SECTION D
DEVELOPMENT TO BE CARRIED OUT BY THE COUNTY COUNCIL

Background Documents: the deposited documents; views and representations received as referred to in the reports and included in the development proposals dossier for each case; and other documents as might be additionally indicated.

Item D1

Installation of electric bus charging infrastructure, LV feeder pillar and associated equipment to support the charging infrastructure; 3no. EKO Energetyka Link 450kw electric bus chargers; creation of new entrance and exit accesses for buses and pedestrians; diversion of a Public Right of Way (PROW) where it crosses Kent Fastway; relocation and removal of two existing uncontrolled crossings of Kent Fastway; new lighting columns; new triangular island bus stop, and associated landscaping at Acacia Hall Car Park, South of Dartford Town Centre, along Kent Fastway, Dartford, Kent, DA1 1RX – DA/25/467 (KCC/DA/0047/2025)

A report by Head of Planning Applications Group to Planning Applications Committee on 17 September 2025.

Application by Kent County Council Major Capital Programme Team for the installation of electric bus charging infrastructure, LV feeder pillar and associated equipment to support the charging infrastructure; 3no. EKO Energetyka Link 450kw electric bus chargers; creation of new entrance and exit accesses for buses and pedestrians; diversion of a Public Right of Way (PROW) where it crosses Kent Fastway; relocation and removal of two existing uncontrolled crossings of Kent Fastway; new lighting columns; new triangular island bus stop, and associated landscaping at Acacia Hall Car Park, South of Dartford Town Centre, along Kent Fastway, Dartford, Kent, DA1 1RX - DA/25/467 (KCC/DA/0047/2025)

Recommendation: Permission be granted subject to conditions.

Local Member: Mr Ryan Waters Classification: Unrestricted

Site

1. The application site is located to the south of Dartford Town Centre and forms part of the Acacia Hall Car Park, which is owned and operated by Dartford Borough Council. The application site has been fenced off and out of use prior to submission of this application, but has recently been temporarily reopened, accommodating 16 parking spaces. Kent Fastway, part of the Fastrack Kent Thameside Bus Rapid Transit service (see paragraph 2 below) runs to the immediate east of the site, beyond which lies Darenth Road. To the south of the site lies the wider Acacia Hall Car Park, beyond which lies Dartford Central Park, which also extends to the west. To the immediate west of the site, beyond a mature tree line, lies the River Darent, beyond which is further car parking, various buildings including Acacia Hall, and a residential property owned by the Diocese of Rochester called The Vicarage. The area to the west of the site is also

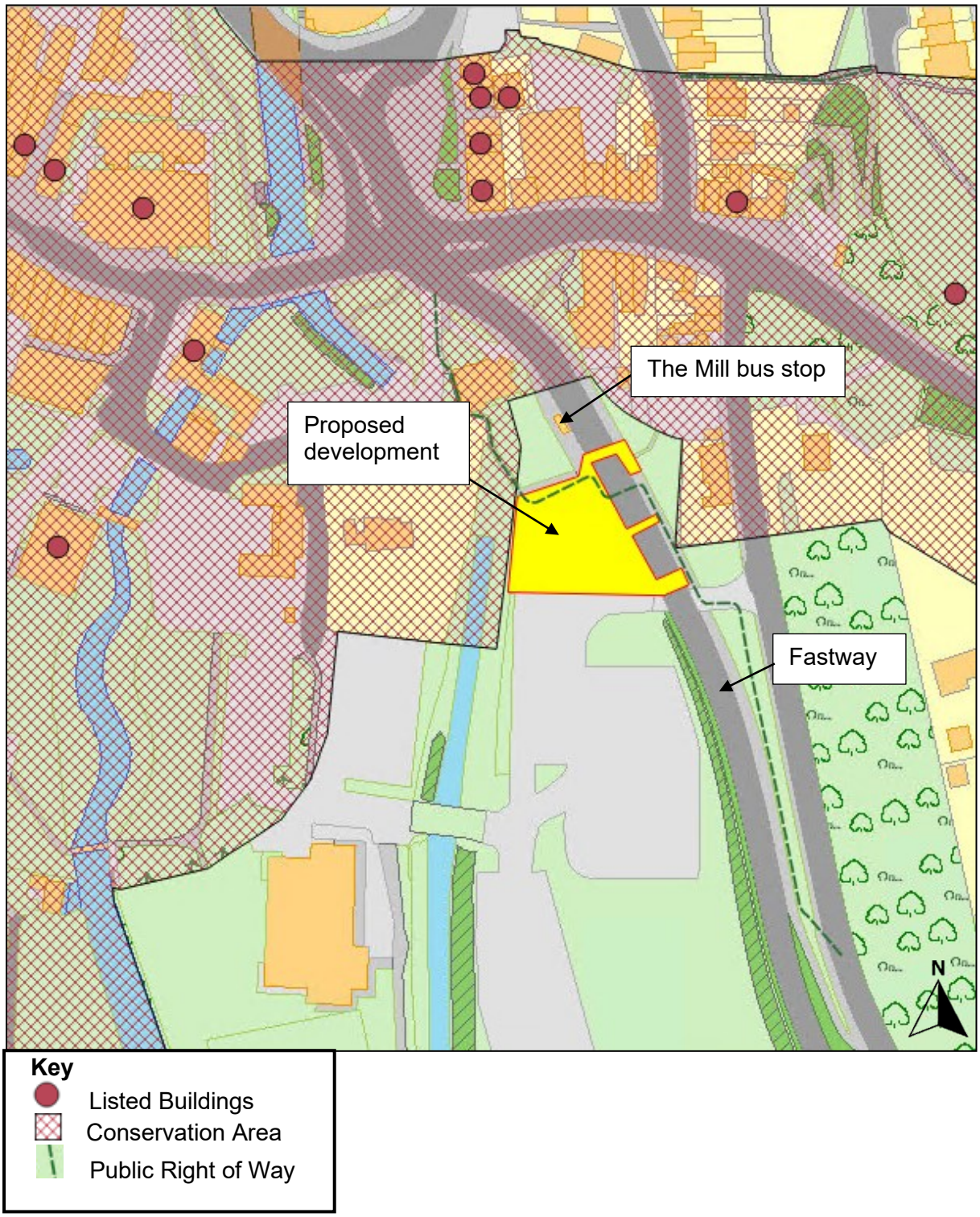
allocated as a Biodiversity Opportunity Area in the Dartford Local Plan. A Public Right of Way runs along the northern boundary of the site, beyond which lies a heavily treed area and a single storey building used as a meeting hall. Dartford Town Centre Conservation Area is located to the east of the site, beyond Darenth Road, to the north of the site beyond the treed area, and to the immediate west, including the Vicarage. The Conservation Area includes a number of Listed Buildings, including Acacia Hall and the Grade I Listed Holy Trinity Church. The site is within flood zone 1 (low probability of flooding).

Location Plan

Item D1

Installation of electric bus charging infrastructure at Acacia Hall Car Park, South of Dartford Town Centre - DA/25/467 (KCC/DA/0047/2025)

General Location Plan



Installation of electric bus charging infrastructure at Acacia Hall Car Park, South of Dartford Town Centre - DA/25/467 (KCC/DA/0047/2025)

Background and Planning History

2. Fastrack Kent Thameside is a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service operating in the Gravesham and Dartford area. This existing Fastrack BRT network has been in place since 2006 and aims to provide fast, reliable, and efficient transport across Kent Thameside. There are currently four Fastrack bus routes in Kent Thameside, serving around 2.8 million passengers per annum. The Fastrack coverage area includes Dartford, Bluewater, Ebbsfleet, Gravesend, Amazon LCY3 and Greenhithe. Fastrack is an integral part of the regeneration of the Northwest Kent area, and links key destinations and points of interest via a mix of dedicated bus lanes with priority signalling and shared carriageway. The area surrounding the Fastrack routes is due for significant development and growth in the coming years such as the Whitcliffe development (located in Ebbsfleet Garden City) of 6,250 homes which Fastrack will fully serve.

3. KCC strategically commissioned the purchase and 15-year operation of an electric bus fleet to operate the Fastrack Thameside Network. A tender exercise led to the signing of a contract with London General Transport Service Limited [as Go-Ahead] to operate Fastrack Thameside Network. The contract cost includes a one-off payment of £6,006,021 granted by the Department for Transport (DfT) under their Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) scheme and an on-going service charge of £7 million per year for 15 years starting from November 2024, mostly funded by bus fare revenue. The ZEBRA scheme was introduced by the Department for Transport (DfT) to encourage local authorities to work in conjunction with local transport partners, and apply for additional support funding to accelerate the introduction of fully electric public transport in towns and cities across the UK. The contract sponsored the purchase of 28 electric busses, which were delivered in November 2024, worth £12 million. These vehicles require access to on-street fast chargers to operate, which are referred to as opportunity chargers and are part of the electric charging infrastructure system.

4. The Gravesham Bus Hub, which includes electric bus charging infrastructure, was granted planning permission by the County Planning Authority in November 2020 (application reference GR/20/848) and is anticipated to be fully operational from September 2025. Further bus charging facilities are required in Dartford to support the electrification of the Fastrack Kent Thameside BRT network. The applicant has identified the application site at Acacia Hall Car Park to be the location for the bus charging facilities required in Dartford.

5. A previous planning application was submitted in March 2024 (planning reference KCC/DA/0036/2024 (DA/24/1103)), which proposed a very similar scheme to that we are now considering. The applicant however withdrew that application in December 2024, with a view to resubmitting a further planning application which would endeavour to address issues raised as a result of consultation and publicity. The application detailed throughout this report is that further submission.

6. As further background, to power the pantograph chargers, a substation would be required. In addition, indicative details of a gull wing canopy/shelter, to be located in the middle of the triangular bus island, have been shown on the application drawings for information. Both the substation and canopy, due to their height and limited size, would fall under the definition of permitted development under Part 12 of the General Permitted Development Order (Development by local authorities) Class A of the Town

and County Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) (Order) (Amended) 2021. Unless details change, these elements of the scheme would not require planning permission, and are therefore not proposed as part of this application.

