cranbrook's application and approval) is over and supermarkets have a much smaller niche offer that reflects the new urban needs, the product range is significantly reduced from the big superstores of the past but is however still wide and varied enough to offer real choice.
 17. Town and district centres in large sustainable urban developments (for instance Northstowe, The Wixams) are being revised to reflect the changed trends typically:
 - Being amended to reduce the retail offer and to concentrate its location to establish critical mass;
 - Seek to include a food operator where one can be found to create a catalyst and draw for the centre
 - Limit the extent of B1 space in the absence of specific end users of public monies
 - Increase activity through the provision of additional residential development; and
 - The introduction of other potential uses such as creches or care or commercial leisure uses
 18. However, within this environment, there is now extremely encouraging news regarding the delivery of town centre uses at Cranbrook.
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19. HDD have been involved in Cranbrook Town Centre, behind the scenes since 2009 and over this time the retail landscape has changed significantly. HDD have marketed the site extensively over this period but in the last 18 months HDD and EDNCp been able to obtain some traction.
 20. Pre-application discussions are progressing positively with the District Council regarding a scheme and occupier that would deliver a retail store of some 2,500 sq metres and an associated parade of shops along the High Street that is already laid out and with ready access to existing public transport, creche and public space. The proposals would be accommodated in parcel 4a with high street shops fronting the high street along the northern edge of the parcel (see plan of parcel at Appendix C) Critically, the scheme is presaged on the basis of the growth of the town to some 7800 dwellings.
 21. Working in partnership, HDD acting as developer have been able to secure a quality tenant and operator for Cranbrook (Morrisons) on the back of the potential of the Southern, Eastern and Western expansion areas adding to the potential customer base of the consented scheme. Only as the prospect of the expansion areas comes closer has interest in a retail development emerged.
 22. The scheme proposed:
 - a) has the Supermarket Operator's Board Approval in a climate where none of the major retailers are acquiring;
 - b) will have customer choice with circa 15,000 products range compared to a typical base offer of 2,000 – 3,000 products. A full weekly shop would be carried out in store which is sustainable;
 - c) a store size of some 25,000 sq.ft. GIA, 14,800 retail sales with circa 160 parking spaces;
 - d) the design and layout will be such that it will relate to the local shops and provide linked trips and act as a catalyst;
 - e) the number of jobs delivered will be circa 115 (60 Full Time equivalent) jobs.
 23. The scheme promotes an interrelationship between the food store and the local shops also to be provided and works well alongside the provision of public space/a square in the town centre. The local shops and foodstore are accessible by the nearby bus route that is along the High Street that passes through the heart of Cranbrook and its town centre. The first of the new concept stores has just opened in Bolsover, the aim of the community store is to fully cater for the local resident needs and encourage less travelling to shops elsewhere.
 24. Detailed technical work has been undertaken to resolve the topography and engineering aspects relating to the provision of the schemes.
 25. It is presently expected by EDDC and EDNCp that such a scheme would (Subject to Planning) be open in the third quarter of 2021.
 26. Even so, with this extremely positive development, as is evident from the attached plan that the original scale of the town centre (notwithstanding that it was to include discrete residential parcels) is now unrealistic.
 27. Ultimately it is HDDs opinion that Cranbrook Town Centre that the capacity to be accommodated in the town centre would be broadly of the following scale – allowing for the expansion areas:
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TOTAL		PROPOSED PHASE 1	COMMENTS
• Supermarket	2,475m ²	2,475m ²	
• Shops / Restaurants	1,500m ²	500m ² – 600m ²	• Situated in a corner of the North of TC4A fronting the MLR and TC2.
• Leisure	600m ²	Market led	
• Offices / Business	1,000m ²		• Situated areas TC2, TC4A and TC4B • This assumes no public sector demand
• Civic Buildings			• Library, Town Council, etc
• Nursery	600m ²	600m ²	
• Care	66 Bed	If market demand exists	
• Public House		Already exists	

28. This does not mean that additional demand could not or would not be accommodated. It does mean that quantum of retail in the town centre as originally envisaged is not sustainable, this is not an economic factor but is due to the seismic shift in consumers spending habits. A flexible and less restrictive policy in CB22 and CB23 is required.

