

# Statement of Community Involvement

**Land at 78c High Street, Tonbridge**

Created for McCarthy Stone

May 2021

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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 McCarthy Stone, the UK's leading developer and manager of retirement communities, has acquired an interest in land at 78c High Street, Tonbridge and is proposing to redevelop the site with specialist Retirement Living accommodation.
- 1.2 McCarthy Stone is committed to consulting local stakeholders and the local community with regard to its planning applications. As a result, McCarthy Stone has a strong track record of consulting and communicating with members of the local community, community groups, local councillors and other relevant third party stakeholders.
- 1.3 This document has been produced with the aim of clearly and concisely highlighting the community consultation undertaken by McCarthy Stone in respect of its proposal for the site.
- 1.4 This document will provide a chronological account of the consultation activity that has been undertaken within the pre-application stages of the planning application and the activity that McCarthy Stone proposes to undertake post application.
- 1.5 In order to assist with the community consultation and communication, McCarthy Stone appointed BECG, a specialist communications consultancy, to form part of its wider project team for the proposed redevelopment.
- 1.6 McCarthy Stone offered pre-submission meetings to local stakeholders, which were also extended to neighbouring residents, as well as distributing an update newsletter, which provided further details about the plans.
- 1.7 All feedback received is accounted for and represented within this document.

## 2. Background

### 2.1 Proposal site

- 2.1.1 The proposal site is located on land at 78c High Street, in the heart of Tonbridge, on the western edge of the town centre, on the junction of New Wharf Road and River Walk, just a few metres to the east of the shops and amenities in the High Street. It is therefore in a highly sustainable location, with good access to local highways and transport links, including by bus and rail.
- 2.1.2 The site received planning permission in 2020 for its redevelopment with a 70-bedroom hotel, 10 residential apartments, an existing A1 unit, and associated parking.
- 2.1.3 Unfortunately, owing to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the hospitality and leisure industry, it is no longer viable to bring these plans forward. As such, the landowner for the site has sought to bring forward an alternative use, that would still provide significant benefits to the community and the high street.



*Aerial view of the site*



## 2.2 Proposal

2.2.1 The regeneration of this vacant site offers the opportunity to provide a sensitive redevelopment that will help fulfil a local need for this type of accommodation.

*Previously approved hotel plans*



*McCarthy Stone's proposed plans*



2.2.2 The proposals include 36 high-quality one and two-bedroom Retirement Living apartments for private sale, part-rent part-buy, and rent, including:

- A design that reflects the height and massing of the approved plans, with a combination of red brick and dark grey cladding detailing
- Parking for around 24 cars in an undercroft car park, accessed via New Wharf Road, as well as space for internal mobility scooter storage with charging points
- Tailored shared facilities within the building, including a communal lounge with a kitchenette and hotel-style guest suite

- Extensive, attractive landscaping around the boundaries of the site as well as the provision of a green roof and communal garden and terraced areas to encourage social interaction and to create a pleasant residential environment

2.2.3 The existing site owner will also be bringing forward 6 residential apartments for open market sale as well as a Class E unit as part of a separate but related application. This includes upgrades to the High Street façade.



2.2.4 We have carefully considered our design for the site, to breathe life to this under-utilised site and our proposals present a valuable opportunity to bring forward a specialist retirement community in this part of Tonbridge, that provides genuine choice for older people so that they can continue to live locally in a home that meets their needs and aspirations in their later years.

2.2.5 Retirement Living creates safe and secure environments for our residents to continue to live an active, independent life. Residents have their own front doors and privacy just as they did in their previous homes and they are free to join in community activities within the development or to pursue their own interests as they please. Apartments can be occupied by people aged 60 or over, although the average age of residents upon moving in is 79. The majority of residents moving into our developments already live in the local area.