Proposal

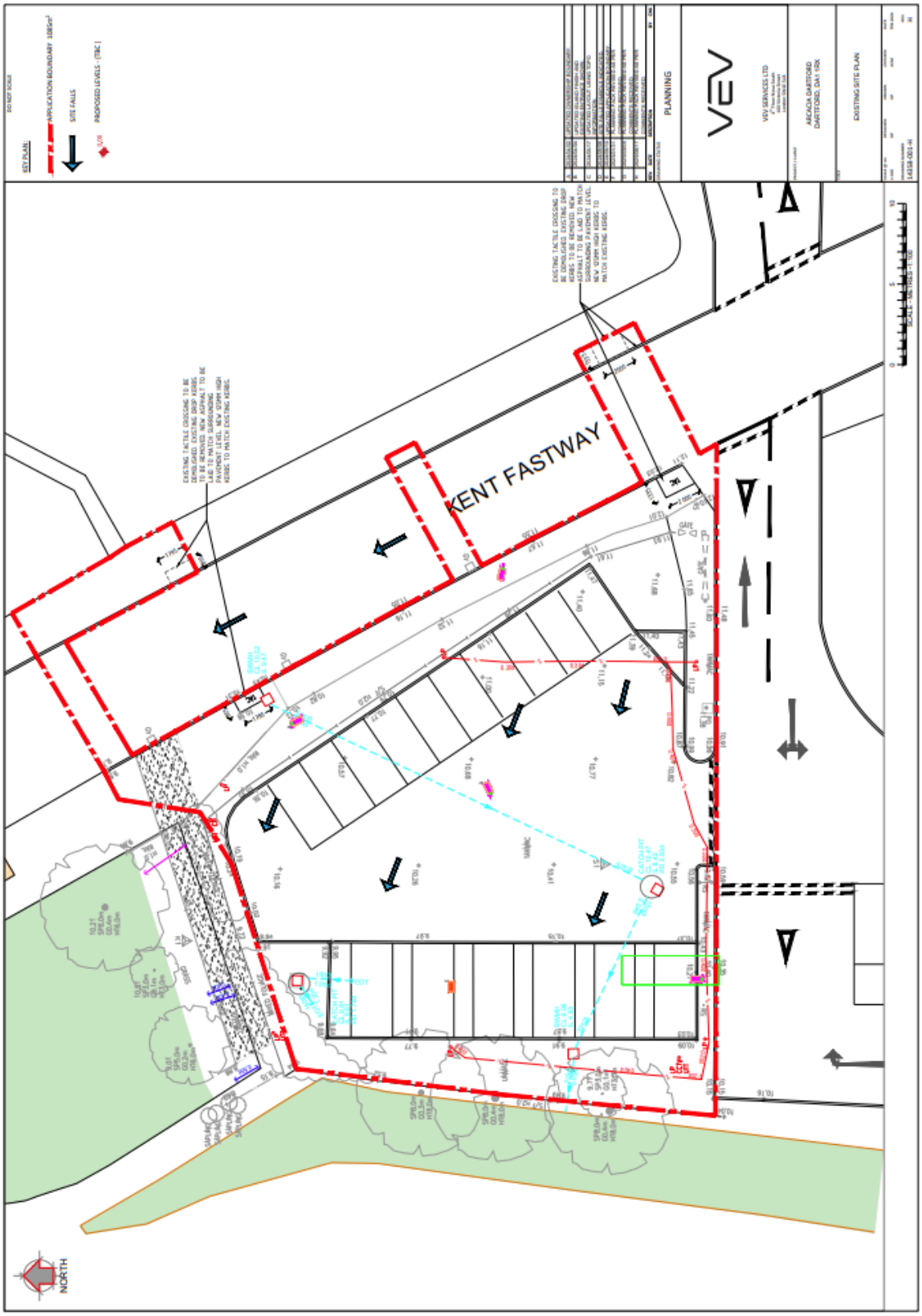
7. This planning application proposes the installation of electric bus charging infrastructure, LV (low voltage) feeder pillar and associated equipment to support the charging infrastructure; 3no. EKO Energetyka Link 450kw electric bus chargers; creation of new entrance and exit accesses for buses and pedestrians; relocation and removal of two existing uncontrolled pedestrian crossings of the Kent Fastway; new lighting columns; a new triangular island bus stop, and associated landscaping which includes the planting of semi-mature trees on the west side of the site to provide a visual screening of the proposed development. The application originally included the diversion of a Public Right of Way (PROW) where it crosses the Kent Fastway. This element is no longer required - see para 89 below.

8. The application site measures 1188m^2 in size and is located at Acacia Car Park along the Kent Fastway. It should be noted that the area proposed for the Acacia electric bus charging hub had not been used for parking since 2022 and had been fenced off resulting in the loss of 16 car parking spaces. However, circa 50 spaces are available in the existing car park to the south of this site, and a further car park located to the west has approximately 70 spaces. At the time that this planning application was submitted, Dartford Borough Council (DBC) had reopened the space, as a short-term and temporary measure to mitigate a loss of car parking due to the town centre regeneration works. The applicant was informed by DBC that this was not a long-term reinstatement of public parking, nor was it in response to a current increase in parking demand.

9. The proposed pantograph style electric bus chargers would have a height of 5.14m and assume 1.36m x 0.98m of floor space at each of the 3 proposed locations within the proposed triangular island bus stop. The pantograph chargers are proposed to be light grey in colour. The applicant is proposing new tree planting along the site's western boundary which would include a mixture of native species, including hornbeam, field maple, hawthorn and wild cherry, that would provide ecologically appropriate and effective long-term screening. It is proposed that these would be planted as semi-mature stock to ensure an immediate contribution to screening and amenity value, and to ensure that a hornbeam is positioned in the northwest corner of the site to fill a gap in the existing vegetation along the western boundary.

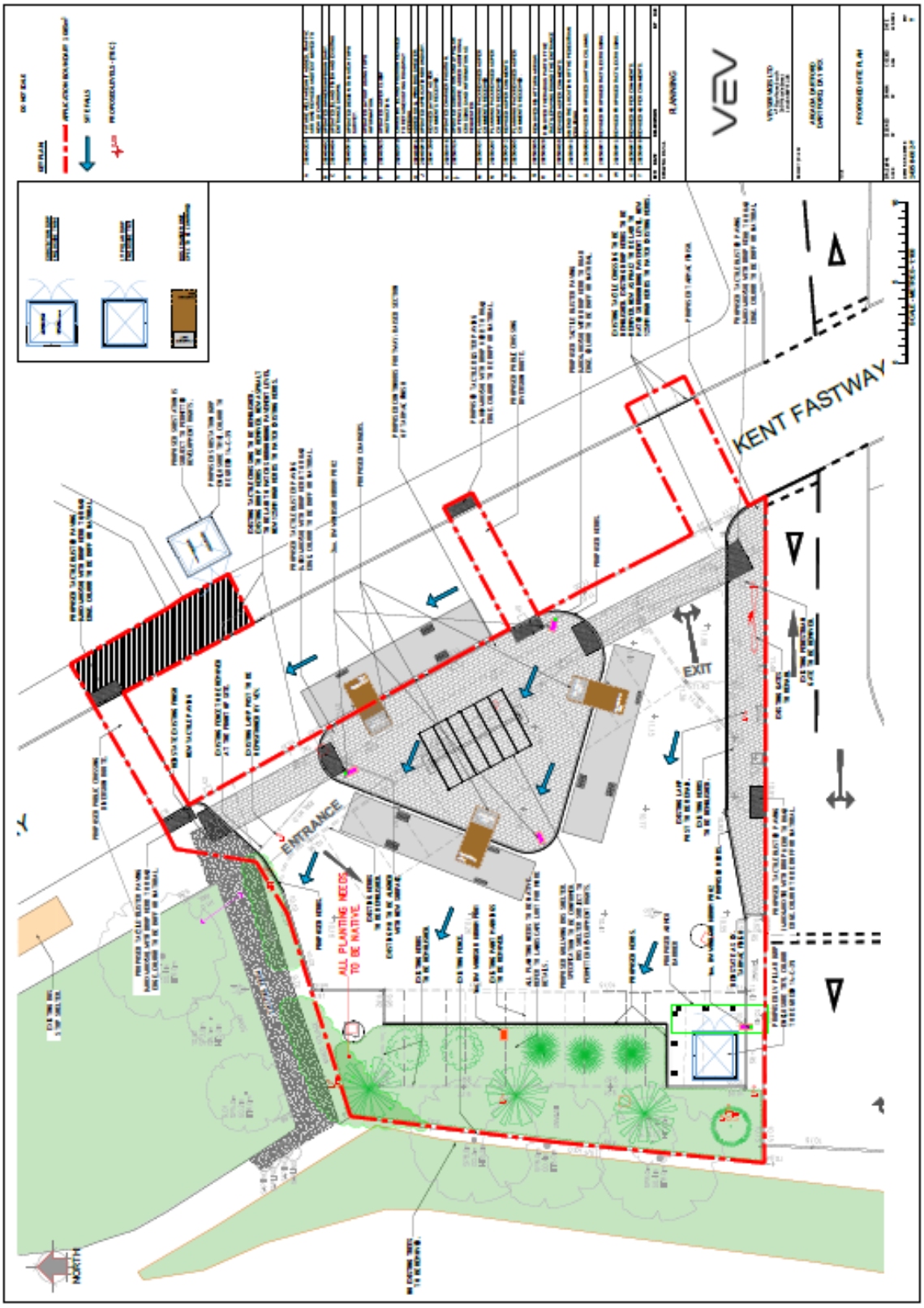
Installation of electric bus charging infrastructure at Acacia Hall Car Park, South of Dartford Town Centre - DA/25/467 (KCC/DA/0047/2025)

Existing Site Plan



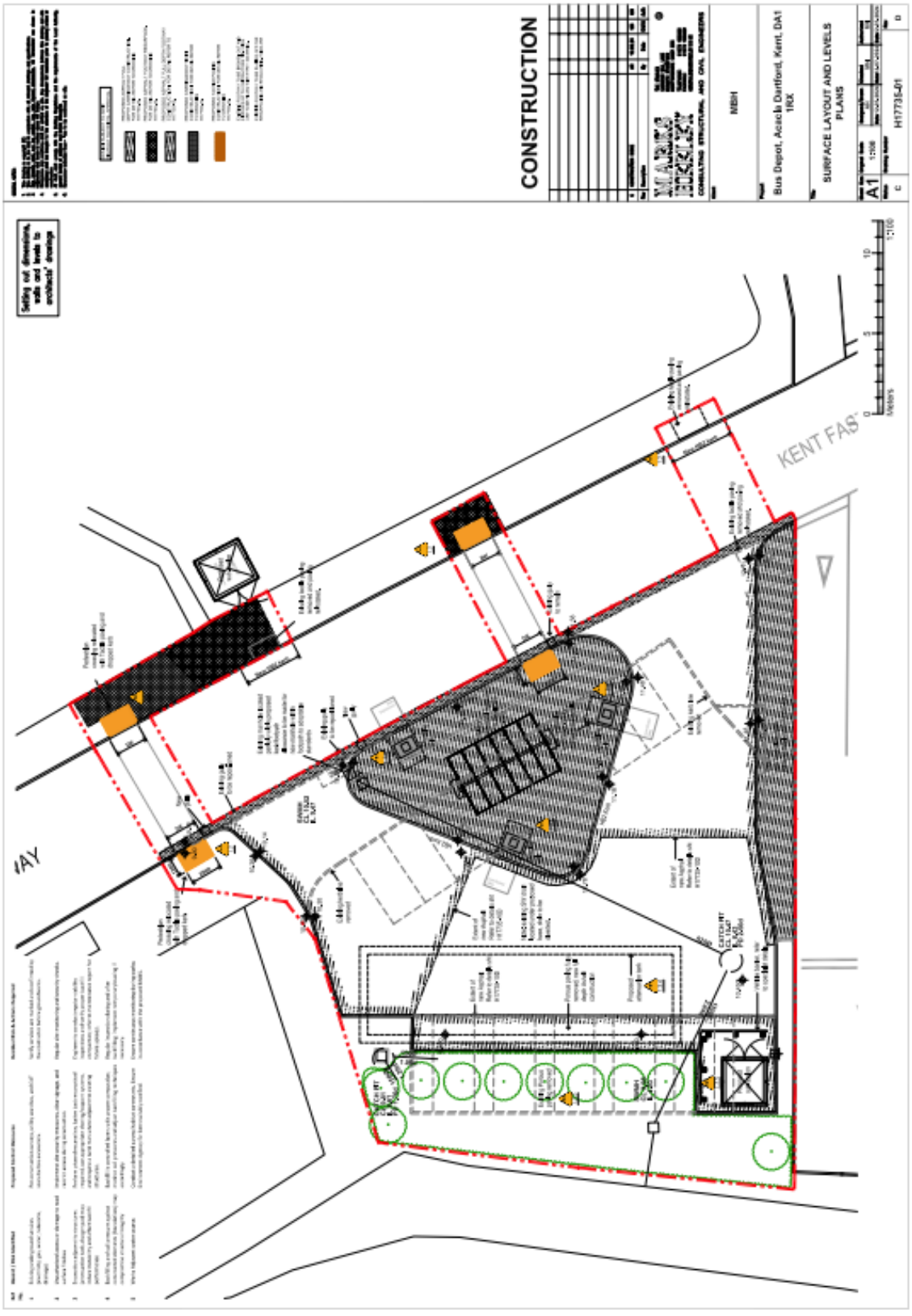
Installation of electric bus charging infrastructure at Acacia Hall Car Park, South of Dartford Town Centre - DA/25/467 (KCC/DA/0047/2025)