Leisure Centre

29. Whilst it is open to discussions regarding the purchase of land commercially for such a purpose EDNCp do not believe that a requirement for EDNCp to provide is consistent with national policy. No evidence is presented to demonstrate that this is likely to be achievable.
30. Planning Practice Guidance in relation to Viability assessment is clear regarding the relationship between plan policies and the price paid for land that is to be developed. Paragraph 001 states: *“Plans should set out the contributions expected from development. This should include setting out the levels and types of affordable housing provision required, along with other infrastructure (such as that needed for education, health, transport, flood and water management, green and digital infrastructure)... Policy requirements should be clear so that they can be accurately accounted for in the price paid for land”*.
31. Clearly where land has been purchased on the basis of policy and Local Planning Authority requirements at the time, there is no opportunity to revisit the price of land to reflect subsequent more costly policy requirements. Land was purchased a number of years ago to deliver the first 3500 homes on this basis. There is no opportunity to apply new policies to that land.
32. The delivery of Cranbrook was based on a clear understanding of what was required in the Town Centre. The mix of uses was set out in the original planning approval and description of development. The approved uses included commercial, community uses and explicitly residential uses in the town centre. No constraints or limitations were placed on the nature of such residential use. No requirement was set out for a Leisure centre which will amount to a very substantial investment (a total cost of some £8m in the IDP of which half is anticipated from section 106 contributions). Not mentioned in the IDP is the potential land requirement.

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33. In relation to the cost of the Leisure Centre - the cost of the building - evidence has been submitted by EDNCp in respect of policy CB6 and CB11 clearly showing that the policies of the DPD are unaffordable. The potential contribution from development in the IDP is therefore not a realistic proposition.
34. Para 4.48 of the text in suggesting that the vision for the town centre should be refreshed should be explicit in recognising that changes that affect its deliverability and changes to the basis upon which the Town Centre was approved and valued - may simply be encouraged or will have to be achieved with appropriate external capital injections including for any additional land requirement for non-residential uses (over and above the community requirements in the extant section 106 agreement). Equally such limitations must apply to any new applications relating to the defined town centre area.

Q218. How will the expansion areas facilitate the delivery of the town centre which is already consented given the text in paragraph 4.48 of the plan?

35. Please see discussion set out above, it is only with the numbers and increasing prospect of the Cranbrook expansion areas that interest has been secured and is being progressed in the Town Centre - the commitment having been made to expand Cranbrook to 7,800 dwellings in the East Devon Local Plan. **The expansion areas are imperative to securing a mix of uses in Cranbrook.**

Q219. Is the approach to A3 class uses in the Town Centre consistent with National Policy?

36. No further comment.

Q220. How is the approach to A3 class uses consistent with the Policy CB1 in relation to Health and Well-being?

37. No further comment.

Q221. What level of confidence is there that the town centre will be delivered and how would this impact on the timing, delivery or phasing of the four expansion areas in the plan?

38. In relation to retail and related elements, a high degree of confidence can be attached to the delivery of the aspects of the town centre that EDNCp and HDD are now proposing as set out above.
39. A high degree of confidence may also be attached to the provision of the community facilities to be provided in the town centre – not least with the County Council actively and vigorously progressing its proposals for a service and community building.
40. Regular dialogue with all parties including Cranbrook Town Council will also result in the progression of the Town Council offices and EDDC is considering how funding – potentially from Enterprise zone sources – may allow an expanded range of facilities in the town centre including small scale employment opportunities.
41. What is clear is that the scale of provision that might have been envisaged some 10 years ago will not be delivered in the town centre but that this has been allowed for in the flexible

construction of policy and permission to date to plan for activity also generated by residential development.

Q222. What is the delivery mechanism for the town centre and market square and how will the core infrastructure be provided - particularly given multiple land ownerships?

42. It is not clear what multiple land ownership refers to. The town centre as defined in the Cranbrook DPD was purchased in its entirety by EDNCp – other than the land sold to the developer the public house. The Town Centre therefore is in single ownership and thus deliverable.
43. The delivery mechanisms are set out above. Specifically, EDNCP is partnering with HDD to secure the delivery of the optimum retail and mixed-use scheme.
44. EDNCp will make available land to the County Council and Town Council and EDDC to deliver those aspects of the town centre set out in the approved section 106 agreement. Remaining parcels of land will be made available on commercial terms to such parties for other facilities, or to other operators for instance care home provider. One possibility being progressed is an agreement with a provider to provide a “construction training centre” in the town centre. Parcels for residential development will also make available parcels of land for residential development in accordance with the existing permission and policy expectation.

Q223. What evidence is available to justify the requirement for residential uses above commercial uses in the Town Centre? How will the requirement for access to shared and private outdoor space be achieved in this regard?

45. The advice of HDD is that the number of apartments that can realistically be delivered over retail uses is very limited as they are not profitable and not that desirable unless built as starter homes/affordable. This is particularly the case given the residential values that have been obtained at Cranbrook and was evident when seeking to secure residential uses above the units in the existing neighbourhood centre. As well as value, the other issue with open market flats above retail in this scale is that some mortgage companies will not lend when there is the possibility of A2/A5 below residential.
46. Policy CB23 is unsound in appearing to place undue expectations of residential uses on upper floors in all instances. The extent to which residential uses above other commercial uses is possible is not evidenced in the DPD albeit where demonstrably viable (but only then) then this is likely to be supported. The evidence of Cranbrook to date - including in the Younghayes centre is that it cannot be assumed that this is the case in all circumstances – and in all likelihood will be limited.
47. Insistence upon this outcome is likely to result in substantial delay in the completion of the town centre.
48. Equally, the reference in CB 23 to residential development being of a minimum density (of not less than 55-60 dph) is unclear in terms of whether it applies to residential uses on other floors or if it involves residential uses on ground floors in discrete parcels. In any event the policy is not justified as the feasibility and viability of densities in this location is not proven or justified. It is therefore unnecessarily and unjustifiably prescriptive in the densities that it sets. A modification is required.