## 3. Pre-application Consultation

### 3.1 Statement of Community Involvement

#### 3.1.1 The Localism Act 2011

Section 122 of the Localism Act 2011 outlines that a person proposing to make a planning application on land in England should carry out consultation on the proposed application. This should include publicity considered likely to bring the application to the attention of a majority of the persons who live at, or otherwise occupy, premises in the vicinity of the land.

#### National Planning Policy Framework (2018)

3.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's policies for England and outlines how these policies should be applied.

3.1.2 McCarthy Stone has had regard to the NPPF at Paragraph 39 when it states that *“early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties.”*

3.1.3 It goes on to highlight at Paragraph 40 that *“Local planning authorities have a key role to play in encouraging other parties to take maximum advantage of the pre-application stage. They cannot require that a developer engages with them before submitting a planning application, but they should encourage take-up of any pre-application services they offer. They should also, where they think this would be beneficial, encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community and, where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees, before submitting their applications.”*

3.1.4 Paragraph 41 outlines that the Local Planning Authority should encourage other parties to take maximum advantage of the pre-application stage, noting that *“the more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, including the need to deliver improvements in infrastructure and affordable housing, the greater the benefits.”*

#### Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Statement of Community Involvement

3.1.5 Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council adopted its Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in February 2015. This SCI is not explicit in terms of precisely how consultation with stakeholders and the wider community should be carried out, however, it gives the following guidance:

*“In many cases, the Council encourages applicants to enter into early engagement at the appropriate level with the local community and other interested parties as advocated by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012).”*

*“Where applicable, planning applications should be accompanied by a document setting out what consultation has been carried out by the applicant, including details of public involvement and how this might have influenced the planning application proposals.”*

- 3.1.6 Government guidance and the Tonbridge and Malling’s SCI encourages pre-application discussions and community involvement. Given that the proposals are in line with the parameters of the previous plans, McCarthy Stone undertook community consultation to provide an update on the plans for the site, as outlined in the following documentation.

## 3.2 Contacting Statutory Bodies

- 3.2.1 During the pre-application discussions, meetings were sought with planning officers alongside relevant bodies. The meetings with officers provided an important opportunity to discuss the draft proposals with officers and receive their feedback at an early stage.

## 3.3 One-to-one Stakeholder Briefings

- 3.3.1 McCarthy Stone felt it was important to discuss the early proposals for the site’s redevelopment with local stakeholders in advance of the wider community consultation.

- 3.3.2 An invitation email alongside a councillor briefing document was distributed to the Planning Officer to share with members on **Friday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2021**. This email and briefing document invited stakeholders to attend a one-to-one meeting with the McCarthy Stone project team to receive a briefing on the early proposals. The briefing note also provided:

- Additional background information on how the proposals had come forward
- Why the previous hotel plans were no longer viable
- Images of the proposed development and a site plan
- McCarthy Stone’s Retirement Living product
- The benefits of this type of specialist accommodation
- Contact details for the team
- A link to the project website

- 3.3.3 A copy of the email and briefing note has been included in the Appendices.



### 3.4 Community Update Newsletter

- 3.4.1 An update newsletter, was distributed to the below consultation area, providing details of the plans to the local residents that was distributed on **Friday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2021**.



*A map depicting the community update distribution area*

- 3.4.2 This newsletter, which was also distributed to stakeholders, including the Tonbridge Civic Society and the Tonbridge and Malling Division Members on Kent County Council, provided:

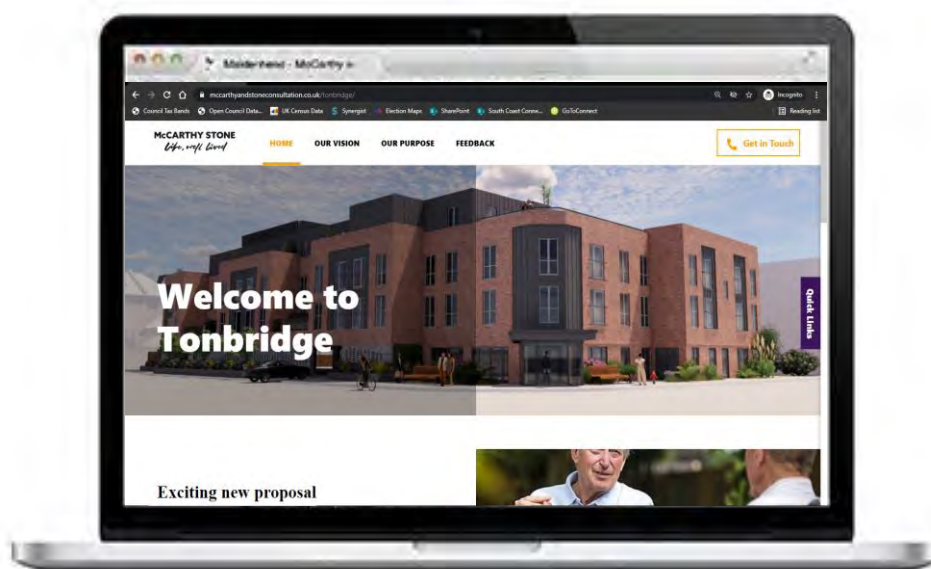
- Details about the plans
- Imagery of the proposals
- Background information on how the proposals had come forward and why the previous hotel plans were no longer viable
- McCarthy Stone's Retirement Living product
- The benefits of this type of specialist accommodation
- Contact details for the team
- A link to the project website

- 3.4.3 A reply card was distributed alongside a freepost envelope to enable them to provide feedback. This feedback will be reviewed as part of the application process.

- 3.4.4 A copy of the newsletter can be found in the Appendices.

## 3.5 Dedicated website

- 3.5.1 A website was set up displaying information about the proposals and is being updated throughout the public consultation and planning process. The website is hosted at <https://mccarthyandstoneconsultation.co.uk/tonbridge/>



*An example of a consultation website*

- 3.5.2 The website address was printed on the newsletter, briefing note and relevant correspondence.
- 3.5.3 The website includes:

- An overview of the proposals
- Relevant plans and layout
- Information about McCarthy Stone and its Retirement Living accommodation
- Benefits of the proposals
- An online feedback form

## 3.6 Post-paid and 0800 Comment Facility

- 3.6.1 During the consultation, access to a freephone telephone enquiry line was offered to those who wished to find out more about the proposals, or to register their comments via the telephone.
- 3.6.2 The telephone number used (0800 298 7040) was in operation Monday-Friday between the hours of 9:00am and 5:30pm for voicemails to be left and responded to at the earliest opportunity to ensure information was readily available and queries or concerns addressed.

3.6.3 Information was given to callers where possible and if questions were of a technical nature, these were passed on to project team members.

3.6.4 Feedback postcards issued also included free postage to encourage feedback.

## **3.7 Feedback**

3.7.1 All feedback received regarding McCarthy Stone's proposals for land at 78c High Street, Tonbridge will be reviewed and considered by the project team as part of the full planning application.

# **4. Post-Application Consultation**

## **4.1 On-going Stakeholder Engagement**

4.1.1 McCarthy Stone will ensure information continually flows through existing channels to interested parties.

## **4.2 Letters to Interested Parties**

4.2.1 A letter will be sent to the following groups and individuals informing them that the application has been submitted alongside addressing the main comments raised throughout the consultation:

- 116 addresses in the immediate vicinity of the proposal site
- MP for Tonbridge
- Tonbridge and Malling members (through the Officer)
- Division Members for Tonbridge and Malling on Kent County Council
- Tonbridge Civic Society
- Age UK Sevenoaks and Tonbridge
- Anyone else that has engaged in the consultation process or registered for updates

4.2.2 Those who requested further information by telephone, letter or email will be responded to in the most appropriate manner.

