



Katherine Parkin
Planning and Regeneration Services
Gravesham Borough Council
Civic Centre
Windmill Street
Gravesend
DA12 1AU

Growth, Environment & Transport

Sessions House
MAIDSTONE
Kent ME14 1XQ

Phone: 03000 411683
Ask for: Simon Jones
Email: Simon.Jones@kent.gov.uk

BY EMAIL ONLY

10th February 2023

Dear Katherine,

Re: Outline Planning Application for a proposed development at Land Surrounding Ebbsfleet United Football Club, bounded By Lower Road, Railway Line, Grove Road and The River Thames, Northfleet, Gravesend (Ref: 20221064)

Thank you for consulting Kent County Council (KCC) on the outline planning application for a phased mixed-use redevelopment involving the demolition of existing buildings and structures including site preparation / remediation works, and the development of residential units (Use Class C3), Class E uses including floorspace for retail Class E(a)), food/beverage and drinking establishments (Use Class E(b)), local services (Use Class E(c)), indoor sport / recreation / fitness (use Class E(d)), healthcare space (Use Class E(e)), creche/nursery uses (Use Class E(f)), office floorspace (Use Class E(g)(i)), a new multi-use stadium with associated business and leisure facilities (sui generis), hotel (Use Class C1), community uses floorspace (Use Class F2). The phased redevelopment will include other sui generis uses, delivery of open space and significant realignment of the road network including the A226 Galley Hill Road / Stonebridge Road / Lower Road with hard / soft landscaping, car and cycle parking provisions, infrastructure works, ancillary and associated works.

In summary, and in considering the application as it currently stands, the County Council, as Minerals and Waste Planning Authority, raises an **objection** on the following grounds:

Minerals and Waste: The application is contrary to national and local development plan policies on safeguarding, and would undermine the adopted Mineral Strategy in the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan (KMWLP), which relies heavily upon wharves and importation facilities, as land-won resources are depleted.

The County Council, as Local Highway Authority, raises a **holding objection** on the following grounds:

Highways and Transportation: The planning application fails to provide sufficient detail regarding the Framework Car Park Management Plan, the Framework Travel Plan and the walking and cycling audit. A number of key plans and strategies have not been provided, including a Transport Strategy, Construction Route Plan, a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit and Designers Response, and plans regarding site access and sustainable transport upgrades. Modelling and traffic count data is required, and further consideration is needed for trip generation and mode share.

Public Rights of Way (PRoW): The application does not sufficiently address the significant impacts of the proposed development on Public Footpath NU1 and the National Trail including the adverse effect on user amenity and visual impacts. The proposed alternative PRoW routes that have been provided are not acceptable to the County Council.

The County Council has reviewed the outline planning application and sets out its comments below:

Highways and Transportation

The County Council, as Local Highway Authority, considers that the site is in a sustainable location, with short walking and cycling distances to local bus stops and both local and international railway stations. The proposals include a dedicated Fastrack route through the site and walking, cycling and car club facilities, all of which will further assist in achieving a mode shift away from the private car. However, the information provided is lacking in detail and in order for KCC to provide a robust assessment of the proposals, further information is required as set out within this response.

A number of plans / strategies that are required to be submitted with the application prior to determination have not yet been provided. These include:

- A Transport Strategy to demonstrate how the transport elements will be delivered over time.
- Detailed site access plans for all access points incorporating appropriate geometry, walking and cycling facilities, Fastrack segregation, visibility splays and tracking, to confirm these can be delivered. The plans should also incorporate the full diversion of the A226.
- Modelling results using the Kent Transport Model.
- A plan showing the areas intended for stopping up.
- A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit and Designers Response.
- Traffic count results.
- Plans showing proposed upgrades to local walking and cycling routes.
- Construction Route Plan.

Further discussion is required with regard to trip generation, mode share, distribution and committed developments, before the application is determined.

The County Council welcomes the walking and cycling audit; however, this should be expanded to include routes to additional facilities such as local bus stops, schools and the town centre for it to be acceptable.