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49. In any event the policy is not justified as the feasibility and viability of densities in this location is not proven. Demand for development at this density does not exist on this scale and development at this density would:
- Create additional parking issues in the town centre;
 - Result in the delay of acceptable development in the town centre;
 - Contradict expectations of residential development in the town centre to date;
 - Undermine viability of the parcels
50. Paragraph three is not justified or effective. For the reasons set out previously the existing planning context is that significant residential development at ground floor level is a commitment and will contribute positively to the Town Centre. Two parcels have already been developed. It is not a matter that it is necessary to demonstrate land on the periphery of the town centre can't be developed for other uses. It is a matter of delivering the existing strategy and commitments which were designed to contribute positively to the activity of the town centre at all times of the day.
51. It must not be the function of the DPD to recast policy and commitments that were the foundation of the purchase of the site and the development of the site. The third para of the policy will need to be recast accordingly.

Q224. What is the delivery mechanism for the neighbourhood centre (in addition to the town centre) given the low take up of premises in phase 1? How might this impact on the proposals?

52. For discussion at examination.

Q225. Modular units are referred to; around what core would these operate and how will the 'meanwhile' or temporary uses referred to in the Consultation Statement and Policy CB22 be delivered?

53. For discussion at examination.

Q226. How will the town centre public space be maintained and funded in the long-term?

54. Is matter of discussion between EDNCP and Town Council and District Council.

Q227. How will the proposed market be operated and maintained in the future? What is the sustainability of the proposal?

55. No evidence has been presented by EDDC as to the deliverability of the proposed market.

Q228. Would any of the new residential development be sustainable without the delivery of the town centre if so, what amount?

56. No evidence has been presented by EDDC as to the deliverability of the proposed market.

Q229. How will the Council achieve the delivery of the Town Centre prior to any new phases of development?

57. The mechanisms for the delivery of the town centre are described above. The delivery of the Town centre is actively being progressed – and on the fundamental basis that expansion will take place. The question is therefore both academic and counter productive. Delay in expansion risks delay in the delivery of the town centre. No delay in any new phase of development is justified prior to progress on the Town Centre.
58. Also relevant to this question is the context set out above. Cranbrook is not a standalone town. Its inherent sustainability is unchallenged and depends upon its role within the Exeter Growth Point area and its relationship to surrounding developments. This is fundamental.
59. Equally the requirement for all residential uses to be capable of adaptation to commercial uses is wholly unevidenced given the history and scale of the town centre. Neither the cost or the purpose (on anywhere near that scale is justified).

Q230. How will the space required for SUDS serving the town centre be delivered?

60. Just in the same way that EDNCP have provided the highway infrastructure in the town centre, the drainage system has been designed and constructed already to accommodate drainage from the whole of the town centre. The drainage attenuation features are in place.

Q231. How will the parking requirement for the significant uplift in the average density be delivered in relation to the Town Centre Uses?

61. The incompatibility of the residential densities given the extensive car parking requirements of other town centre uses anticipated by EDDC has not been considered. The impact in terms of place making is extremely negative.

Q232. How will the required improvements to the rail crossing be achieved given that some traffic will be drawn from the north of the rail line?

62. EDNCP are not aware of any requirement for improvements to the rail crossing.
63. No further improvements are justified or required as is clearly set out in the comprehensive TA that accompanies the present planning applications – in particular the most recent application for Bluehayes. There is no significant increase in traffic.

Additional Question:

AQ32. Are any Main Modifications proposed in relation to Issue 32?

64. In relation to Policy CB22, for all the reasons set out above then it is necessary to draw no distinction between residential uses on upper floors in para 2 - reference needs to be made only to residential uses - whether on upper floors or not.
65. For the reasons set out above the reference to the Leisure Centre should be deleted list of facilities for which provision should be made and appropriate located or the means by which the land requirement purchase is to be realised.
66. In relation to Policy CB23 the policy should be amended as follows to be sound.
- replace specifically with includes in line 1;

- replace bullet one without reference to an unevidenced and unjustified 55-60 dph requirement;
- delete first two lines of para 3 Where it...some limited”
- start next sentence with higher not high.
- delete reference as not effective and deliverable to residential uses being capable of conversion at ground floor use – ie adaptability

SCHEDULE OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: REPORT TO DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL 9 OCTOBER 2019

APPENDIX B: CORRESPONDENCE FROM HDD 8 JANUARY 2020

APPENDIX C: PLAN OF TOWN CENTRE PARCELS



8th January 2020

FOR THE ATTENTION OF

NICK FREER – CHAIRMAN

David Lock Associates Limited
50 North Thirteenth Street
Central Milton Keynes
MK9 3BP

Dear Nick

Cranbrook Town Centre Proposals

Henry Davidson Developments (HDD) are a retail lead mixed use specialist, established in 1992.