## **4.3 Media Contact**

4.3.1 To ensure the wider community is aware of the submission of the planning application a detailed press release will be issued to local publications.

## 5. Appendices

- **Copy of the one-to-one stakeholder meeting invitation letter**
- **Copy of stakeholder briefing note**
- **Copy of the consultation newsletter**
- **Copy of the feedback reply card**



14<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Information line: 0800 298 7040

Dear Councillor,

**RE: McCarthy Stone's proposals for Tonbridge**

At McCarthy Stone, we strive to create healthier and happier lives through our retirement communities, to enable older people to maintain their independence for longer.

We have recently acquired an interest in land at 78c High Street, Tonbridge and we are in the process of working up proposals for its redevelopment with specialist Retirement Living accommodation.

As you may be aware, the site has extant planning permission for a 70-bedroom hotel. Owing to the impact of the pandemic, these plans have unfortunately not been brought forward. McCarthy Stone has subsequently been working with the landowner to bring forward proposals that will still provide significant benefits to Tonbridge. Further details about the plans, alongside the benefits of bringing forward specialist retirement accommodation on this site, can be found in the attached briefing note.

**McCarthy Stone's proposals will provide much-needed specialist retirement accommodation in Tonbridge, addressing an identified and growing local need for older person's housing in the area. The site is in a highly sustainable location for older people, close to the train station and amenities in the high street.**

**This importantly can help to bolster the local economy post-Covid 19, as residents living in each retirement development generate around £550,000 of spending per year, £347,000 of which is spent on the local high street. Further information about the benefits of retirement developments on the local economy can be found in the latest Homes for Later Living Report on Silver Saviours, which can be found [here](#).**

Given your role within the community, we would like to invite you to an individual meeting to discuss the proposals and to obtain your feedback on the plans before we submit a planning application to Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council. The meeting will be held virtually using online teleconferencing software, or via a telephone call, if you'd prefer.

Should you consider such a meeting to be of interest, please contact **Hannah Anderson-Jones** at BECG on the project's information line number – **0800 298 7040** – to arrange a mutually convenient timeslot.

We will also be shortly distributing a community update newsletter regarding the plans for the site, to enable the local community to provide their feedback, which we will of course, share with you.

In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact my colleague **Hannah Anderson-Jones** on the freephone information line on **0800 298 7040** or email us at **[feedback@mccarthyandstone-consultation.co.uk](mailto:feedback@mccarthyandstone-consultation.co.uk)** if you require further information or would like to arrange a meeting.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

**Mark Bryan**  
**Divisional Development Director**  
**McCarthy Stone London & South East**

c/o BECG, Jellicoe House, Grange Drive, Southampton, SO30 2AF  
**0800 298 7040 | [feedback@mccarthyandstone-consultation.co.uk](mailto:feedback@mccarthyandstone-consultation.co.uk) | [www.mccarthyandstone.co.uk](http://www.mccarthyandstone.co.uk)**

# McCarthy Stone's proposals for land at 78c High Street, Tonbridge



McCarthy Stone, the UK's leading developer and manager of retirement communities, is bringing forward proposals for land at 78c High Street, Tonbridge.

As you will be aware, the site received planning permission in 2020 for its redevelopment with a 70-bedroom hotel, 10 residential apartments, an existing A1 unit, and associated parking.

Unfortunately, owing to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the hospitality and leisure industry, it is no longer viable to bring these plans forward. As such, the landowner for the site has sought to bring forward an alternative use, that would still provide significant benefits to the community and the high street.

McCarthy Stone has since acquired an interest in the site, and working in partnership with the landowner, is developing proposals that will do just this. The reimagined plans for the site comprise:

- 36 Retirement Living apartments, for those aged over 60 in a range of tenure options, including purchase, rent and part-rent, part-buy
- A design that reflects the height and massing of the approved plans
- Parking for around 24 cars, as well as space for internal mobility scooter storage with charging points
- Tailored shared facilities within the building, including a communal lounge with a kitchenette and hotel-style guest suite
- Extensive, attractive landscaping, including a green roof and communal terraced area

The existing site owner will also be bringing forward 6 residential apartments for open market sale as well as a Class E unit as part of a separate but related application.