The dedicated Fastrack route through the site is welcomed - and will be key to achieving mode shift away from the private car. The route through the site should be shown on a plan submitted as part of this planning application, along with proposed geometry, so this can be secured to any permission granted.

KCC advises that the Framework Car Park Management Plan and Framework Travel Plan need further detail. The Framework Travel Plan needs to include monitoring and review procedures and development of the Transport Review Group, for it to be acceptable.

The County Council, as Local Highway Authority, has provided detailed commentary on the application in Appendix 1 and would like to place a holding objection on the application until the above issues have been resolved.

Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

The County Council would draw attention to the existence of Public Footpath NU1 and the National Trail - the England Coast Path - which are directly affected by the development site. The Footpath (NU1) is identified on the attached extract of the Network Map of Kent (Appendix 2), which is a working copy of the Definitive Map. The existence of the right of way is a material consideration and the Definitive Map and Environmental Statement provide conclusive evidence at law of the existence and alignment of PRoW. While the Definitive Map is the legal record, it does not preclude the existence of higher rights, or rights of way not recorded on it. The National Trail is a leisure opportunity of considerable importance to both Gravesham and Kent, the use of which is expected to grow in the future and is heavily promoted on a national level.

The County Council is keen to ensure that its interests are represented within the local policy frameworks of the districts in Kent. KCC is committed to working in partnership with Gravesham Borough Council to achieve the aims contained within the [Rights of Way Improvement Plan](#) (ROWIP) which relate to quality of life, supporting the rural economy, tackling disadvantage and safety issues, and providing sustainable transport choices.

The impact on both the Public Footpath and the England Coast Path will be significant and KCC does not consider that the application addresses this sufficiently. The alternative routes are not acceptable as currently proposed. It should be noted that PRoW issues cannot be determined at a later Reserved Matters stage. The County Council therefore places a holding objection on this application, as a result of the adverse effect on user amenity and visual impact, to ensure these issues are fully addressed and resolved ahead of determination of this application.

Impact on Public Footpath and England Coast Path National Trail

Overall, the County Council considers that the references to the PRow network and the England Coast Path in the application are minimal:

- The routes do not appear on the majority of plans consistently, particularly the Illustrative Masterplan. Where the routes are shown (Transport Assessment Figure 4.4) they are not clear, and there is no correct labelling.
- Neither PRow nor the England Coast Path are mentioned in the Planning Statement document, particularly paragraph 5.205 Walking, Cycling and Public Transport.
- The routes in Figure 1 Walking and Cycling of the Walking and Cycling Assessment do not show PRow. This is available in larger print on request.
- The re-alignment of the A226 would appear to significantly impact the England Coast Path and the proposed diversion route would be unacceptable as it would appear adjacent to the new stadium - it is unclear and there is lack of detail. The Natural England report for the section of the England Coast Path refers to *'the proposed re-development of the area, where there may be an opportunity to align the trail closer to the coast'*. All options should be fully explored with the County Council and Natural England, and a Variation Report will be necessary for the diversion of the National Trail, before the application is determined. Any diversion of the PRow route will require County Council approval as the Local Highway Authority, and both these issues require engagement at this stage to resolve, and not later in the planning process.

General Comments

The County Council requires the following:

- A PRow Scheme of Management to be secured through a condition, detailing the PRow affected, including the England Coast Path, to cover the diversion procedure to enable a timely and legal delivery of any development; construction management (routes must remain open and safe for public use) and width, surface and signage on completion. Any phasing must ensure the delivery of infrastructure to support the development. This scheme of management to be approved by the County Council prior to the commencement of any works.
- Any Travel Plan submitted as part of the application must include the PRow network and opportunities provided for both active travel and leisure, health and wellbeing.

Section 106 (S106) / Contributions

KCC recognises that there is no mention of the wider PRow network within the Green Transport and Highways section of the S106 Agreement Heads of Terms. This should be amended as the County Council would request contributions as mitigation for the impact of the development on the PRow and to provide improvements to the wider connectivity. This is in line with the KCC ROWIP, a statutory KCC policy. The County Council considers that mitigation in the form proposed of new signage, planting and drop kerb crossings is not considered appropriate or sufficient.