The HDD team are arguably the UK's leading developer of Local and District Town Centres within new residential urban extensions, having delivered over 85 projects of varying sizes.

Our knowledge of the scale and quantum of retail required to make these schemes work is unrivalled as we are active in the sector and at the forefront of discussions with occupiers.

The high street is under pressure to reflect changing shopping patterns and habits and over the past three or four years as the residential elements of the large urban extensions throughout the country reach a critical mass, HDD and our partners have been involved in re-shaping the Town Centres in these locations to make them fit for purpose and in particular to take into account the changing retail landscape.

The BDO Town Centre Report entitled "Adapt, Embrace and Innovate. Looking for Opportunities in the Turmoil" dated December 2019 states: -

"Town centre sales continue to decline as consumers shift their spend to other locations like retail parks and supermalls. These locations offer a wider product choice, free parking and a better all-round experience, with food service and leisure being a key focus alongside retail. However, despite being on a downward trajectory, essential product sectors, namely food & grocery, and health & beauty will help prop up the location."

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HDD have been involved in a number of similar projects to Cranbrook, some where the older existing consent has been changed and some where the consent is newer but reflects current thoughts, by way of an example: -

The Wixams, Bedford

Original Consent

Up to 15,540m² A1
Up to 500m² A2
Up to 500m² A3/A4/A5

Current Proposal

2,815m² including Public House

The scheme has 4,500 consented dwellings but has allocations to increase to 6,000.

Stanton Cross, Wellingborough

Supermarket 1,000m ²	1,000m ²
Shop Units x 7	875m ²
Food and Drink x 2	385m ²
Public House / Restaurant	660m ²
Total	2,920m²

The scheme has 3,650 consented units with potential to increase to 4,000.

In addition to the above we are working on other projects at Peacehaven in Sussex, the L&Q scheme at Watling Street, Milton Keynes, again where the extent of housing and population is significant and the quantum of retail is being reduced to around 2,500 – 3,000m².

We have recently worked on town centre schemes in Lichfield and Newcastle-under-Lyme both of which have failed to deliver despite being substantially reduced compared to the various local plans and town centre development briefs, both these schemes are being re-master planned with further significant reductions in the retail quantum and the introduction of other uses such as: -

- Community Centres
- Public Square Buildings
- Nurseries
- Leisure
- Care and
- Residential

It is pretty much universally accepted that the quantum of retail in town centres needs to be reduced but it is important that the town centre uses are concentrated to ensure vibrancy, which in turn will create a safe environment and a sense of place.

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In all cases, the town centres in urban extensions require an anchor/catalyst to ensure that there is footfall to support the smaller ribbon shops, in particular, a branded Supermarket.

The “race for space” in the supermarket sector is over and supermarkets have a much smaller niche offer that reflects the new conurbation needs, the product range is significantly reduced from the big superstores of the past but is however still wide and varied enough to offer real choice. As a consequence, the relationship between the smaller ribbon shops and supermarket is a healthy one.

HDD have been involved in Cranbrook Town Centre, behind the scenes since 2009 and over this time the retail landscape has changed significantly.

HDD have marketed the site extensively over this period and only in the last 18 months have we been able to obtain any traction.

The Local Authority at Cranbrook has looked at proposals for a revised town centre solution, on a “small grain” basis which involves high density residential with ground floor retail spread over the main nodes throughout the layout, so no critical mass to the retail. The scheme makes no provision for parking or servicing and in our opinion it will be extremely difficult to secure occupiers for such a scheme. There will be significant levels of void units which ultimately will lead to boarded up shops, a lack of sense of place and potentially anti-social behaviour.

It is our opinion that Cranbrook Town Centre should include: -

TOTAL		PROPOSED PHASE 1	COMMENTS
• Supermarket	2,475m ²	2,475m ²	
• Shops / Restaurants	1,500m ²	500m ² – 600m ²	• Situated in a corner of the North of TC4A fronting the MLR and TC2.
• Leisure	600m ²	Market led	
• Offices / Business	1,000m ²		• Situated areas TC2, TC4A and TC4B • This assumes no public sector demand
• Civic Buildings	As many as possible	As many as possible	• Library, Town Council, etc
• Nursery	600m ²	600m ²	
• Care	66 Bed	If market demand exists	
• Public House		Already exists	

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We also strongly believe that the local shops and supermarket should work together around the Main Link Road (MLR), allowing easy access to public transport.