## OUR PURPOSE

Since building our first development in 1977, we have become the UK's leading developer and manager of retirement communities. We have sold over 58,000 properties across 1,300 developments.

We are focussed on developing beautiful, sustainable and more affordable places to live, with flexible services and choice of ownership options at the core of our developments, designed around the needs of our customers and their families.

We believe that retirement living is so much more than simply deciding to move into a new home that's better suited to our customers' needs. It's also an opportunity for them to embrace a new way of life, to have the freedom to live a lifestyle with more choices and more time to do the things they enjoy.




CGI of the proposed development from New Wharf Road


## BENEFITS OF RETIREMENT HOUSING


McCarthy Stone's specialist retirement housing has a number of benefits to the local high street, as well as wider health and social benefits:

 **£347,000** – average spending every year in the local high street


 **80%** of our customers use the local shops daily or often


 **£125,200** more expenditure on average than a general needs market scheme

 The creation of new and permanent jobs in the high street as well as further jobs in construction, management and repairs

 **£3,500** – average health and social care saving per person per year when someone moves into retirement housing

 The average 80-year-old feels a decade younger after moving to specialist retirement accommodation

 Release of under-occupied family homes back into the local market, which will in turn improve the supply of homes for first-time buyers

 **27%** lower infection rates of Covid-19 in McCarthy Stone's developments compared with the general over 65s population

**1**  
**2** Those in specialist retirement housing are half as likely to be lonely, making them significantly less likely to develop dementia



Site plan

## RETIREMENT LIVING

Retirement Living creates safe and secure environments to enable our customers to continue to live an active, independent life. Customers have their own front doors and privacy just as they did in their previous homes and they are free to join in community activities within the development or to pursue their own interests as they please.

Apartments can be occupied by people aged 60 or over and are provided in a flexible range of ownership options from outright sale, to shared ownership, rent and part rent-part buy.

### Designed to make life a little easier

Our developments are carefully designed with the needs of our customers in mind, with step-free access throughout the building.

The beautiful apartments are all built to generous internal space standards and are adaptable for wheelchair use. They are built to incorporate features designed to help customers maintain their independence; such as 24-hour emergency call points, level-access bathrooms, good lighting, and switches / electrical sockets at a raised height to reduce bending.

### Stunning shared spaces

Along with the benefits of independent living within their own apartments, residents are able to enjoy activities in the shared spaces within the development, including a club lounge, guest suite and landscaped outside spaces.

These shared spaces within retirement communities help to combat loneliness in later life more effectively, as there is a ready-made community available. We make this a priority within our developments, ensuring that a range of activities, trips and opportunities to make new friends are available to our residents.



CGI of the proposed development from River Walk

## FIND OUT MORE

If you would like further information, have any questions regarding the proposals, please get in touch with the project team on our dedicated information line, **0800 298 7040** or by email on [feedback@mccarthyandstone-consultation.co.uk](mailto:feedback@mccarthyandstone-consultation.co.uk). You can also visit our dedicated project website on [mccarthyandstoneconsultation.co.uk/tonbridge](https://mccarthyandstoneconsultation.co.uk/tonbridge)



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**McCARTHY STONE**  
*Life, well lived*

CGI of the proposed development



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The existing site owner will also be bringing forward 6 residential apartments for open market sale as well as a Class E unit as part of a separate but related application.

McCarthy Stone will shortly be submitting a planning application. As part of our commitment to community engagement, we would like to hear your feedback on the proposals. Please take a moment to complete the enclosed postage-paid feedback card.

