1. Policy = Core Strategy 2011 policy SP3, specifies on a site of this size, 40% of homes should be provided for affordable housing, i.e. 300 homes.

Offer - Due to viability issues, the applicant has proposed 25% affordable housing, i.e. 188 homes.

HP position – We require the level of affordable housing to be viability tested by SDC’s own independent consultant and their response is awaited.  We would expect the level of affordable housing to be the maximum level that viability will allow.

1. Policy - policy SP3 specifies a tenure mix for the affordable housing of 65% for affordable/social rent and 35% for intermediate housing, i.e. 195 for rent and 105 for intermediate housing.  In exceptional circumstances where viability demonstrates policy compliant provision is not feasible, a reduced level of provision may be accepted.

Offer – the applicant proposes a tenure split of 65% for intermediate housing (and they have specifically specified shared ownership) and 35% for Affordable Rent (they are silent on Social Rent).

HP position - This split is not supported.  SDC’s independent viability consultant has been asked to advise whether a policy compliant tenure split is possible based on the maximum level of affordable housing that viability will allow.  If a policy compliant tenure split is not achievable at the maximum level of affordable housing that viability allows, the consultant has been asked to advise what reduced level of affordable housing would allow a policy compliant tenure split.

As per NPPF and identified housing needs, an element of Social Rented housing is expected, i.e. 100% Affordable Rent is not a suitable tenure for 4 bedroom homes (due to the overall benefit cap) and therefore all 4 bedroom affordable homes should be provided as Social Rent only. Social Rent should be maximised across all property sizes.

Within the intermediate housing, the range of tenures set out in NPPF, is expected to be provided, i.e. 100% Shared Ownership is not supported.  This is particularly pertinent given the Government’s recent consultation and announcement regarding shared ownership re-sales. We would expect to see some homes for Discounted Market for Sale and Intermediate Rented. It should be noted the development site lies within a Designated Protected Area and therefore all intermediate homes will be restricted from outright ownership to ensure they remain available to meet needs in perpetuity.

1. Policy – Policy SP3 specifies that an average of 50% of new homes should provide one and two bedrooms. Policy SP5 is silent on compliance with national space standards but the accompanying Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document Policy paragraph 5.8, stipulates new homes should comply with any Homes & Communities Agency (now Homes England) design standards and relevant national standards. Policy SP5 specifies the Council will seek homes which meet the Lifetime Homes Standard (now Building Regulation Part M4(2)).

Offer - The applicant confirms all homes will meet the Nationally Described Space Standard and 5% will meet the wheelchair standard (Building Regulations Part M4(3)). It is silent on meeting the Lifetime Homes Standard.  The applicant recommends the specific type of affordable housing e.g. flats, houses and extra care, should be determined at the Reserved Matters stage

HP position - we would expect the range of homes to match the sizes laid down in Core Strategy policy SP3. Subject to the advice of Development Control colleagues, we are willing for the detail to be determined as Reserved Matters.

Compliance with the Nationally Described Space Standard is welcomed.

Provision of 5% of homes which meet the wheelchair standard is noted and welcomed.  National policy sets out wheelchair housing should be provided as affordable housing. We would look for these to be provided as homes for social/affordable rent.

As per SP5, we would hope to see all homes will meet the Lifetime Homes Standard.

1. Policy – Core Strategy policy SP5 sets out that extra care housing will be encourages on suitable sites close to a range of services. The Housing Strategy 2017, priority 3.28, concerns the identification of a suitable site for a supported housing scheme for vulnerable younger people.

Offer - The applicant recommends the specific type of affordable housing e.g. flats, houses and extra care, should be determined at the Reserved Matters stage

Housing Policy position – Subject to the advice of Development Control colleagues, we are willing for the detail to be determined as Reserved Matters.

Due to its location, an extra care facility is not supported in this location.  Instead, we will consider earmarking a number of homes for applicants age 55 and over to help with related older peoples and downsizing strategy.  To assist with this approach, and providing the Registered Provide partner confirms the resultant service charge would remain affordable, we would ask that all apartment blocks have lift access.

1. Policy – The Sevenoaks District Housing Register Allocations Policy 2019, paragraphs 7.8, specifies a Local Lettings Plan may be used to allocate homes on a new development to ensure a balanced and sustainable community is created.

Offer – The applicant suggests a local lettings plan is developed so that affordable homes can be targeted at local people.

Housing Policy position – We would be willing to consider the development of a local lettings plan but this would be outside the remit of the planning application and any S106 agreement. It would be developed and agreed independently with the Registered Provider and other local partners, e.g. the parish councils.

1. Policy - The Housing Strategy 2017, priorities, 1.26 – 1.28, promotes micro-homes.

Offer – the application is silent.

Housing Policy position - We  would be keen to see an element micro-housing provided as intermediate housing on this development as we believe it will meet the needs of newly-forming households.  This model is proving to be a fashionable solution elsewhere.

1. Policy – The Housing Strategy 2017, priorities 3.39 – 3.41, promotes housing options for military personnel and veterans.

Offer – the application is silent.

Housing Policy position – Bearing in mind the military history of this site, we would seek an element of affordable housing to be earmarked for military personnel and veterans. This would be achieved by local lettings/sales plans and would be developed and agreed independently with the Registered Provider and other partners, e.g. the Military of Defence and Royal British Legion.