Proposed Site Plan



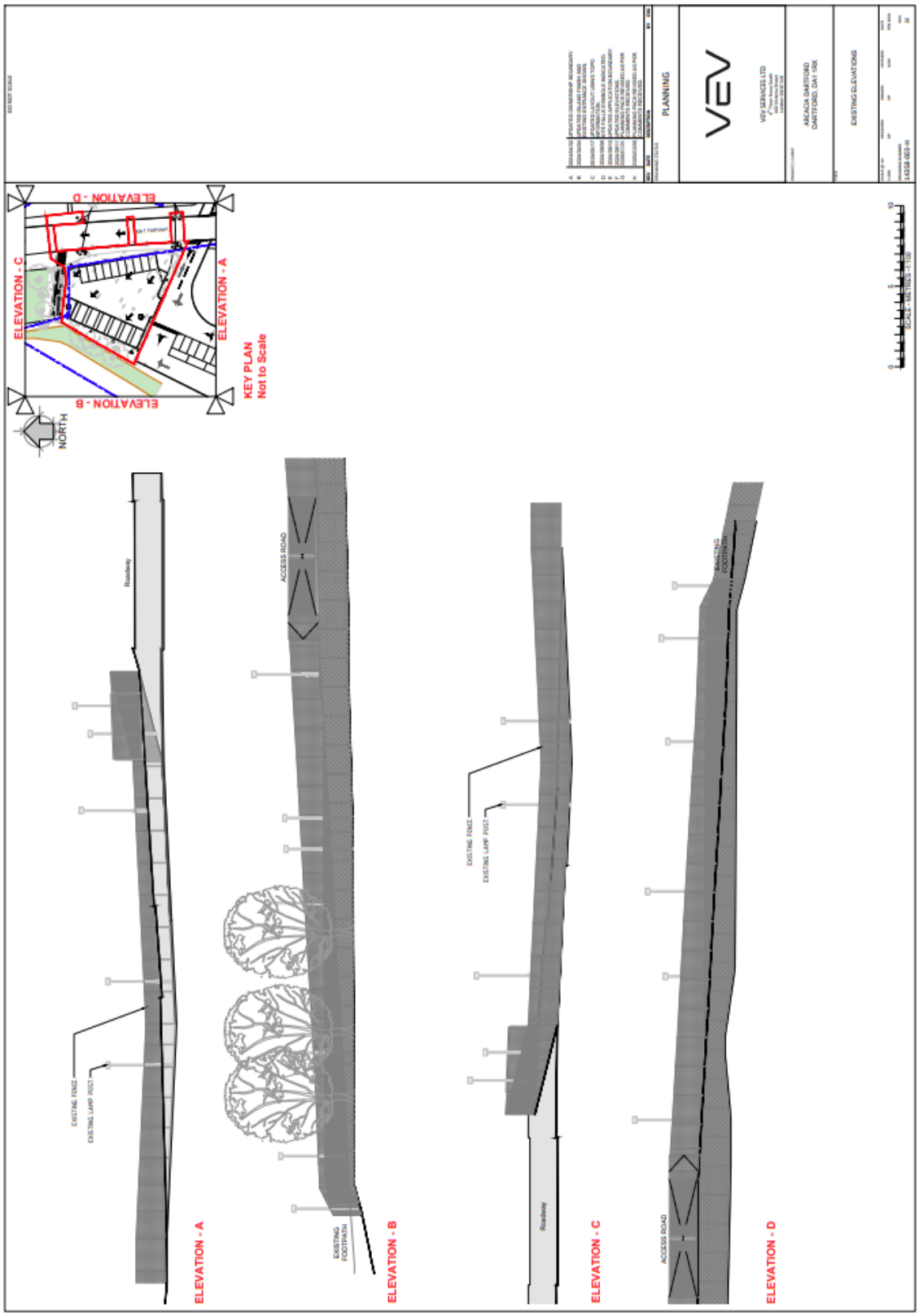
Installation of electric bus charging infrastructure at Acacia Hall Car Park, South of Dartford Town Centre - DA/25/467 (KCC/DA/0047/2025)

Surface Layout and Levels Plan



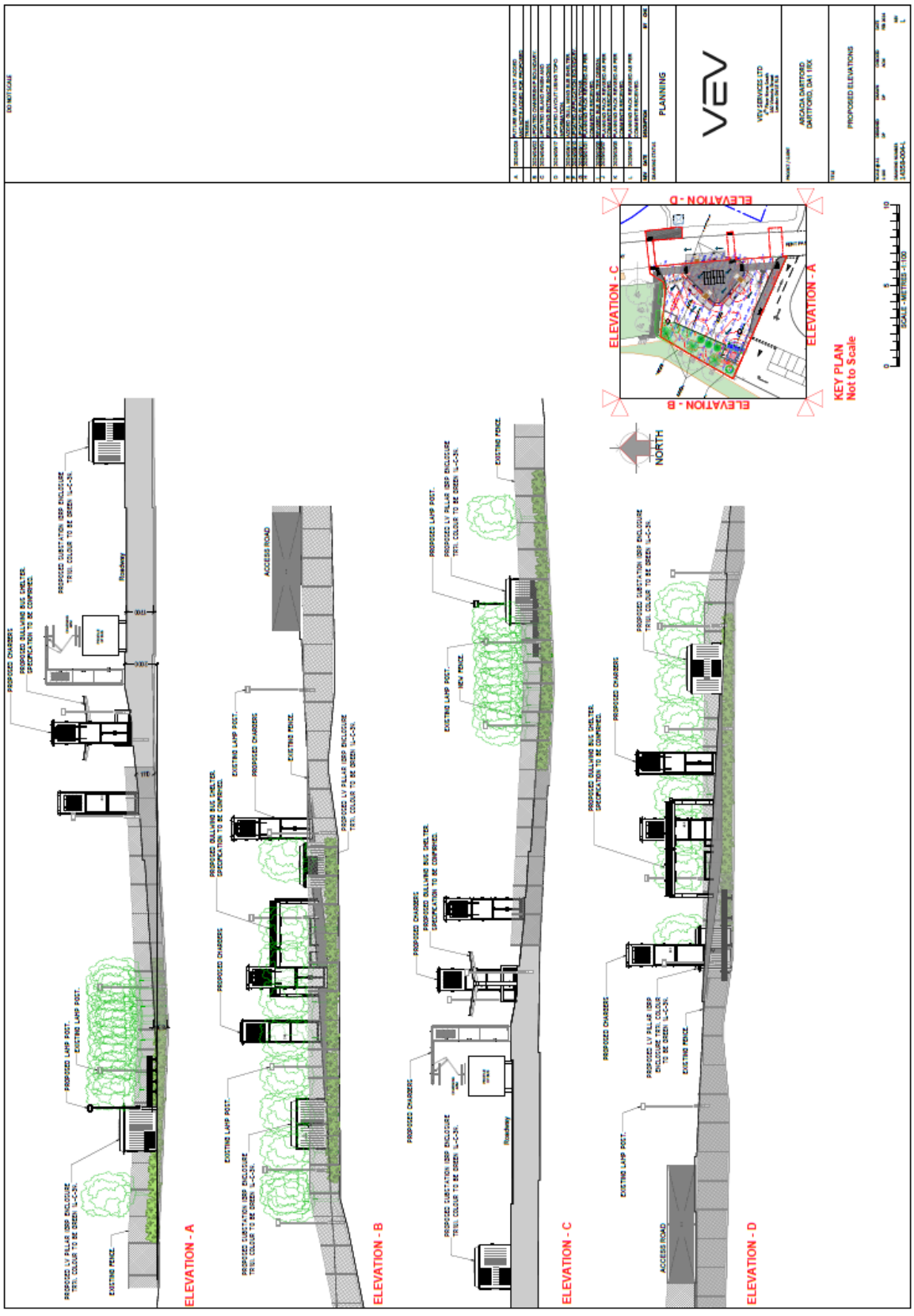
Installation of electric bus charging infrastructure at Acacia Hall Car Park, South of Dartford Town Centre - DA/25/467 (KCC/DA/0047/2025)

Existing Elevations



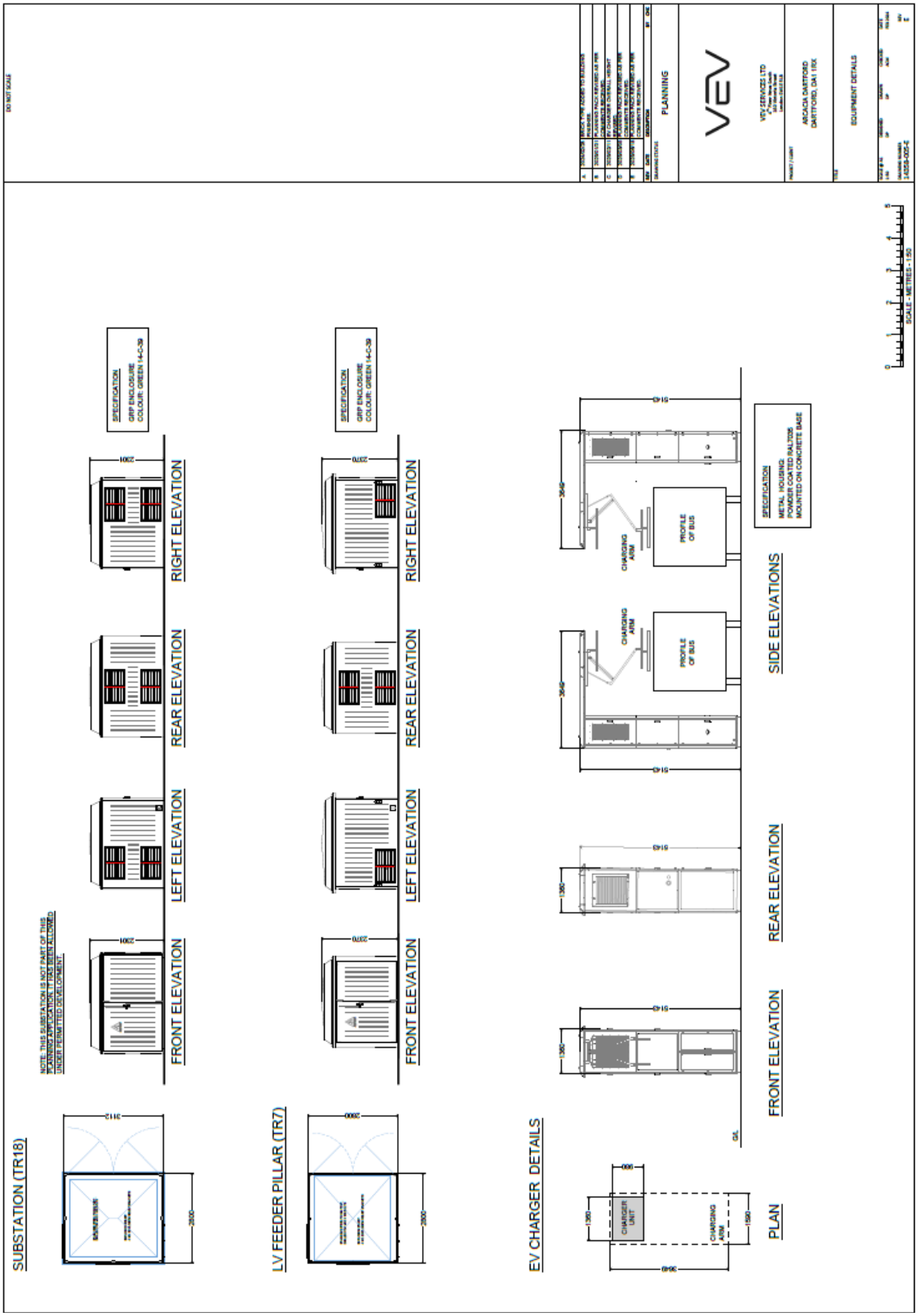
Installation of electric bus charging infrastructure at Acacia Hall Car Park, South of Dartford Town Centre - DA/25/467 (KCC/DA/0047/2025)