Working in partnership, HDD acting as developer, have been able to secure a quality tenant and operator for Cranbrook in Morrisons.

Over the last few years Morrisons have been working hard to create their “Neighbourhood Store” which is specifically designed as a community store to respond to new residential conurbations such as Cranbrook. The first of the new concept stores has just opened in Bolsover, Derbyshire, the aim of the community store is to fully cater for the local residents needs and to encourage less travelling to shops elsewhere.

HDD have worked very closely with Morrisons over the last 18 months looking at projections for house growth including the potential Southern, Eastern and Western expansion areas and indeed all of the new residential development in East Devon and of course the existing populations which are currently unrepresented in terms of retail, the outcome of this process is broadly as follows: -

- The scheme proposed has the Supermarket Operator’s Board Approval in a climate where none of the major retailers are acquiring.
- The offer is unique and will have customer choice with circa 15,000 products range compared to a Discounter offering 2,000 – 3,000 products. A full weekly shop can be carried out in store which is sustainable.
- The new neighbourhood format is a product of extensive research and is a fixed entity, in that the store dimensions, car park requirements in terms of size of spaces, location of spaces and numbers required are fixed.
- Size of store is 24,619 sqft GIA, 14,800 retail sales with circa 160 parking spaces.
- The design and layout will be such that it will relate to the local shops and provide linked trips and act as a catalyst.
- The Supermarket Operator’s customers will have easy access to the car park.
- The number of jobs delivered will be **circa 115/120 (60 Full Time equivalent)**.
- **Subject to planning, opening Q3 2021.**

Continued/...

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To conclude it is our belief: -

- The quantum of retail in the town centre as originally envisaged is not sustainable, this is not an economic factor but is due to the seismic shift in consumers spending habits.
- A supermarket/grocery offer is key to creating a sustainable town centre and is deliverable now along with 500m² of local shops.
- The location and design will allow for phasing and the introduction of other town centre uses.
- The technical and topographical issues can be resolved by the use of relatively inexpensive cut and fill.
- The supermarket is of an appropriate size (not too big or too small) with an excellent product range which will support local shops creating footfall to ensure viability of the small shops.
- The supermarket operator has Board Approval.
- The local shops will only be deliverable early with the supermarket as a catalyst.

I do hope that the foregoing is informative, should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind Regards

Yours sincerely

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APPENDIX A: REPORT TO DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL 9 OCTOBER 2019

Construction of a community facilities building in Cranbrook Town Centre providing flexible space for County Council services including children's, youth and libraries

Report of the Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment

Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Cabinet (and confirmation under the provisions of the Council's Constitution) before taking effect.

Recommendation: That Cabinet:

- (a) approves this proposal to deliver a community facilities building in Cranbrook town centre providing flexible space for County Council services including children's, youth, adults and libraries;**
- (b) empowers officers to renegotiate the existing planning agreement to allow the provision of an integrated building at an earlier timescale;**
- (c) delegates authority to officers to seek sources of funding to bridge any funding gap;**
- (d) agrees to the County Council's membership of the new Cranbrook Strategic Delivery Board attended by the Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills and one of the two Local Members.**

1. Summary

This report seeks support to progress plans for a community facilities building in Cranbrook town centre providing flexible space for County Council services including space for children's, youth, adult and libraries.

2. Background/Introduction

Construction of the new town of Cranbrook in East Devon began in 2011. The town now has approximately 2,000 houses and over 4,000 residents. It is expected that the town will grow to about 7,750 homes with over 18,000 residents by 2031, which is about the same size as Barnstaple. Community facilities provided so far at Cranbrook include a primary school, an all-through school, a multi-purpose building with GP surgery space and a rail station. To date the only building that has been provided in the town centre is a public house.

Cranbrook has been delivered through a commercial delivery model with no public sector control of land. This model is dependent on a legally binding planning agreement (section 106 agreement) attached to the existing planning permissions for the original 3,487 houses that has established trigger points for the delivery of facilities with financial payments and delivery of land. In the case of social infrastructure for which the County Council is responsible, the planning agreement requires the developers to provide specified areas of space for children's, youth and library facilities.

A trigger point for the provision of the children's centre facilities was recently met and this Council has served notice on the Cranbrook consortium of developers to make direct provision of the children's centre facilities. This notice requires the developers to agree the specification, construct and complete the facilities no later than 10 June 2021 or upon the occupation of 2500 dwellings (whichever is later) unless otherwise agreed by the Council.

The planning agreement also requires the provision of town council offices in the town centre by the same deadline as for the youth and library facilities (prior to first occupation of the 3450th dwelling at Cranbrook) and five retail units by occupation of 2000 dwellings. Other facilities such as additional town centre shops and a food store are commercially led and the expectation is that these would be delivered by the private sector with no fixed timescales.