The County Council would also draw attention to the following comments to the Applicant:

- No furniture, fence, barrier or other structure may be erected on or across PRow without the express consent of the Local Highway Authority.
- There must be no disturbance of the surface of the PRow, or obstruction of its use, either during or following any approved development without the express consent of the Local Highway Authority.
- No hedging or shrubs should be planted within 1 metre of the edge of the PRow.
- Any planning consent given confers no consent or right to close or divert any Public Right of Way at any time without the express permission of the Local Highway Authority.
- No Traffic Regulation Orders will be granted by the Local Highway Authority for works that will permanently obstruct the route unless a diversion order has been made and confirmed. If the Applicant needs to apply for a temporary traffic regulation order whilst works are undertaken, the County Council would need six weeks notice to process this.

Development Investment

The County Council has assessed the implications of this proposal in terms of the delivery of its community services and is of the opinion that it will have an additional impact on the delivery of its services. These impacts will require mitigation, either through the direct provision of infrastructure or the payment of an appropriate financial contribution.

The Planning Act 2008 and the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (the CIL Regulations) (Regulation 122) require that requests for development contributions of various kinds must comply with three specific legal tests:

1. Necessary,
2. Related to the development, and
3. Reasonably related in scale and kind These tests have been duly applied in the context of this planning application and give rise to the following specific requirements (the evidence supporting these requirements is set out in the attached Appendices).

Request Summary

	Per Applicable ¹ House (NIL)	Per Applicable Flat (x 1,589)	Total	Project
Primary Education	Nil	£1,700	£2,701,300.00	Towards expansion of a school locally within the KCC North Kent Education Area
Primary Land	Nil	Nil	Nil	N/a

¹ 'Applicable' excludes: 1 bed units of less than 56 sqm GIA, and any sheltered accommodation. Please confirm the number of 1 bed units proposed and that they are below this threshold.

Secondary Education	Nil	£1,294	£2,056,166.00	Towards any secondary school within three miles of the development
Secondary Land	Nil	£878.58	£1,396,063.60	Towards secondary school land for any secondary school within three miles of the development
Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) School	Nil	£126.29	£200,674.81	Towards a SEND school within the KCC North Kent Education Area
Special Education Needs and Disabilities School Land	Nil	Nil	Nil	N/a

	Per Dwelling (x 3,500)	Total	Project
Community Learning	£16.42 ²	£57,470.00	Towards additional equipment, services, and resources to assist with the education and training of the new learners arising from this development at Gravesham Adult Education Centre
Youth Service	£65.50	£229,250.00	Towards youth service resourcing arising from this development or Miracles Youth Centre.
Library Service	£55.45	£194,075.00	Library service resourcing arising from this development or Gravesend Library .
Social Care	£146.88	£514,080.00	Towards specialist care accommodation, assistive technology systems and equipment to adapt homes, adapting community facilities, sensory facilities, and Changing Places arising from this development or at Age UK Fleming Resource Centre, Gravesend.
	All Homes built as Wheelchair Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings in accordance with Building Regs Part M 4 (2)		
Waste	£129.20	£452,200	Ebbsfleet Waste Transfer Station
Highways	<i>Kent Highway Services will respond separately</i>		

² Please note that these figures are to be index linked by the BCIS General Building Cost Index from April 2020 to the date of payment (Apr-20 Index 360.3). They are valid for 3 months from the date of this letter after which they may need to be recalculated due to changes in district council housing trajectories, on-going planning applications, changes in capacities and forecast rolls, projects and build costs.

Justification for infrastructure provision/development contributions requested

The County Council has modelled the impact of this proposal on the provision of its existing services and the outcomes of this process are set out below and in Appendices 3a – 3d.

Education

KCC is the Statutory Authority for education and is the Strategic Commissioner of Education Provision and provides the following commentary below.

Primary Education

The impact of this proposal on the delivery of the County Council's services is assessed in Appendix 3a.

The proposal gives rise to additional primary school pupils during occupation of the development. This need, cumulatively with other new developments in the vicinity, can only be met through a new primary school.