Proposed Elevations



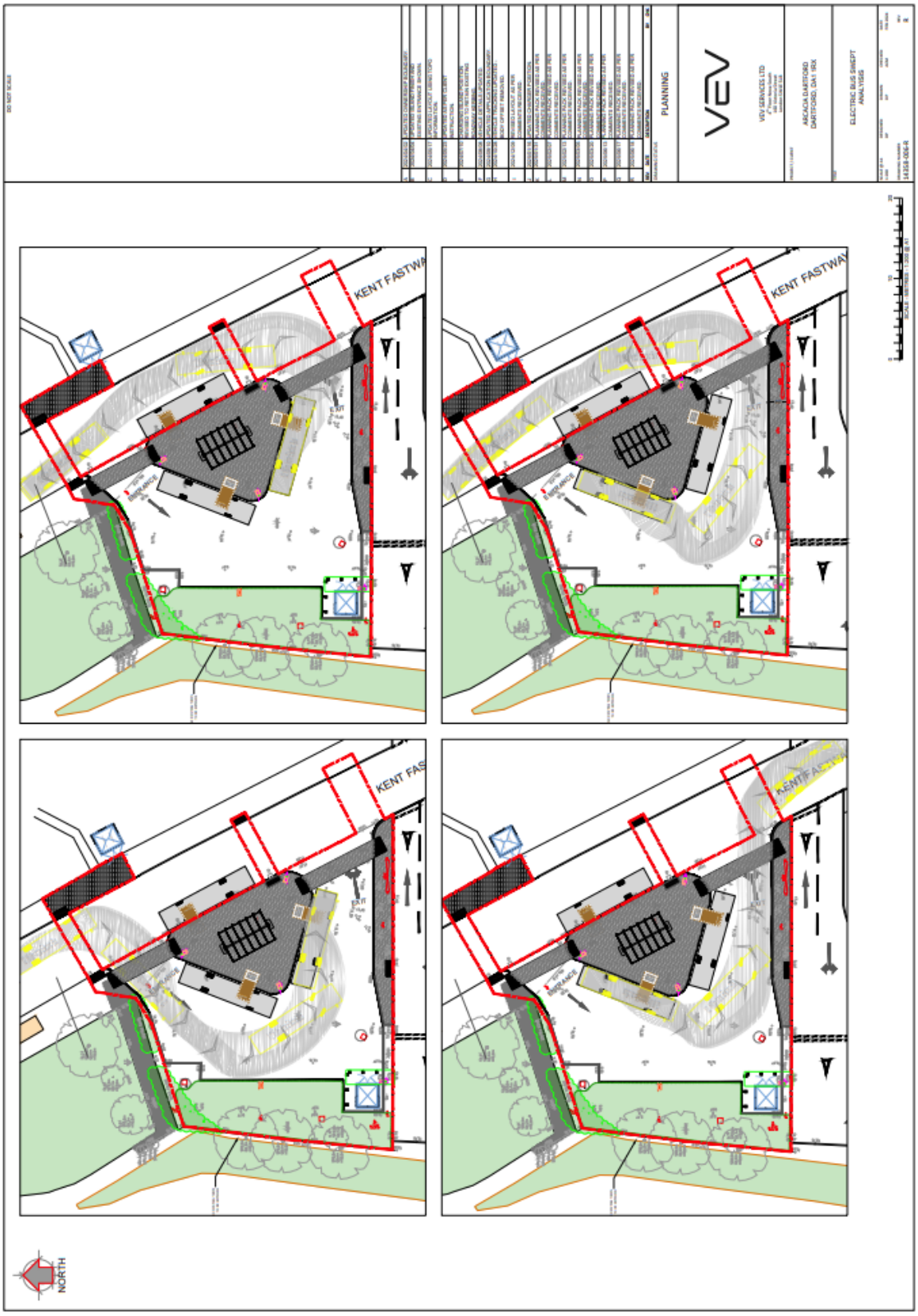
Installation of electric bus charging infrastructure at Acacia Hall Car Park, South of Dartford Town Centre - DA/25/467 (KCC/DA/0047/2025)

Proposed Equipment Details



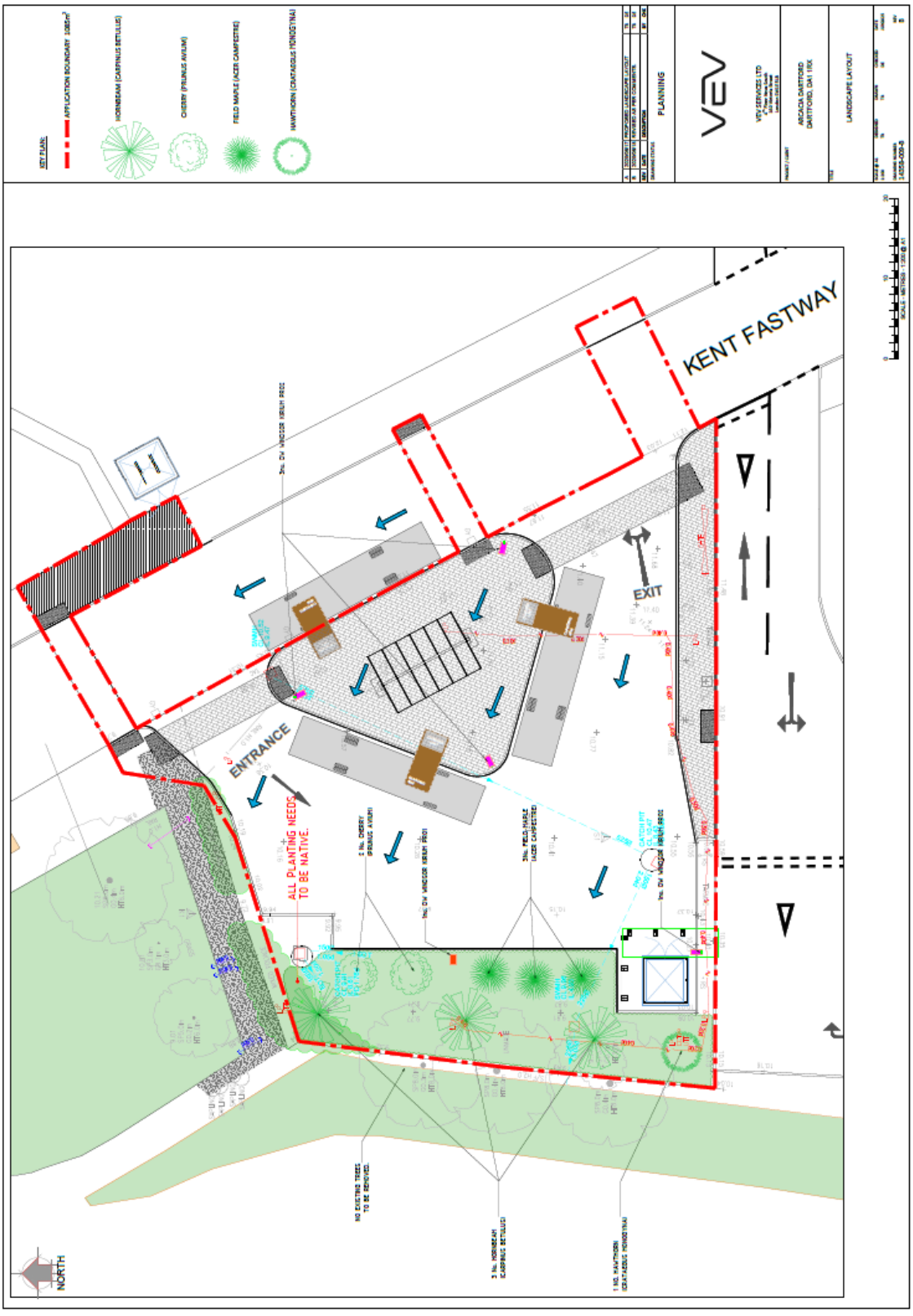
Installation of electric bus charging infrastructure at Acacia Hall Car Park, South of Dartford Town Centre - DA/25/467 (KCC/DA/0047/2025)

Electric Bus Swept Path Analysis



Installation of electric bus charging infrastructure at Acacia Hall Car Park, South of Dartford Town Centre - DA/25/467 (KCC/DA/0047/2025)

Proposed Landscape Layout



Installation of electric bus charging infrastructure at Acacia Hall Car Park, South of Dartford Town Centre - DA/25/467 (KCC/DA/0047/2025)

Image of Proposed Charger

3D image of the proposed electric bus chargers from Kent Fastway where vehicles cross to gain access to the Acacia Hall Car Park

Installation of electric bus charging infrastructure at Acacia Hall Car Park, South of Dartford Town Centre - DA/25/467 (KCC/DA/0047/2025)

3D images of the proposed electric bus chargers

10. As part of this scheme, a new vehicular entrance and exit is proposed to be created into the electric bus charging hub from the existing Kent Fastway which runs along the eastern boundary of the application site. The applicant has confirmed that the proposal would include several additional civil works, to aid with the practical and aesthetic utilisation of the site. These would include:
    - Formation of kerbed passenger waiting area using modular paving. Kerbing would include DDA compliant pedestrian access;
    - Block paving finish to island;
    - Reprofiling and resurfacing of the bus turning area for the bus hub to interface with the existing Kent Fastway including reconstruction of the existing grass verge;
    - Review existing street lighting and amend/extend as necessary to ensure lighting is suitable for an operational bus charging hub, whilst ensuring minimal light pollution to the surrounding residential area and low impact on the local biodiversity;
    - Road markings for 'bus stopping' areas in the relevant places around the new Fastrack bus charging hub island where the electric bus chargers would be located;
    - Continuous paving with raised section to facilitate ease of movement for wheelchair users and pedestrians;
    - A slight diversion of the existing PROW where it currently crosses the Kent Fastway (due to the proposed location of the vehicular entrance into the bus charging hub).

11. Further works include a proposed LV (low voltage) feeder pillar to be located in the southwestern corner of the application site, surrounded by an Armco barrier for protection. A total of 5 new lighting columns are proposed (3 located within the triangular bus island, 1 located by the LV feeder pillar and 1 located at the edge of the widened grass verge along the western boundary). The applicant has confirmed that the proposed lighting strategy for the site has been carefully developed to minimise potential light spill, using low-level, directional LED luminaires with no upward light output.

12. It is intended that the Acacia Hall Bus Hub would operate as an operational bus charging station, with a passenger waiting area to replace the existing Mill bus stop and shelter (located on the Kent Fast way route, to the north of the application site). The Fastrack services operates over 4 routes over a 24 hour period.