It is expected that additional infrastructure would be provided to facilitate the expansion of the town to 7,750 houses as allocated in the Cranbrook Plan Development Plan Document (DPD, Submission Draft February 2019). This infrastructure would be funded in part by developer planning contributions secured by planning agreements attached to the expansion area planning applications. It is anticipated that this would deliver other town centre facilities including a health and wellbeing hub and a leisure centre.

The process of coordinating infrastructure and service requirements which are future-proofed is very complex and so far there has been no resolution of what form key facilities should take and how they should be delivered. The Council considers it essential that important infrastructure is provided in an appropriately phased and timely manner due to the unusually high proportion of families with young children and need for additional support. Given the limited infrastructure currently in place, the County Council and other agencies face significant challenges in supporting the health and social needs of the growing number of residents. The early delivery of a community facility would allow provision of critical County Council services to support the growing population, in line with the Council's aim to promote resilient, healthy, prosperous, connected and safe communities. It is likely to be the first significant building within the town centre and would be a catalyst for further commercial and civic development.

A Cranbrook Strategic Delivery Board is due to be established in Autumn 2019 subject to approval by the councils involved. This advisory board would comprise members of the County Council, East Devon District Council and Cranbrook Town Council to ensure that the three tiers of local government can speak with one voice and to provide oversight. The County Council would be represented by the Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills and one of the two Local Members. The board would meet quarterly and focus on coordinating the delivery of future assets and services for Cranbrook. East Devon District Council endorsed involvement in this board and its Cabinet meeting on 4th September 2019.

3. Proposal

Commensurate with the size and importance of Cranbrook, it is proposed that there should be a multi-purpose integrated building to meet the functions of the County Council and able to adapt to future changes in service provision. This would provide flexible space for children's, youth, adult and library services with potential use for public health and highways services and council working space. In particular, the Council's Public Health Nursing Service would share the children's centre space allowing integrated working. The facility would support locality-based delivery of multi-agency services at Cranbrook. It is expected that there would be spaces that can be used/hired to other organisations. It could be delivered as a stand-alone County Council owned and operated building or combined with other civic facilities such as the Town Council offices. Subject to funding to enable early delivery, the aim would be to complete the building within the next 2 years.

The Council will work with partners to deliver these town centre facilities, including the district and town councils and the developers. It may be necessary for the Council to seek renegotiation of the existing planning agreement with the developers to provide financial contributions for the library, youth and children's facilities instead of the developers building the facilities themselves. The Council would also seek transfer of necessary land to the County Council from the developers earlier than the timescales specified in the agreement.

The triggers in the planning agreement require the delivery of children's centre facilities by June 2021 (at the 2500th dwelling at Cranbrook) and the library and youth facilities in approximately 2025 (by first occupation of the 3450th dwelling at Cranbrook). The delivery of an integrated building within the next few years would therefore involve early delivery of the library and youth facilities. It is expected that payment of contributions for the library, youth and children's facilities by the developers would not cover the full cost of early delivery of this space. Additional forward funding would therefore be required to fill the shortfall between the money available from the agreement (planning contributions) and the cost of the building. The Council would expect to manage the design and delivery of a stand-alone County Council building.

4. Consultations/Representations/Technical Data

Public consultation has been undertaken at appropriate stages of preparing the Cranbrook Plan, which has now been submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for examination. The draft plan includes policies for the town centre and infrastructure delivery. The planning agreement (that provides existing developer contributions for the library, youth and children's centre facilities) was attached to planning applications which were subject to the statutory publicity and consultation processes.

There are ongoing discussions about this scheme with the Council's Local Members. Formal public consultation would be undertaken as part of the statutory procedures for determining the planning application for this new building.

5. Financial Considerations

The Council retains ambitious requirements for facilities fit for purpose for children's, youth, adult and library services. It remains committed to these services and buildings able to facilitate this work as a means of improving wellbeing and health across the local community and providing space to bring people together to learn, create and connect. Whilst work will be needed to ensure requirements for separate services are understood and accommodated within an integrated building, additional cross community and cross generational opportunities will also be made possible. The Council would seek partnerships with a range of organisations to develop these facilities and services within.

Given this opportunity to enhance the public realm in Cranbrook, and with it to improve community wellbeing and relations, the Council will seek a range of capital funding from local and national partners to accelerate the delivery of the facilities in advance of existing trigger points. As initial feasibility and design work has not yet been undertaken, the estimated cost of the new building is unknown. The funding gap between this and the money available from the existing planning agreement will not be known until this is renegotiated with the developers. As indicated above, approval is sought to seek sources of funding to address any shortfall.

6. Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change)

The development would be subject to full environmental analysis as part of the design and planning application process. The provision of a community facilities building within the town centre is considered to minimise the environmental impact of service provision at Cranbrook. A single integrated building would reduce carbon emissions and use of natural resources compared with provision of individual buildings. The building would be designed to appropriate environmental standards to meet the Climate Emergency agenda. Connection to the existing district heating system would allow the building's heating to be decarbonised when the fuel source switches away from gas.

Location of the building within the town centre on a bus route would maximise accessibility and allow users to travel by non-car modes, thereby minimising carbon emissions. The socio-economic impact is expected to be beneficial through improved provision of community services at Cranbrook within a space which would support community interaction and integration.

7. Equality Considerations

Where relevant to the decision, the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty requires decision makers to give due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct;
- advance equality by encouraging participation, removing disadvantage, taking account of disabilities and meeting people's needs; and
- foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

Taking account of age, disability, race/ethnicity (includes Gypsies and Travellers), gender and gender identity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, pregnant women/ new and breastfeeding mothers, marriage/civil partnership status in coming to a decision, a decision maker may also consider other relevant factors such as caring responsibilities, rural isolation or socio-economic disadvantage.

Following approval to progress the scheme, an Impact Assessment will be undertaken alongside development of detailed scheme design. This will assess the social/equality, environmental and economic impacts of the scheme in line with the County Council process.

8. Legal Considerations

In order to achieve early delivery of these facilities, the Council would need to renegotiate the existing planning agreement with the developers to seek provision of financial contributions for the library, youth and children's facilities instead of the developers building the facilities themselves. The Council would also seek transfer of necessary land to the County Council from the developers earlier than the timescales specified in this legal agreement.

9. Risk Management Considerations

The main risks associated with this proposal are the successful renegotiation of the existing planning agreement, securing additional money to fill any funding shortfall and obtaining the necessary planning permission. As this scheme has not yet been started, there is currently uncertainty over the outcome and delivery timescale.

It is considered that this scheme would reduce risks by giving the Council greater control over the design and delivery process for these facilities. As indicated in section 11 below, there are also risks associated with the alternative 'default position' defined in the existing agreement.

10. Public Health Impact

This scheme would result in significant public health benefits by provision of a community facility building providing dedicated space for provision of essential children's, Public Health Nursing, youth, adult and library services. The building would contribute to wider public health objectives by supporting community interaction and active travel.

11. Options/Alternatives

The main alternative option to delivery of an integrated community facility building would be to allow delivery of separate buildings for library, youth and children's services as specified in the existing planning agreement (the default position). This would involve construction of the buildings by the developers in accordance with an agreed specification at the specified trigger. The children's centre would be due to be delivered as a stand-alone building by June 2021. The library and youth centre facilities are due to be delivered separately by approximately 2025 at the trigger point of first occupation of the 3450th Cranbrook dwelling. The library and youth facilities could potentially be combined with each other or the town council offices should agreement on this be reached.

A disadvantage of this default position is that it would involve later delivery of the youth and library facilities, when they are needed by the local community as soon as possible. It would also result in delivery of fragmented and inflexible buildings which are not favoured by the Council and some partners. Later (or potentially no) delivery of these community buildings would contribute to Cranbrook remaining without a town centre that provides the facilities and services required for this growing town.

It is considered that delivery of an integrated County Council community facility would be beneficial in providing the necessary facilities earlier than currently required and with greater certainty over delivery and final design.

12. Reason for Recommendation/Conclusion

The existing planning agreement requires delivery of library, youth and children's centre facilities in Cranbrook town centre within the next two to six years. It is considered that this proposal to deliver an integrated County Council community facilities building in Cranbrook town centre represents the optimal way to provide the required facilities. It would allow early delivery of Council facilities and give the Council greater control over the design, delivery process and outcome. This would enable the Council to ensure that the resulting community facility represents value for money and provides flexible integrated space that can adapt to future changes in service provision. It is therefore recommended that Cabinet approves this proposal, the associated renegotiation of the planning agreement, and the seeking of additional funding. Cabinet is also requested to approve County Council membership of the new Cranbrook Strategic Delivery Board which would allow coordination and oversight of infrastructure and service provision in the town.

Dave Black
Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment

Electoral Divisions: Broadclyst

Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills: Councillor Rufus Gilbert

Chief Officer for Communities, Public Health, Environment and Prosperity: Dr Virginia Pearson

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

Contact for enquiries: Nicola Wilson

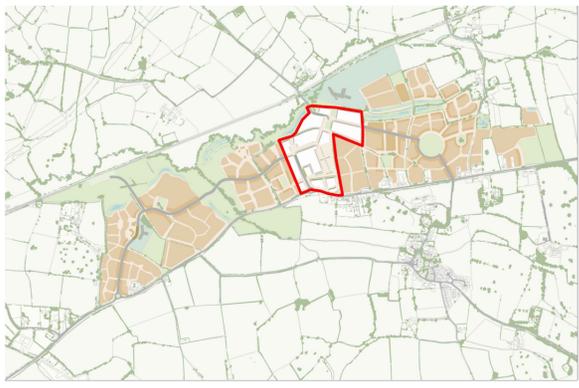
Room No. Lucombe House, County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter, EX2 4QD