This proposal has been assessed in accordance with the adopted KCC Development Contributions Guide methodology of 'first come, first served' assessment; having regard to the indigenous pupils, overlain by the pupil generation impact of this and other new residential developments in the locality.

Secondary School Provision

The impact of this proposal on the delivery of the County Council's services is assessed in Appendix 3a.

A contribution is sought based upon the additional need required, where the forecast secondary pupil product from new developments in the locality results in the maximum capacity of local secondary schools being exceeded.

The proposal is projected to give rise to additional secondary school pupils from the date of occupation of this development. This need can only be met through the provision of new accommodation at the secondary school and will be provided and delivered in accordance with the timetable and phasing in the Local Planning Authority's Infrastructure Delivery Plan, where available.

KCC notes that this process will be kept under review and may be subject to change as the Local Education Authority will need to ensure provision of the additional pupil spaces within the appropriate time and at an appropriate location.

It is also noted that this process will be kept under review and may be subject to change, including possible locational change, as the Local Education Authority has to ensure provision of sufficient pupil spaces at an appropriate time and location to meet its statutory

obligation under the Education Act 1996, and as the Strategic Commissioner of Education provision in the County under the Education Act 2011.

KCC will commission additional pupil places required to mitigate the forecast impact of new residential development on local education infrastructure generally in accordance with its [Commissioning Plan for Education Provision](#) (2022-2026) and [Children, Young People and Education Vision and Priorities for Improvement](#) (2018-2021).

Community Learning

The County Council provides community learning facilities and services for further education in line with KCC policies as set out in [Framing Kent's Future](#) (2022-2026). Community Learning and Skills (CLS) helps people moving to a new development overcome social isolation and encourages community cohesion, as well as improving skills in a wide range of areas.

There is an assessed shortfall in provision for this service. The current adult participation in both District Centres and Outreach facilities is in excess of current service capacity, as shown in Appendix 3b, along with the cost of mitigation.

To accommodate the increased demand on KCC Community Learning, the County Council requests £16.42 per dwelling towards the cost of providing Community Learning Project, local to the development.

Youth Service

KCC has a statutory duty to provide Youth Services under section 507B of the Education Act 1996. This requires KCC, so far as reasonably practicable, to secure sufficient educational leisure-time activities and facilities to improve the well-being of young people aged 13 to 19 and certain persons aged 20 to 24.

To accommodate the increased demand on the Kent Youth Service, the County Council requests £65.50 per dwelling towards additional resources for the Youth Service locally.

Library Service

KCC is the statutory Library Authority. Under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964, the County Council has a statutory duty to provide 'a comprehensive and efficient service'. The Local Government Act 1972 also requires KCC to take proper care of its libraries and archives.

Borrower numbers are in excess of capacity, and bookstock in Northfleet items per 1000 population is below the County average of 1134 and both the England and total UK figures of 1399 and 1492, respectively.

To mitigate the impact of this development, the County Council will need to provide additional services, equipment, and stock to meet the additional demand generated by the people residing in these dwellings.

The County Council therefore requests £55.45 per household to address the direct impact of this development, and the additional services, equipment and stock will be made available locally at the local library or mobile library service, as and when the monies are received.

Adult Social Care

The impact of this proposal on the delivery of the County Council's services is assessed in Appendix 3c.

KCC is the Statutory Authority for Adult Social Care. The proposed development will result in additional demand upon Adult Social Care Services, including older persons and adults with learning / neurodevelopmental / physical disabilities and mental health conditions. Existing care capacity is fully allocated, with no spare capacity to meet additional demand arising from this and other new developments.

To mitigate the impact of this development, KCC Adult Social Care requires:

- A proportionate monetary contribution of £146.88 per household (as set out in Appendix 3c) towards specialist care accommodation, assistive technology systems and equipment to adapt homes, adapting community facilities, sensory facilities, and [Changing Places](#) locally.
- In June 2019, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities identified in guidance that the need to provide housing for older and disabled people is critical. Accessible and adaptable housing enables people to live more independently and safely, providing safe and convenient homes with suitable circulation space, bathrooms, and kitchens. Kent Adult Social Care requests these dwellings are built to Building Reg Part M4(2) standard (as a minimum) to ensure that they remain accessible throughout the lifetime of the occupants, meeting any changes in the occupant's requirements.