13. The applicant has confirmed that the number of electric buses using the chargers would vary between a minimum of 1 charge per hour (at night) and maximum of 12 charges per hour at regular intervals (Monday to Sunday daytime) across the proposed 3 chargers depending on day, time of day, and number of electric bus routes operating. It is expected that the charging time would be between 30 seconds and 6 minutes per charge depending on operational needs. The charging would most often take place during the bus passenger pickup and drop off time.

Planning Policy

14. The following Guidance/Statements and Development Plan Policies summarised below are relevant to the consideration of the application:

(i) **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2024** and the **National Planning Policy Guidance**, sets out the Government's planning policy guidance for England, at the heart of which is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The guidance is a material consideration for the determination of planning applications but does not change the statutory status of the development plan which remains the starting point for decision making. However, the weight given to development plan policies will depend on their consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the development plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

In determining applications, the NPPF states that local planning authorities should approach decisions in a positive and creative way, and decision takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

In terms of delivering sustainable development in relation to this development proposal, the NPPF guidance and objectives covering the following matters are of particular relevance:

- Planning decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation *(paragraph 90)*.

- public rights of way should be protected and enhanced, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users *(paragraph 105).*

- transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, using a vision-led approach to identify transport solutions that deliver well-designed, sustainable and popular places. This should involve realising opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure and changing transport technology and usage *(paragraph 109).*

- whether impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity or congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree *(paragraph 115)*. Development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road would be severe *(paragraph 116).*

- applications for development should be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations *(paragraph 117).*

- achieving the requirement for high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. Planning decisions should ensure that developments would function well and add to the overall quality of an area; be visually attractive as a result of good architecture; layout and appropriate and effective landscaping; be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting; establish or maintain a strong sense of place, creating a welcoming and distinctive place to live, work and visit; include an appropriate mix of development and support local facilities and transport networks; and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible *(paragraph 135).*

- the planning system should support the transition to net zero by 2050 and take full account of all climate impacts including overheating, water scarcity, storm and flood risks and coastal change. It should help to shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure (*paragraph 161).*

- when determining planning applications for all forms of renewable and low carbon energy developments, local planning authorities should not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy and give significant weight to the benefits associated with renewable and low carbon energy generation and the proposal's contribution to a net zero future *(paragraph 168)*.

- planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment, minimise impacts on and provide net gains for biodiversity, and prevent new and existing development from contributing to unacceptable levels for soil, air, water or noise pollution *(paragraph 187).*

- planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including the setting) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage assets conservation and any aspect of the proposal *(paragraph 208).*

(ii) The adopted **The Dartford Plan, Dartford Borough's Local Plan to 2037 (adopted April 2024)**

Policy S1 **Borough Spatial Strategy**: Seeks to ensure that sustainable development will occur at planned locations in the Borough to meet assessed needs, securing new infrastructure provision and brownfield land re-use, creating neighbourhoods resilient and adaptive to climate change. Development should provide a diverse and complementary balance of uses and services within settlements and minimise the necessity to travel by private vehicles.

Section 7 part b, seeks the provision of infrastructure, and improvements to walking and cycling links, railway stations and the bus/Fastrack networks.

Policy S2 **Infrastructure Planning Strategy:** Seeks that Borough development will be plan-led, and major proposals master planned and phased, in order to ensure the co-ordinated delivery of new infrastructure, and that demand is managed to remain within capacity as far as possible until necessary new infrastructure is provided. New services and facilities will be provided to meet Dartford Borough's needs with key infrastructure provision.

Section 4, part b, seeks the provision of new and improved Fastrack and other bus services/routes, including addressing non-dedicated

sections of Fastrack routes which are vulnerable to general traffic congestion and bus priority at junctions where possible.

Policy S3 **Climate Change Strategy**: Seeks to ensure that development is well located, and innovatively designed and constructed, to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. Development in the Borough should contribute to minimising carbon emissions from properties and processes, and reducing the need for unsustainable travel, avoiding vulnerability and increasing resilience to the effects of climate change by a package of bespoke measures integrated within development at an early stage of design and planning.

Section 7 seeks to ensure that the design, location and construction of development will minimise energy consumption and incorporate renewable or low/zero carbon energy sources, and allow for other new sustainable technologies to be provided or readily incorporated in the future.

Policy M1 **Good Design for Dartford**: Seeks that development must be shown to be suitable in terms of its height, mass, form, scale, orientation, siting, access, overlooking, overshadowing, detailing, and landscaping relative to neighbouring buildings and the wider locality. Development should satisfy all of the locally specific criteria for good design in the Borough, including amongst others, that appropriate regard is had to connectivity, heritage assets, & biodiversity gain.

Policy M2 **Environmental and Amenity Protection**: Seeks to ensure that development is designed and located to not result in unacceptable material impacts on neighbouring uses including, amongst other matters, in relation to air quality, intensity of use, noise disturbance, and light pollution.

Policy M3 **Sustainable Technology, Construction and Performance**: Seeks to ensure that the design, construction and whole life carbon cost of development must contribute to the mitigation of, and adaption to, climate change. This includes, but is not limited to, reducing embodied and operational carbon emissions. Applicants should demonstrate best endeavours to use recognised assessment tools/quality standards.

Section 9 states that in determining applications for small and large scale low/zero carbon technology and installations, the economic and environmental benefits of the proposal will be weighed against the individual and cumulative impact of the development.

Policy M4 **Flood Risk and Riverside Design**: Seeks to ensure that development with a frontage along the Rivers Thames or Darent will be expected to fully explore the potential for improving, amongst other matters, biodiversity. Planning permission for development will only be granted where it can be demonstrated that the site is safe from all types of flooding, now and for the lifetime of the development, taking into

account the effects of climate change and it does not materially displace flood water or worsen flood risk elsewhere.

Policy M5 **Designated Heritage Assets:** Designated heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. Any harm or loss will require clear and convincing justification.

Section 5 states that development proposals affecting listed buildings must have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting. Loss of or harm to a statutorily listed building or its setting will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.

Section 6 states that development proposals affecting a conservation area must pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

Policy M6 **Historic Environment Strategy**: Seeks to ensure that development must contribute to the conservation and enjoyment of the Borough's historic environment.

Development proposals which may affect the significance of both designated and non-designated heritage assets or their setting must demonstrate how these assets will be protected, conserved or enhanced as appropriate. Proposals must aim to reflect and interpret the historic character of a site and conserve its most significant historical and/or architectural aspects.

Policy M14 **Biodiversity and Landscape**: Section 3 seeks to ensure that developments will protect and enhance biodiversity. In the event that development adversely affects any existing habitats, this must be replaced by compensatory habitat of a similar type, size and condition in close proximity to that which is being lost. The new national requirements for at least 10% biodiversity net gain will apply to all applicable developments. Developers must be able to demonstrate that impacts on ecology and biodiversity could not reasonably be avoided or mitigated on-site before biodiversity offsetting off-site will be considered. Biodiversity Net Gain will be measured using DEFRA's latest biodiversity metric and habitats will need to be secured for at least 30 years.

Section 4 seeks to ensure that all new developments be designed and laid out in a way which is sympathetic to their landscape setting.

.

Policy M16 **Active Travel, Access and Parking:** Seeks to ensure that development must be of a design and layout that promotes walking, cycling and public transport use through provision of attractive, well-designed and safe routes which address the needs of users. Design features should be provided for people with mobility and sensory difficulties, especially at road crossing points, public transport stops, and changes in level on walking routes.

Other Material Considerations

15. In addition to the considerations arising from the planning policy section above, local finance considerations and other strategy documents are also material considerations for the determination of this application.

(i) The **local finance considerations arising from Section 143 of the Localism Act 2011**.
Section 143 amends Section 70 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (determination of applications for planning permission: general considerations) such that in the determination of a planning application, the local planning authority must have regard to:

(a) the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application;
(b) any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application, and
(c) any other material considerations.

Section 70(4) of the 1990 Act (as amended) defines a local finance consideration as a grant or other financial assistance that has been, that will or that could be provided to a relevant authority by a Minister of the Crown. In this case, the financial assistance is that arising from the award of a one off payment of £6,006,021 granted by the Department for Transport (DfT) under their Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas (ZEBRA) scheme. This is a new scheme introduced by the Department for Transport (DfT) to encourage local authorities to work in conjunction with local transport partners and apply for additional support funding to accelerate the introduction of fully electric public transport in towns and cities across the UK. In deciding an application for planning permission where a local financial consideration is material, decision takers need to ensure that the reasons supporting the decision clearly state how the consideration has been taken into account and its connection to the development.

(ii) The **County Council's Local Transport Plan 5: Striking the Balance (2024-2037) (LTP5)** adopted in December 2024 sets out the following:

1. Our Ambition for Transport in the County: We want to improve the health, wellbeing, and economic prosperity of lives in Kent by delivering a safe, reliable, efficient and affordable transport network across the county and as an international gateway. We will plan for growth in Kent in a way that enables us to combat climate change and preserve Kent's environment. We will do this by delivering emission-free travel by getting effective dedicated infrastructure to electrify vehicles, increase public transport use and make walking and cycling attractive.

2. Policy Objective 7: Reduce the volume of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions entering the atmosphere associated with surface transport activity on the KCC managed highway network by an amount greater than our forecast "business as usual" scenario. This means achieving a greater fall than those currently forecast of 9% by 2027, 19% by 2032 and 29% by 2037.

Consultations

16. The following consultee responses were received:

Dartford Borough Council made detailed comments on the proposal which are summarised below:

Whilst noting that the Dartford Local Plan to 2037 supports the principle of the development which would facilitate green energy, and recognises the benefits of the conversion of Fastrack buses to electric, the Borough Council considers it important to assess the details and impacts of the proposed bus charging infrastructure, particularly given the sensitive nature of the proposed location. The Borough Council request that KCC, as planning authority, take the following into account in reaching a balanced determination of this application:

- impact of the proposal on visual amenity and town centre landscape amenity, given the intervisibility between the site and the town centre;
- need for the development in this location;
- impact of the development on the character and appearance of the adjoining Conservation Area, and the setting of nearby Listed Buildings;
- a requirement for the submission of a detailed landscaping scheme, to include native species, and a maintenance and management plan for such planting;
- a requirement for a condition requiring details of any further structures on site, including bus shelters, to be agreed;
- highway matters (including proposed junction relationships, vehicle access to the carpark, and pedestrian routes across the site towards the town centre);
- impact on neighbouring occupiers and their amenity, including from intensification of use of the site, noise, light and air pollution;
- clarity is required regarding levels and the reprofiling of the site, and potential archaeological impact. The County Archaeologist should advise, and
- impact on ecological matters needs to be carefully considered given the sites location close to the River Darent, existing mature trees and areas of landscaping. Advice should be sought from the Environment Agency, KCC's Flood and Water Management Officer, and KCC's Ecologist.

KCC Highways and Transportation Officer raises no objection to the proposal subject to the imposition of conditions for the completion and maintenance of the access and egress points to the electric bus charging hub; the permanent retention of the pedestrian visibility splays with no obstruction over 0.6m above the carriageway level within the splays, and the removal of existing pedestrian crossing points and the reinstatement of the footway and kerbs in accordance with details to be submitted and approved prior to the use of the site commencing. An informative is also requested which reminds the applicant that planning permission does not convey any approval to carry out works on or affecting the public highway.

Public Rights of Way (West Kent PROW Team) raise no objection to the proposal.

KCC Ecologist raises no objection subject to the imposition of conditions, including the deemed condition requiring the submission and approval of the Biodiversity Gain Plan prior to the commencement of development; a condition to secure the submission of a simple landscaping management plan, and details of the precautionary mitigation required to clear any vegetation to be included within a construction environmental management plan.