CGI of the approved development



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CGI of the proposed development from New Wharf Road



Site plan

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CGI of the proposed development from River Walk

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## Privacy Statement

By filling-in this form you are agreeing that BECG can hold and process your personal data in relation to this public consultation exercise.

- BECG will only share your personal data with McCarthy Stone and its project team for planning evaluation purposes only.
- Your identifiable, personal data will not be used for any other purposes without your consent.

BECG and McCarthy Stone will use your data to:

- Send you updates about the project (where you provide us with your contact details).
- Develop a Statement of Community Involvement (or similar document) about this public consultation that will be submitted to the planning authority or similar body; this will be a publicly available document. Your comments will be anonymous, and we will only identify you in these reports with your express permission.

If you provide us with your contact details, we might also contact you to ask you more about the comments you've made.

BECG acts on behalf of McCarthy Stone to run public consultation activities.

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## About the Consultation

We welcome feedback from local residents and stakeholders on our proposals for land at 78c High Street, Tonbridge. McCarthy Stone believes that the views of the local community are important, along with conservation and economic factors, when developing sites.

### Your Details

If you choose not to fill in all parts of this section, we will not be able to include your comments in the consultation process.

Title (Miss/Mrs/Ms/Mr/Other)

First Name or Initial

Surname

Postcode

Age Group (please circle)

Under 13 13-17 18-24 25-34 35-44 45-54  
55-64 65-74 75-84 85+

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55-64 65-74 75-84 85+

### Your Contact Details

We will use these details to contact you and update you on the proposals. You don't have to fill in this section if you'd rather we didn't contact you.

Address

Telephone

Email

Do you support these proposals?

YES

NO

**\*PLEASE COMPLETE IN BLOCK CAPITALS**

Once completed, please place this in the Business Reply envelope and post it to us. You do not need to affix a stamp.

Any additional comments

### Data Protection

We hold all personal data in accordance with the retained EU law version of the General Data Protection Regulation ((EU) 2016/679) (the "UK GDPR"), as it forms part of the law of England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland by virtue of section 3 of the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018, the Data Protection Act 2018, the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003 as amended, and any successor legislation. Your personal data will not be transferred outside of the EU. You can see our full Privacy Statement, Data Protection Policy, Data Retention Policy and find out how to make a Subject Access Request at the following website address [becg.com/dp](http://becg.com/dp) or by contacting us on 01962 893 893 / [dataprotection@becg.com](mailto:dataprotection@becg.com). You can also find McCarthy Stone's Privacy Statement at [mccarthyandstone.co.uk/privacy-and-cookies](http://mccarthyandstone.co.uk/privacy-and-cookies).

19668/0521

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Address

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Do you support these proposals?

YES

NO

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Any additional comments

### Data Protection

We hold all personal data in accordance with the retained EU law version of the General Data Protection Regulation ((EU) 2016/679) (the "UK GDPR"), as it forms part of the law of England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland by virtue of section 3 of the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018, the Data Protection Act 2018, the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003 as amended, and any successor legislation. Your personal data will not be transferred outside of the EU. You can see our full Privacy Statement, Data Protection Policy, Data Retention Policy and find out how to make a Subject Access Request at the following website address [becg.com/dp](http://becg.com/dp) or by contacting us on 01962 893 893 / [dataprotection@becg.com](mailto:dataprotection@becg.com). You can also find McCarthy Stone's Privacy Statement at [mccarthyandstone.co.uk/privacy-and-cookies](http://mccarthyandstone.co.uk/privacy-and-cookies).

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### Your Contact Details

We will use these details to contact you and update you on the proposals. You don't have to fill in this section if you'd rather we didn't contact you.

Address

Telephone

Email

Do you support these proposals?

YES

NO

**\*PLEASE COMPLETE IN BLOCK CAPITALS**

Once completed, please place this in the Business Reply envelope and post it to us. You do not need to affix a stamp.

Any additional comments

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