Waste

Kent County Council is the statutory Waste Disposal Authority for Kent, responsible for the safe disposal of all household waste, providing Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRC) and Waste Transfer Stations (WTS). Each household produces an average of a quarter of a tonne of waste per year to be processed at HWRCs and half a tonne per year to be processed at WTS'. Existing HWRCs and WTS' are running at capacity and additional housing will create a significant burden on the manageability of waste in Kent.

A contribution of £129.20 per household is required towards the waste facilities at Ebbsfleet, to mitigate the impact arising from this development, and accommodate the increased waste throughput within the Borough.

The County Council previously responded to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report on 8th September 2022 and considered that waste should be scoped into the Environmental Statement. This is due to the potential impact upon this service from the proposed development and the misconception that landfill capacity was the determining factor in their EIA concluding a negligible impact.

KCC is therefore pleased to see that waste features as a chapter within the Environmental Statement and is supported by a Waste Strategy in the appendices.

However, the focus remains solely on available landfill capacity in determining the impact of the proposed development on waste facilities. As stated in the County Council's EIA Scoping Report response, the consideration of landfill as the only final disposal option for waste in Kent is incorrect. KCC disposes of less than 2% of waste to landfill and this is not kerbside collected household waste. All household waste is diverted, either to an energy from waste facility or to multiple recycling facilities, where waste is recovered and treated as a resource for recycling or energy production. The Environmental Statement must have consideration of the capacity at these alternative final disposal facilities. The sole consideration of landfill as the final disposal option also conflicts with the Environmental Statement which states that *'space to hold bins for Mixed Dry Recyclables, Food and Residual waste streams'* will be provided.

Additionally, in order for waste from developments such as that proposed to reach these final disposal facilities, it must first be taken to a WTS for bulking. The whole of the Gravesham District is currently served by a single transfer station, which is already at capacity. The County Council considers that the provision of an additional 3,500 homes will place an unsustainable burden of demand upon KCC waste disposal services and therefore informed mitigations should be identified within the Environmental Statement / Waste Strategy.

KCC does not agree with the concluding statement of the Non-Technical Summary in paragraph 110 *'Considering the waste management infrastructure available capacity within the region, the impacts of the waste arising from the Proposed Development will be minimal and will not result in likely significant effects upon waste infrastructure once operational'*. KCC would therefore recommend that this sentence is revised.

Waste Management and Recycling Management Strategy

The County Council considers that paragraph 1.3 within the Strategy is misleading, as kerbside collected waste is not sent to landfill, it is sent to an Energy from Waste Facility. In addition, food waste is not composted but sent to an AD plant.

KCC notes that Table 1 Waste and Recycling Management Policies omits the [Kent Waste Disposal Strategy](#), a key document in setting out KCC's current position, identifying the future pressures and outlining how the County Council will maintain a sustainable waste management service.

In respect of paragraph 6.9, whilst KCC supports innovation, consideration of the contamination levels arising from use of a system such as this need to be further explored and demonstrated that this will not impact negatively on recycling rates.

Chapter 8 Waste Disposal is focused on available landfill capacity, which is not considered appropriate. Gravesham Borough Council as the Waste Collection Authority collects the household waste and brings it to the KCC WTS at Pepperhill for bulking before being transported to its final disposal outlet. For Kent, this does not include landfill.

The assessment in Paragraph 8.2 acknowledges '*that at least 75% of the total operational waste is considered to be MDR / recycling waste, that will be sent to household waste recycling facilities (for residential apartments)*'. KCC notes that kerbside collected household waste does not get sent directly to a Household Waste Recycling Facility as indicated, but is first sent to the KCC Pepperhill WTS for bulking before being transported to a Materials Recycling Facility (MRF) under Contract. The KCC Pepperhill WTS is at capacity and cannot sustainably accommodate the tonnages from the proposed development. The assessment does not consider the impact of significant volumes of mixed dry recyclables on the local waste infrastructure.