KCC County Archaeological Officer raises no objection subject to the imposition of two conditions, one to secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written specification and timetable to be approved by the County Planning Authority and one to provide a Post Excavation Assessment Report for approval within 6 months of the completion on site.

KCC Conservation Officer raises no objection to the application. Having reviewed the proximity of the proposed works to the heritage assets, including Listed Buildings and the Conservation Area, together with the site topography and surrounding features and landscaping, the Conservation Officer concluded that the proposal would cause less than substantial harm to the setting of heritage assets.

Environment Agency raise no objection subject to conditions requiring the submission of a strategy to deal with the potential risks associated with any contamination prior to commencement of development; a verification report to be submitted before the development is first bought into use; no further development being undertaken if additional contamination is found that had not previously identified; and no infiltration of surface water into the ground without consent. A drainage informative has also been requested which reminds the applicant that only clean uncontaminated water should drain to the surface water system.

KCC Flood and Water Management Officer raises no objection subject to the imposition of a condition for a verification report pertaining to the surface water drainage system to be submitted prior to first use of the development.

Local Member

17. The former local County Member for Dartford East, Penny Cole, was notified of the application on 23 Apil 2025. Following the County Council elections in May 2025, the newly elected Member, Ryan Waters, was notified of the application on the 8 May 2025. No views have been received.

Publicity

18. The application was publicised by the posting of 12 site notices and an advertisement in a local newspaper, which was published on 1 May 2025.

Representations

19. In response to the publicity, 2 letters of objection and 1 letter of support to the application have been received.

    A summary of the main planning issues raised is set out below:

    <u>Support</u>

    - The bus network in and around Dartford is in serious need of investment.
    - The charging points are proposed on the furthest edge of an existing large car park and next to a busway, so the claim that the proposal could affect heritage assets ‘is a bit of a stretch’.

Objection

- There are no proposed levels on the Proposed Site Plan, making it impossible to see how the ground levels are changing.
- What are the proposals for the alteration of the PROW? The route currently is poor and sightlines almost non-existent.
- There is no information submitted to demonstrate what the impact would be from the loss of the parking spaces on the wider highway network with regards to any overspill.
- The proposed charging structures, given their elevated position in the context of the wider landscape, would be highly visible from the Conservation Area and harm the character and appearance of the area.
- While an Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has been submitted, it does not amount to a full desk-based Archaeological Assessment. Given the potential for disturbance to below-ground remains, this omission is significant.
- Whilst the proposal seeks to bolster tree planting along the northwestern boundary of the site the tree planting does not reach a sufficient height to provide adequate screening for properties to the west. Given that the proposal solely relies on the provision of tree planting as screening mitigation, which will take a number of years to grow it is not considered that this level of planting is adequate to shield neighbouring properties from light spill or protect the privacy of its residents.
- A Noise Impact Assessment (NIA) has not been submitted to support the application. There is no accompanying information to demonstrate a noise assessment has been carried out regarding noise associated with the charging infrastructure and the use of the site as a bus stop for members of the public.

Discussion

20. In considering this proposal regard must be had to the Development Plan Policies outlined in paragraph 14 above. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) states that applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The proposal therefore needs to be considered in the context of the Development Plan Policies, Government Guidance and other material planning considerations arising from consultation, publicity and in this case the Localism Act.

21. This application is being reported for determination by the Planning Applications Committee due to objections received from two local residents following publicity of the application. In my opinion, the key material planning considerations in this particular case are the principle of development and the need; funding matters arising from the Localism Act; siting and design; impact on residential amenity including noise and light pollution; heritage and archaeological impacts; transportation and highway considerations; Public Rights of Way; Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain; drainage and contamination, and construction.

Principle of Development and Need

22. Fastrack Kent Thameside is a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service operating in the Gravesham and Dartford area. This existing Fastrack BRT network has been in place since 2006 and provides fast, reliable, and efficient transport across Kent Thameside.

There are currently four Fastrack bus routes in Kent Thameside, serving around 2.8 million passengers per annum. The Fastrack coverage area includes Dartford, Bluewater, Ebbsfleet, Gravesend, Amazon LCY3 and Greenhithe. This service is also key to future local housing developments including the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation Masterplan.

23. Fastrack is also seen as an integral part of the regeneration of the Northwest Kent area, providing essential access to business and employment opportunities, education, healthcare and shopping. It links key destinations and points of interest via a mix of dedicated bus lanes with priority signalling and shared carriageway. The area surrounding the Fastrack routes is due for significant development and growth in the coming years and, with current levels of traffic congestion considered to be at critical levels, Fastrack is central to supporting the growth agenda by increasing the modal share between public transport and cars.

24. The applicant advises that the main objectives of this proposed scheme are as follows:
    - To provide charging points for electric buses at Acacia Car Park.
    - To make public transport more accessible for people travelling into Dartford Station & Dartford Town Centre, and from Dartford to nearby sites of importance such as Darent Valley Hospital, Bluewater & Ebbsfleet International.
    - To reduce the emissions created by public transport services in Kent.

25. The Gravesham Bus Hub, which includes electric bus charging infrastructure, was granted planning permission by the County Planning Authority in November 2020 (application reference GR/20/848) and is anticipated to be fully operational from September 2025. Further bus charging facilities are required in Dartford to support the electrification of the Fastrack Kent Thameside BRT network. The applicant has identified the application site at Acacia Hall Car Park to be the location for the bus charging facilities required in Dartford.

26. Due to a delay in constructing and energising the electric charging infrastructures at the Gravesham and Dartford sites, this necessitated implementing the London General Transport Service Limited (as Go-Ahead) contract with a temporary diesel fleet of buses. Partial progress on delivery of the charging infrastructure means that the Gravesend site is soon to be energised and, at this point, it is anticipated a portion of the electric buses would enter into service. Eleven diesel vehicles would be retained to operate the route terminating at Acacia Hall at this time. The applicant has confirmed that operating a mixed fleet creates significant complications on the delivery of the bus service for the operator.

27. The applicant has identified a number of consequences should it be unsuccessful in securing planning permission for the second terminus at Acacia Hall. These include:
    - Loss of opportunity for cleaner air and carbon reduction by not fully using the new Fastrack vehicle fleet for the residents of Dartford and Gravesend.
    - Complication in operation of a mixed fleet of buses leading to reduced reliability and punctuality.
    - Reduced fare revenue income on Fastrack due to reduced fleet performances.
    - Risk of long term vehicle battery degradation from under use of the vehicles.
    - Risk of vehicle damage in storage/transfer.
    - Reputational risk to Kent County Council and the Fastrack brand.

- Risk of request for the partial return of ZEBRA funding to the DfT (£6 million) (see paragraphs 32 to 34 below).
- Potential loss of credibility in ability to deliver DfT grants in the future and therefore limiting access to further grants.

28. The adopted Dartford Plan, Dartford Borough's Local Plan to 2037 (adopted April 2024) sets out in Policy S2, the need for necessary infrastructure to be in place to support the provision of new and improved Fastrack services. Furthermore, Policy S1, seeks the provision of infrastructure and improvements to the bus/Fastrack networks, while Policy S3 seeks to minimise carbon emissions and energy consumption and incorporate renewable or low/zero carbon energy sources. The proposed development would therefore accord with these elements of the Dartford Borough Core Strategy.

29. The County Councils Local Transport Plan 5: Striking the Balance (2024-2037) (LTP5), adopted in December 2024, seeks to combat climate change by delivering emission-free travel by introducing effective dedicated infrastructure to electrify vehicles and to increase public transport use. Furthermore there is support to reduce the volume of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions entering the atmosphere associated with surface transport activity on the KCC managed highway.

30. In terms of the overarching guidance of the NPPF, at the heart is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It also states that the planning system should support the transition to net zero by 2050 and take full account of all climate impacts. It should help to contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure (*paragraph 161).* Furthermore, when determining planning applications for all forms of renewable and low carbon energy developments, local planning authorities should give significant weight to the benefits associated with renewable and low carbon energy generation and the proposal's contribution to a net zero future *(paragraph 168)*.

31. It is evident from the above that there is clear policy support and backing for the delivery of the infrastructure required for the electrification of the Dartford Fastrack scheme.

Funding – Localism Act

32. Whilst monetary matters are not usually a relevant material consideration in the determination of planning applications, in this case, not having regard to the finance considerations in relation to the Localism Act (2011) would mean that the Committee had not assessed all relevant material planning considerations in its decision making. Paragraph 143 of the Localism Act 2011, titled '*Applications for Planning Permission: Local Finance Considerations'* states that local planning authorities should have regard to local finance considerations as a material consideration where they are relevant to the application before them. Local finance considerations are thereafter defined as 'a grant or other financial assistance that has been, or will be, provided to a relevant authority by a Minister of the Crown'.

33. KCC strategically commissioned the purchase and 15-year operation of an electric bus fleet to operate the Fastrack Thameside network. A tender exercise led to the signature of a contract with London General Transport Service Limited (as Go-Ahead) to operate Fastrack Thameside Network. The contract cost includes a one-off payment of £6,006,021 granted by the Department for Transport (DfT) under its Zero Emission Bus

Regional Areas (ZEBRA) scheme and an on-going service charge of £7 million per year for 15 years starting from November 2024 mostly funded by bus fare revenue. The ZEBRA scheme was introduced by the Department for Transport (DfT) to encourage local authorities to work in conjunction with local transport partners and apply for additional support funding to accelerate the introduction of fully electric public transport in towns and cities across the UK. The contract sponsored the purchase of 28 electric vehicles which were delivered in November 2024, worth £12 million. These vehicles require access to on-street fast chargers to operate, so are currently not in full operation.

34. The securing of the above funding for the delivery of the Acacia Hall electric bus charging hub is therefore, in this instance, a material consideration in the determination of this planning application. As set out by the applicant above, should permission not be granted for this scheme, there is the potential risk of a request for the partial return of the ZEBRA funding to the DfT (£6 million), and a further risk to the County Council in losing credibility in our ability to deliver DfT grants in the future, potentially limiting access to further grants. I therefore consider that this matter should be given significant weight in the determination of this application.

Siting and Design

35. The proposed location for the electric bus charging infrastructure had been identified by the applicant based on a combination of operational efficiency, minimal disruption to the existing transport network, and the opportunity to repurpose underutilised land. Situated approximately 10 metres from an existing bus stop and shelter (The Mill) and immediately adjacent to the existing Kent Fastway, the applicant has confirmed that the site would enable a seamless access for buses without the need for diversion from established routes. This would promote continuity of service and would avoid additional movements through Dartford Town Centre or surrounding residential areas, thereby supporting the efficient and sustainable operation of the network.

36. Importantly, the site lies outside the core of Dartford's historic centre, significantly reducing potential impacts on designated heritage assets in comparison to more centrally located alternatives. The Acacia Hall car park, which is in Dartford Borough Council's ownership, had been unused for over a year prior to the submission of this planning application, with no resulting pressure on capacity in the adjacent parking areas. This suggests that the site could be viably repurposed for charging infrastructure without adverse effects on local parking provision.

37. Initially, a site at Home Gardens was considered for the charging hub as this is where the current bus interchange is located in Dartford. However, the Borough Council raised concerns regarding the potential visual harm of the Home Gardens site, particularly given the site's proximity to the Civic Centre. To explore this further, a detailed feasibility study was commissioned, which was followed by feasibility design drawings in August 2022. These documents provided early indications of the comparative benefits of the Acacia Hall site.

