

14-9-26

1. Summary Representation

Halstead Parish Council's concern that the scale of development being proposed will almost certainly double the population of the current Parish and will inevitably place a strain on the capacity of community infrastructure and services featured extensively in our Objection in November 2025. The Parish Council's concern about the capacity of community infrastructure and medical services (primary care, community care, mental health services, and acute care) remains unchanged in response to the amended Planning Application. The district has a lack of medical services and those indicated will not improve access for most of the district.

The proposed development site is located on the border with the London Borough of Bromley, and given the current provision of health infrastructure it is anticipated by both South East London Integrated Care Board (SEL ICB) and Kent & Medway ICB that the development will disproportionately and overwhelmingly impact health services located within the London Borough of Bromley, especially with an ageing population in the proposed retirement village and residential Care Home. With an ageing population, care needs become increasingly complex, which places greater demand than in the past for extra care provision.

2. Access to Medical facilities

2.1. Transport

It is a recognised fact that people in Halstead parish regularly experience transport challenges and are dependent on private transport, relying on their cars to get them to medical appointments, pharmacies, physiotherapy, and hospital appointments. The same limitations will apply to the residents living at the proposed development site. Requirements for retirement housing are to *"be within sustainably located and well-connected areas of the District, where there is easy access to shops, [and] community facilities including healthcare"* (p.91).

3. GP Practices

- 3.1. **Location accessibility:** the closest GP practices to the site under SEL ICB are Green Street Green Medical Centre, The Family Surgery, and Chelsfield Surgery. None of these are currently accessible from the site by direct public transport. The nearest GP practice under Kent & Medway ICB is Otford Medical Centre which is, again, not accessible from the site by direct public transport. No new medical centre has been proposed within the development, and none was proposed within the Fort Halstead development of 635 houses, which means residents of both sites will have to use private transport to get to the nearest GP surgeries, provided they can register there. The local GP surgeries are already oversubscribed, and NHS data shows that Kent and

Medway ICB face a GP shortfall of over 200 practitioners by the end of 2026. These two major developments, one already under construction, are around 1½ miles by road in each direction from the centre of Halstead village, and are of a similar size to the existing village. If this amended Planning Application is granted, it will result in a huge pressure on existing medical services without the appropriate infrastructure improvement, which is not guaranteed.

4. Hospitals

- 4.1. **Overview:** The Sevenoaks Local Plan Reg.19 includes the intention to provide people *“with access to good quality healthcare”* (p.25). It also states that although there are two minor injury hospitals, Sevenoaks Hospital and the new Edenbridge Memorial Health Centre, *“there are no major medical facilities within the District for residents, who have to travel out of District to Tunbridge Wells Hospital, the Princess Royal University Hospital (Orpington), Queen Mary’s Hospital (Sidcup), Darent Valley Hospital (Dartford), Maidstone Hospital, and London hospitals.”*
- 4.2. **A&E:** Although the nearest NHS hospital to the site is Orpington, the nearest A&E units are located at the Princess Royal University Hospital (PRUH) and Tunbridge Wells Hospital at Pembury (which is a 25-minute drive away). The nearest hospital under Kent & Medway ICB is Darent Valley Hospital, nearly 11 miles away, which is more than twice the distance from the site as the PRUH and has no direct public transport from the site. The documents provided by Quinn Estates list Chelsfield Park as the nearest hospital, but it is a private hospital. Transport to any of these hospitals is complex because there is no direct access from the site by public transport, and although Sevenoaks MP Laura Trott is lobbying for a direct bus from Sevenoaks to Pembury Hospital, it will be of little use to the residents of Halstead parish, which includes the proposed development site.
- 4.3. **Challenges:** The Planning Officer for NHS London Healthy Urban Development Unit (NHS HUDU) wrote a joint response with SEL ICB, predicting that *“Increased pressure on existing health services will adversely impact the local community’s access to care and result in poorer access to services for new residents. Delays in accessing primary care services lead to people attending accident & emergency departments more frequently, requiring more complex interventions and experiencing poorer health outcomes.”* (letter, 11 November 2025). It is also worth noting that all hospitals mentioned are already burdened with more patients than they can handle.

5. Medical Infrastructure

The Sevenoaks Local Plan Reg.19 states *“We want to create healthy communities, not just houses, and these places need to be supported by services and infrastructure to promote wellbeing”* (p.38). SDC’s Infrastructure Delivery Policy (IN1) states, *“All new development must be served and supported by appropriate on-and off-site infrastructure and services as identified in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) or as indicated by infrastructure*

providers” (p.264). Clearly, there is a great lack of clarity regarding medical infrastructure for the proposed site.