The anticipated residual waste arisings from the development are assessed against landfill void capacity, which the County Council notes is incorrect. After collection by Gravesham Borough Council and bulking at the KCC Pepperhill WTS, they are sent to the Allington Energy from Waste Plant. The impact of some 31,344m³ per annum of residual waste on the KCC Pepperhill WTS is not negligible as this facility is at capacity.

Broadband: Fibre to the premise/gigabit capable

KCC recommends that all developers work with a telecommunication partner or subcontractor in the early stages of planning to decide on the appropriate solution and the availability of the nearest connection point to high-speed broadband. Most major telecommunication providers are now offering next-generation access broadband connections free of charge to developers. The County Council notes that further details are available on their websites and would recommend that the Applicant has consideration of this matter.

Implementation

The County Council is of the view that the above contributions comply with the provisions of CIL Regulation 122 and are necessary to mitigate the impacts of the proposal on the provision of those services for which the County Council has a statutory responsibility. Accordingly, it is requested that the Local Planning Authority seek a S106 obligation with the developer/interested parties prior to the grant of planning permission. The obligation should also include provision for the reimbursement of the County Council's legal costs, surveyors' fees and expenses incurred in completing the agreement, and County monitoring fee of £500 for each trigger within the agreement. KCC would request that a draft copy of any S106 agreement or unilateral undertaking is shared at the earliest convenience prior to its finalisation.

KCC would request confirmation for when this application will be considered and that the County Council is provided with a draft copy of the Committee report prior to it being made publicly available. If the contributions requested are not considered to be fair, reasonable, and compliant with CIL Regulation 122, it is requested that the County Council is notified immediately and to allow at least 10 working days to provide such additional supplementary information as may be necessary to assist the decision-making process in advance of the Committee report being prepared and the application being determined.

Minerals and Waste

The County Council, as the relevant Mineral Planning Authority, strongly objects to the proposal on the grounds that it is contrary to national and local development plan policies on safeguarding and would undermine the adopted Mineral Strategy for Kent which relies heavily upon wharves and importation facilities as land-won resources are depleted. Robins Wharf is an important facility as it provides a sustainable means of importing the aggregate building materials needed to support economic growth and is well placed to serve Kent and London. The latter has a reported finely balanced aggregate mineral importation capacity (wharfage) and may well require imports from other areas (including Kent) to ensure the capital's growth is sustainably supported if it returns to the sales and consumption ratio seen in 2010 to 2018 (see paragraph 4.10 of the London Annual Monitoring Report 2019). It also provides facilities for concrete manufacture and coated asphalt products.

The wharf and its associated mineral based product facilities can operate in a largely unconstrained manner in the locality given the planning permissions it operates to, therefore taking full advantage of the River Thames as a means of achieving sustainable transportation of the bulk raw materials with great flexibility. This in turn enhances the safeguarded wharf to then provide aggregates and mineral based construction products to the immediate market efficiently. Loss of this importation facility would undermine both aggregate supply that is becoming more reliant on importation and adversely affect sustainable transport of such materials if greater reliance, through time, is placed on increased road transportation. Therefore, the proposal is contrary to the NPPF, as it does not accord with the need to safeguard existing sites for the bulk transport, handling and processing of minerals, the manufacture of concrete and associated products such as coated asphalt materials.

The adopted KMWLP 2020 in turn identifies Robins Wharf as such a site with its associated facilities that require to be safeguarded to allow a steady and adequate supply of aggregate materials to support sustainable development in Kent. In light of the economic importance of wharves to the county and the delivery of a sustainable minerals strategy, there is a presumption in planning policy that these sites are safeguarded. Any development that proposes the loss of such facilities needs to robustly demonstrate that it satisfies the exemption criteria of the safeguarding policies in the KMWLP. The application asserts a number of arguments to justify an exemption, but these are not considered sufficient to set aside the presumption to safeguard.