38. Subsequently, in March 2023, UK Power Networks (UKPN) formally confirmed the electrical constraints at Home Gardens, and that there were already competing demands for electricity capacity. This would significantly limit the ability to secure the required capacity for an electric bus charging hub at that location. The applicant

advises that they then engaged with Dartford Borough Council officers to reflect on these issues and document the rationale for prioritising the Acacia Hall car park site as the more viable and deliverable option.

39. I am therefore satisfied that the applicant has considered alternative sites for the proposed electric bus charging hub and, due to the unsuitability of the Home Gardens site in terms of the required power supply, has selected the application site for operational efficiency, minimal disruption to the existing transport network, and the opportunity to repurpose underutilised land.

40. The site plan accompanying the planning application includes detailed information derived from a topographical survey. This survey has accurately captured the existing site levels and illustrates the proposed finished levels post-development. The applicant has confirmed that the central hub area and associated roadway have been designed to follow the existing topography as closely as possible, thereby minimising any significant alterations to the current ground levels. The installation of pantograph chargers has also been carefully considered, with all units to be mounted upright on plinths that are positioned in accordance with the surveyed site gradient. Specifically, over the 13m length of the newly raised island, there would be an approximate level difference of 470mm (47cms). This equates to a 3.6% gradient, or a 1:26 slope ratio, which falls within acceptable standards for accessibility and operational functionality.

41. To minimise the visual impact of the charging system on the nearby area, the applicant confirmed that the charger selection process involved assessing the visual impact of the chargers, with the EKO pantograph charger providing a look that was considered to best fit the aims and suggestions of the Borough Council, with a streamlined design to soften the visual impact. The proposed use of a light grey colour finish for these structures has been carefully chosen to minimise visual impact and to integrate with the natural surroundings as it is recognised that some elements of the development, such as the pantograph height, may be partially visible from certain viewpoints. It should be noted that the chargers themselves cannot be reduced in height due to operational requirements, so they have been limited to the minimum necessary height of 5.14m.

42. To reduce the visual impact of the electric bus chargers and to address concerns raised by the Borough Council, the applicant has proposed additional tree planting along the western boundary of the site. This planting would consist of native species such as Hornbeam, Field Maple, Hawthorn, and Wild Cherry, which are fast-growing, resilient trees capable of reaching heights of approximately 25 metres and providing effective long-term screening for nearby residents and the adjacent Dartford Town Centre Conservation Area.

43. Subject to the imposition of conditions regarding the landscaping scheme to be implemented as submitted, and be managed and maintained; the development being carried out in accordance with the submitted details and using the external materials and colour finishes as specified in the application documents, I consider that the siting and design of the proposed development is acceptable in principle. Subject to these conditions I consider that the development would accord with paragraphs 90, 135, and 187 of the NPPF and with Policies S1, M1, M2 and M14 of the Dartford Borough Local Plan. I would give this moderate weight.

Impact on Residential Amenity (including Noise and Light Pollution)

44. The proposed development would support the introduction of electric buses, replacing the existing diesel-powered vehicles. This transition would significantly reduce local noise emissions and improve the acoustic environment for nearby residents. Although the site would serve as a stop, it is important to note that this is proposed to replace the existing Mill stop located some 10m to the north of the application site. The applicant has confirmed that the site would not be a busy terminus, and passenger activity at this location is expected to remain minimal. Whilst the applicant acknowledges the concerns regarding general noise from operations, the combination of quieter electric vehicles and limited passenger use means the overall impact of this proposal would be low. Noise is discussed in great detail in paragraphs 47 to 53 below.

45. An updated lighting plan has been submitted which provides further clarity on the number, location and orientation of the proposed lighting columns. The proposed lighting is discussed in greater detail in paragraphs 54 to 61 below. Subject to the conditions proposed below, the impact upon amenity is considered acceptable.

46. To provide screening to protect the amenity of residential occupiers to the west and also to conserve the setting of the nearby Conservation Area, the application proposes the bolstering of the existing tree planting along the western boundary of the site. To further reduce visual impact and to enhance immediate visual mitigation, the proposed landscaping scheme includes semi-mature tree planting along the western boundary, as set out in paragraph 42 above. The use of semi-mature stock ensures visual benefits are delivered from the outset, rather than relying solely on long-term growth. Additionally, a Hornbeam is proposed to be positioned in the northwest corner of the site to fill a gap in the existing vegetation along the western boundary.

Noise

47. The facility is primarily intended as a charging point for Fastrack electric buses with some short-term layover, rather than a high-traffic passenger terminus. Passenger activity is expected to remain minimal. The applicant has confirmed that a recent 14 day report (2–16 June 2025) recorded just 39 boardings at The Mill and Acacia Hall combined, which is less than three per day on average. While alighting data was not captured, the applicant considered it is likely to be of a similarly low scale.

48. By comparison, Home Gardens accommodates approximately 750 boardings daily, clearly demonstrating that Acacia Hall is not a key passenger destination. Its potential to generate additional demand is inherently limited, regardless of how many bus routes might serve this site. Although Routes A and AZ would also visit the hub for charging purposes, they follow the same alignment to Home Gardens as Route B and therefore offer no new journey opportunities. As a result, it is considered that no material increase in passenger numbers would be expected.

49. In terms of bus operations, most services at Acacia Hall are scheduled to dwell for nine minutes. During these layover periods, charging times were expected to be brief, typically between 1 to 6 minutes, meaning that any associated noise from the charging infrastructure would be infrequent and short in duration, further limiting any potential impact on nearby receptors.

50. Specification reports have been provided as part of the planning application for the chargers and electric buses. The applicant has explained that to provide a sense of scale, a normal conversation typically measures around 60 dB, while a busy street can reach up to 80 dB. In contrast, the EKO pantograph bus chargers operate at a maximum of 65 dB, and the electric buses generally remain well below 66 dB, with that upper limit typically reached only during reversing - a manoeuvre not expected as part of routine activity on site. In comparison, traditional diesel buses can emit 80–85 dB during idling or acceleration. This means the switch to electric vehicles would reduce noise by approximately 15–20 dB, which on a logarithmic scale equates to a sound energy reduction of over 75%. In practical terms, the quiet hum of an electric bus is much closer to background ambient noise than the persistent rumble of a diesel engine, marking a significant improvement for nearby residents and passers-by.

51. Whilst recognising the concerns about potential operational noise, the overall impact on surrounding amenity is expected to be low. This would be due to the combination of quiet, zero-emission electric vehicles, short and infrequent layovers, minimal passenger activity and low-noise charging infrastructure. Collectively, these factors ensure that acoustic disruption would remain negligible, representing a substantial improvement over historic diesel operations and supporting a quieter, cleaner environment for nearby residents and visitors.

52. It is considered that the application would not result in an adverse impact in relation to noise during the operational phase, and that any impacts during construction would be dealt with through good construction management processes and enforced through adherence to an approved Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). It is considered that the wider benefits of providing the electric bus chargers and running quieter electric buses rather than diesel buses would off-set the temporary construction impacts, and therefore the scheme is considered to be acceptable in this regard.

53. I am therefore satisfied that the potential noise impact from the creation and operation of the proposed electric bus charging hub would be acceptable and that the combination of quieter electric vehicles and limited passenger use means the overall impact would be low. Noise emissions and the acoustic environment for nearby residents would arguably be improved.

Lighting

54. The planning application proposes a total of 5 new lighting columns with 3 light columns located within the triangular bus island, 1 light column by the LV feeder pillar and 1 light column at the edge of the widened grass verge along the western boundary. All new lighting columns are proposed to be 6m in height. The lighting strategy for the site has been carefully developed to minimise the potential for light spill, using low-level, directional LED luminaires with no upward light output.

55. It should be noted that an appropriate level of lighting is required so that pedestrian movements and vehicular activities can proceed safely. Poor lighting levels and/or the lack of lighting could lead to incidents involving injury through accident, and potential criminal damage and theft. The lighting proposed for this scheme would help to deter any antisocial behaviour or loitering in the area compared to the existing inadequately lit car park. Pedestrian and vehicle routes need to be adequately illuminated to provide safe passage on the site, and ingress and egress routes to be illuminated to compatible

levels with connecting roads. It should be noted that the existing Kent Fastway has lighting columns that measure 10 metres in height and so the proposed lighting would be viewed against the existing level of lighting.

56. The scheme is designed so as to ensure that external lighting would be concentrated in the appropriate areas and that upward light would be minimised, reducing unnecessary light pollution, energy consumption and nuisance to adjacent property. The proposed lighting has been designed to concentrate the main beam of illuminance onto each of the three bus and charger locations. The LED lamp sources would provide improved colour rendering requiring less intensity as well as providing for accurate targeting of light beams to restrict any spill light above and outside of the horizontal task plane. All external lighting would be controlled by a daylight sensor time switch which would prevent operation during daylight hours.

57. In designing the scheme, particular attention has been given to eliminating any light trespass and glare. Where appropriate, the applicant has advised that masking/shrouds would be fitted to the rear of the lanterns. Existing and proposed boundary treatment, along with the benefit of good lighting design with new LED technology would restrict any spillage of light and mitigate any nuisance to adjacent highways, neighbouring residents, and wildlife habitats.

58. Given the close proximity to the River Darent, the County Council's Ecologist has recommended that baffles are included on the lights closest to the River Darent to further minimise light spill. She further recommends that the lighting is switched off or dimmed for periods when the lighting is not required. The inclusion of baffles can be covered by the imposition of a planning condition and an informative to request that the lights are switched off or dimmed. My recommendation below addresses these.

59. It should also be noted that the applicant would welcome the imposition of a planning condition requiring a lighting strategy to be submitted and approved prior to the bus hubs first operation. This strategy would set out the exact specifications of the luminaires, their siting, mounting heights, beam angles, shielding measures, and illumination levels. It would also demonstrate compliance with the relevant best practice guidance and confirm that post-installation verification would be undertaken. The applicant has also confirmed that they would be happy to agree to a condition stating that no additional lighting could be installed on site unless further approval is first obtained.

60. I am therefore satisfied that the application has satisfactorily considered the potential lighting impact associated with the proposed electric bus charging hub and acknowledge that the proposed lighting scheme has been designed to minimise the impact of proposed lighting upon surrounding development.

61. Subject to the imposition of a condition regarding the submission of a lighting strategy including exact specifications of the luminaires, their siting, mounting heights, beam angles, shielding measures and illumination levels; and conditions regarding baffles to be included on the proposed lights nearest the river; post-installation verification of the installed lighting to be undertaken; no additional lighting to be installed at this site unless further approval is first obtained, and a landscaping scheme to be implemented as submitted and be managed and maintained, I consider that the development would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the residential amenity in terms of noise and

lighting impacts and would accord with paragraph 135 of the NPPF and Policies M1, M2, M5 and M14 of the Dartford Borough Local Plan. I would give this moderate to high weight.