Tel No: 01392 383000

Background Paper	Date	File Reference
Nil nw170919cab Construction of a community facilities building in Cranbrook Town Centre		hk 05 270919

APPENDIX B: CORRESPONDENCE FROM HDD 8 JANUARY 2020

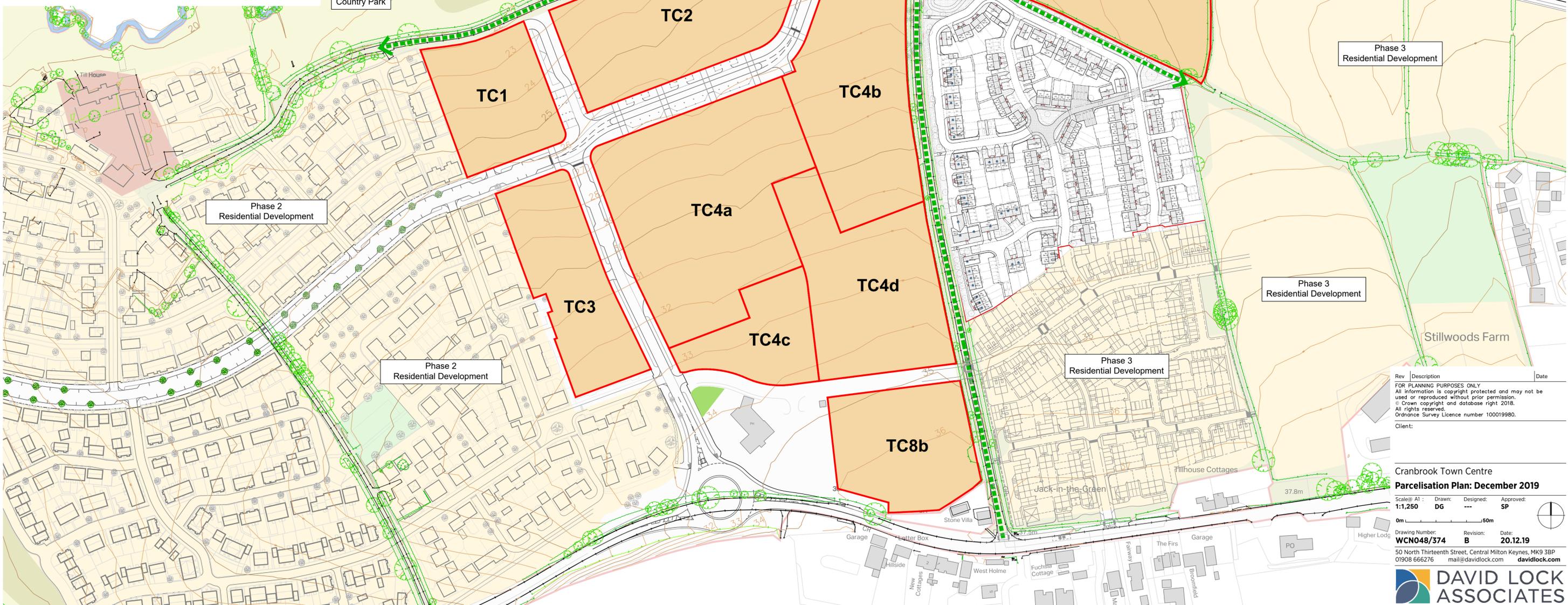
APPENDIX C: PLAN OF TOWN CENTRE PARCELS



Town Centre Development Parcels

TC1	0.59 ha	1.46 acres
TC2	1.15 ha	2.84 acres
TC3	0.70 ha	1.73 acres
TC4a	1.59 ha	3.93 acres
TC4b	1.15 ha	2.84 acres
TC4c	0.43 ha	1.22 acres
TC4d	1.00 ha	2.47 acres
TC5a	0.37 ha	0.91 acres
TC5b	0.15 ha	0.37 acres
TC6	1.23 ha	3.04 acres
TC7	1.60 ha	3.95 acres
TC8b	0.68 ha	1.68 acres

Notes: Parcels taken to back of footpath and centre line of hedgerow. No allowance for hedgerow root protection.



Town Centre Parcel

Rev | Description | Date
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 Client:

Cranbrook Town Centre
Parcelisation Plan: December 2019
 Scale: A1 : 1:1,250 Drawn: DG Designed: --- Approved: SP
 0m 50m
 Drawing Number: WCN048/374 Revision: B Date: 20.12.19
 50 North Thirteenth Street, Central Milton Keynes, MK9 3BP
 01908 666276 mail@davidlock.com davidlock.com