The Applicant asserts that the regenerative advantages of the proposal are of such a scale and importance in meeting the Gravesham Local Plan's objectives that they override the

presumption to safeguard the importation facility. The adopted Gravesham Local Plan not only has policies to safeguard the sustainable transport commercial importation sites (Robins Wharf is one such facility, see Policy CS07: Economy, Employment and Skills, paragraph 5.1.37 and Policy CS11: Transport). Moreover, the Northfleet Embankment and Swanscombe Peninsula East Opportunity Area delineates Key Sites where the focus of regenerative development of this scale would be more appropriately located. Therefore, to deliver this regenerative development would needlessly incur the loss of the safeguarded wharf and compromise sustainable transport objectives of the Gravesham Local Plan. The Applicant's proposal does not accord with the adopted Gravesham Local Plan policies and is a departure from its spatial objectives.

With regard to the Applicant's assertion that the loss of the mineral importation wharf is justified and that its capacity is not needed, it is the County Council's view that the Applicant has failed to satisfy either exemption criteria 6 or 7 of Policy DM 8: Safeguarding Minerals Management, Transportation, Production and Waste Management Facilities as the area of the proposal is outside the main areas identified for regeneration in the Local Plan. The need, therefore, to deliver it at the application site is not overriding (exemption criterion 6). Furthermore, the Applicant has used out-of-date monitoring data and failed to understand the importance of maintaining all mineral importation capacity, as this underpins the whole strategy of the adopted KMWLP in providing for a steady and adequate supply of aggregate minerals, as required by the NPPF.

The Applicant's assertion that sufficient available capacity to import aggregate minerals will continue to exist, even with the loss of Robins Wharf as this will not be needed (exemption criterion 7) as sufficient unused 'headroom' importation capacity exists, is a fundamentally misguided argument. Indications are that the available capacity 'head room' will increasingly be utilised even if overall aggregate mineral demand remains static, as the Kent land-won sector for the sharp sands and gravels is rapidly depleting. Moreover, any increase in overall demand will inevitably place additional strain on all available importation capacity, both in Kent and the proximate London area, where there is little if any mineral importation capacity headroom. Wharf sites are considered generally irreplaceable once lost, therefore it remains imperative to retain all importation capacity into the future. Neither exemption criterion (6) or (7) of the relevant safeguarding policy can be said to have been satisfied by the Applicant's submitted Mineral Infrastructure Assessment.

The County Council, as the relevant Mineral Planning Authority, is willing to maintain a dialogue with Gravesham Borough Council on the matter of mineral supply and importation and the safeguarding of importation and associated mineral products facilities in order to assist the Borough Council if this would be helpful.

KCC has provided detailed commentary on the application in Appendix 4.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS)

The County Council, as Lead Local Flood Authority provided comments direct to Gravesham Borough Council on 28 November 2022 (Appendix 5).

Heritage Conservation

The County Council provided comments direct to Gravesham Borough Council on 14 December 2022 (Appendix 6).

Biodiversity

The County Council provided comments direct to Gravesham Borough Council on 7 December 2022. (Appendix 7).

The County Council will continue to work closely with Gravesham Borough Council to help to ensure the delivery of new housing and infrastructure in response to local needs. The County Council will welcome further engagement with Gravesham Borough Council and the Applicant on the matters raised in this response.

If you require any further information or clarification on any matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Simon Jones
Corporate Director, Growth Environment and Transport

Enc.

Appendix 1: Local Highway Authority Detailed Response

Appendix 2: Extract of the Network Map

Appendix 3a: New School Land Costs Mk6 SEN

Appendix 3b: Communities Assessment (Master Nov 19)

Appendix 3c: Social Care Assessment (Master May 22)

Appendix 3d: Waste Assessment (Master May 22)

Appendix 4: Minerals and Waste Planning Authority Detailed Response

Appendix 5: Lead Local Flood Authority commentary - provided direct to the LPA on 28.11.2022

Appendix 6: KCC Heritage Conservation commentary – provided direct to the LPA on 14.12.2022

Appendix 7: KCC Biodiversity commentary - provided direct to the LPA on 07.12.2022