Heritage and Archaeological Impacts

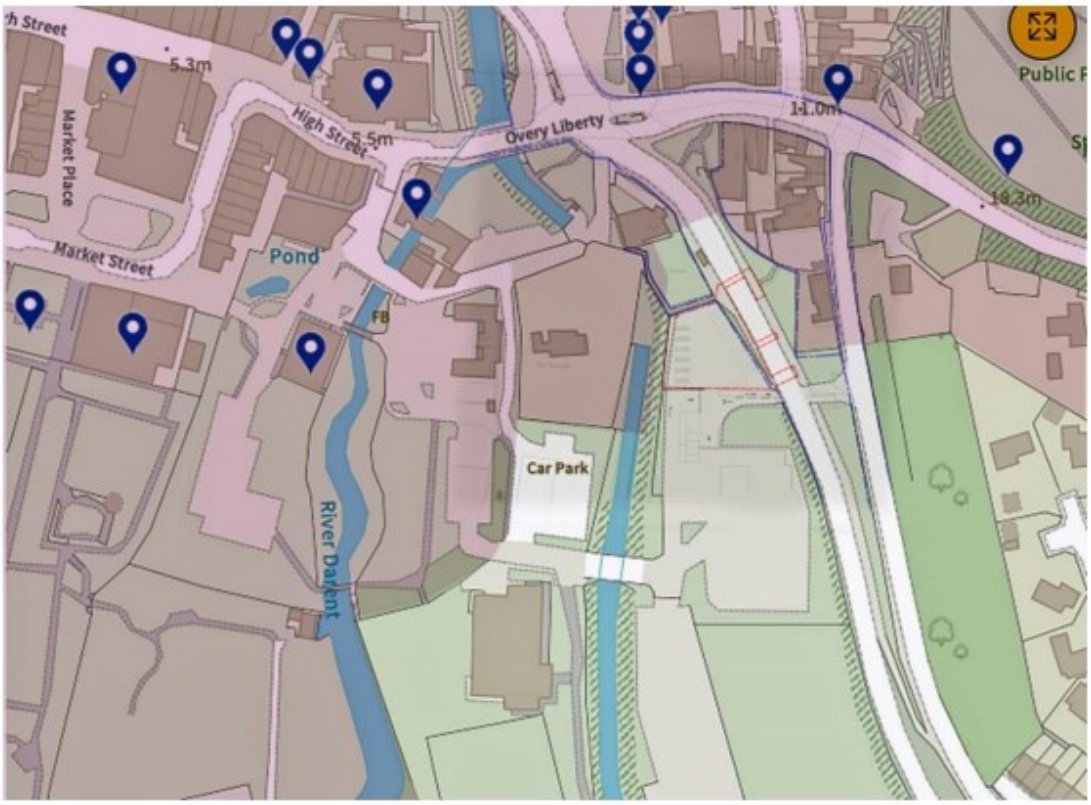
Heritage considerations

62. The planning application is supported by the submission of a Heritage Statement. From a heritage perspective, the site is visually and physically separated from the Dartford Town Centre Conservation Area by the Fastrack corridor, tree screening and existing buildings, a relationship acknowledged in the submitted Heritage Assessment and supported by the Dartford Conservation Area Appraisal. Although the tops of the pantograph chargers may be visible above the western tree line, these elements would be read against the existing vegetated backdrop to the east and would not appear starkly silhouetted on the skyline. The proposed light grey colour for the pantographs would minimise their visual prominence, and would be secured by a recommended planning condition.

63. In relation to heritage impact, the Heritage Assessment concludes that the proposal would result in no harm to the significance of nearby heritage assets. This conclusion is reached through a detailed site-based assessment, considering the topography, visibility, and existing landscape features. While it is acknowledged that judgments on heritage impact can vary, the mitigation proposed, including additional semi-mature tree planting and the careful selection of materials, would ensure that the proposal avoids adverse effects on the setting or significance of heritage assets.

64. The County Council's Conservation Officer was consulted on the planning application and has reviewed the proximity of the proposed works to the heritage assets, including the Listed Buildings and the Conservation Area, together with the site topography and surrounding features and landscaping. He has confirmed that in his opinion the proposals would cause less than substantial harm to the setting of nearby Listed Buildings and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. In light of the local objections as set out in paragraph 19 above, he further advises as follows.

Installation of electric bus charging infrastructure at Acacia Hall Car Park, South of Dartford Town Centre - DA/25/467 (KCC/DA/0047/2025)



Plan showing the area of the Dartford Town Centre Conservation Area

Photograph showing the location of the Listed Buildings near to the application site (which is edged in a red line)

65. The setting of the Grade I Listed Holy Trinity Church (shown below on the bottom left) is broadly determined by the surrounding buildings in the High Street. Open outlook towards the east and southeast are acknowledged to be closed by mature trees, preventing direct visual contact with the application site, despite the rising land on the opposite side of the river.

Photograph showing the Grade I Listed Holy Trinity Church and Overy Street

66. Other Listed Buildings to the north of the application site in Overy Street, have a setting dominated by a road junction and the established Fastrack route. The County's Conservation Officer has stated that the application site could be visible across the road junction, over the roof of the Royal Victoria Mill Hall and through the existing trees, but the distance and intervening visual features would make any visual impact minor in the context.

Photograph showing A226 Overy Liberty traffic light junction looking south (to the right) towards Kent Fastway

67. The County's Conservation Officer went on further to confirm that the Listed Buildings to the west, Acacia Hall and Bridge House, were some distance from the application site, to the opposite side of the River Darent. An existing tree belt screens the application site from direct view but, as the site is on rising ground, some parts may be visible, especially in winter when the trees are bare. They would however be set against the wooded slope behind to the east, so would not be seen against the sky from ground level. Visual impact would further be reduced by the unlisted buildings that block direct views from the Listed Buildings. The space between the existing buildings is largely given over to car parking. This has been landscaped but the County's Conservation Officer does not consider them to contribute positively to the setting of the Listed Buildings.

Photograph looking eastwards towards the application site with The Vicarage property to the right

68. The Conservation Area extends across the river and borders the western edge of the application site, but the area is now dominated by car parking. The close proximity of the application site to the Conservation Area at this point, could increase its visual impact, even though this is mitigated by tree screening. However, given the existing character of the area, the Conservation Officer considers that any harm would not be substantial.

Photograph looking eastwards towards the application site (behind tree line)

69. I note that the County's Conservation Officer raises no objection to the development, concluding that the public benefit arising from the electric bus charging and public transport benefits of the proposals would outweigh the less than substantial harm to heritage assets. Subject to further mitigation through additional screening and appropriate colouration of the pantograph towers, which are included in the application and would be secured by condition, I am satisfied that the applicant has considered the heritage impacts upon the nearby Conservation Area and Listed Buildings.

Archaeology considerations

70. The planning application is supported by the submission of a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for Archaeological Evaluation. The WSI outlines the necessary measures to manage any archaeological potential associated with the site, taking into account the scale and nature of the proposed development. The WSI has been accepted by the County's Archaeological Officer as the most appropriate way forward in terms of understanding the archaeological potential of the site and the likely impacts that could occur. This would provide sufficient detail to manage any potential archaeological interest on site through a programme of works. Furthermore, this approach was considered appropriate given that a watching brief was undertaken in 2006 during the development of the Kent Fastway, and which provided sufficient archaeological data for the site. As such, a new desk-based assessment is not deemed necessary.

71. The County Archaeologist states that the submitted WSI is appropriate for the first stage of the archaeological work, and therefore raises no objection to the development, subject to the imposition of conditions to secure this work. These would include the need to secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written specification and timetable to be approved by the County Planning Authority (prior to the commencement of development) and to provide a Post Excavation Assessment Report for approval within 6 months of the completion on site and for the measures outlined in the Post Excavation Assessment Report to

implemented in full and in accordance with the agreed timings. Subject to the imposition of these conditions, which are included in the recommendation below, I am satisfied that the archaeological potential at the application site has been satisfactorily addressed.

72. Subject to the imposition of conditions that the development is carried out in accordance with the submitted details; is to be carried out using external materials and colours as specified; a landscaping scheme to be implemented as submitted and be managed and maintained, I consider that the development would not have an detrimental impact on heritage features, including the setting of Listed Buildings and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, as well as upon archaeological potential. Given the findings of the Heritage Statement and the WSI for Archaeological Evaluation documents, and the views of the County Archaeologist and Conservation Officer, it is considered that the development would accord with the guidance of the NPPF, specifically paragraph 190 and Dartford Borough Council polices M1 and M6. I would give this moderate to high weight.

Transportation and Highway Considerations

73. The planning application is supported by the submission of a Transport Statement, a Road Safety Audit Combined Stage 1 and 2, as well as a number of highway drawings. The application was also supported by vehicle swept path analysis, which confirmed that the three charging locations could be accessed independently and that the facility could be accessed and egressed successfully from the Kent Fastway, with a point of entry to the north of the passenger waiting area and point of egress south of the waiting area immediately adjacent to the Acacia Car Park exit, with only a small kerbed margin retained to separate these junctions. The Road Safety Audit, concluded that that there were no road safety issues identified as a result of the proposed development.

74. As part of this scheme a new entrance and exit is proposed to be created into the electric bus charging hub from the Kent Fastway. The proposed bus vehicle tracking layout has been provided in support of this application and shows how each bus route can easily and safely access the chargers. A new pedestrian walkway is proposed to the south of the site, separating the remaining car park and the bus chargers. This new walkway is proposed to provide a safer route for pedestrians to enter and exit the car park. The existing walkway was too narrow and was gated which meant most pedestrians had to use the road as an egress point which was dangerous for all parties.

<u>Existing site</u>

75. The area proposed for the Acacia Hall electric bus charger hub has largely been unused for parking since 2022 and has been fenced off, although Dartford Borough Council (DBC) has recently reopened the space this is a short-term and temporary measure. The applicant understands from DBC that this is not a long-term reinstatement of public parking, nor is it in response to a current increase in parking demand.

76. Given the extended period during which this area has not been in operational use as a car park, the impact of its removal has, in practice, already been absorbed into the functioning of the surrounding network. On this basis, I would agree with the applicants' highways consultant that a parking demand survey would be unlikely to provide meaningful insights at this stage, since the site's removal has already been experienced by the public for a significant period.

77. In relation to Blue Badge provision, the application recognises the importance of ensuring accessible parking is maintained. While the proposal results in the loss of six accessible bays, the applicant has confirmed that 23 accessible bays would remain available within the wider Acacia Hall car park, which comprises a total of 325 spaces. This retained provision exceeds the requirements of Dartford Borough Council's Local Plan, which recommends 17 accessible spaces for a car park of this size. It is also important to note that the accessible bays being permanently removed have not been available for use for some time. Alternative Blue Badge bays are located to the northwest of the site, offering convenient access and ensuring that the removal of these six bays would not adversely impact accessibility.

Existing Junction

78. It should be noted that the existing car park access adjacent to the site, whilst described as a crossroad in form, does not function as a conventional crossroad, with turning movements restricted to ahead only. While vehicles may cross Kent Fastway to access the wider Acacia Hall car park, only buses are allowed to travel along Fastway.

Proposed Junction Relationship and Vehicle Swept Path Analysis

79. As part of the scheme, a new vehicular entrance and exit is proposed to be created into the Electric Bus Charging Hub from the existing Kent Fastway which runs along the eastern boundary of the application site. The proposal includes separation between the proposed site egress and the adjacent Acacia Hall car park access, via the retention of a 3m wide pedestrian island. Whilst concern has been raised about the separation between the car park access and the bus egress, the applicant has confirmed that this layout had been designed specifically to avoid conflict between general traffic and bus operations. The proposal demonstrates that these adjacent junctions can achieve a good level of intervisibility between them, which would allow drivers to acknowledge each other's presence and enter Kent Fastway and/or Darent Road when it is clear and safe to do so, acknowledging that traffic travelling between Acacia Hall car park and Darent Road would not be turning in/out of Kent Fastway, removing potential points of conflict that might be expected at traditional crossroad locations.

80. The submission is supported by vehicle swept path analysis. These confirm that the three charging locations could be accessed independently and that the facility could be accessed and egressed successfully from Kent Fastway. Kent Highways were consulted on the proposed layout and raised no objection, subject to the completion and maintenance of the access and egress points as shown on the submitted drawings prior to the use of the site and imposition of appropriate conditions for visibility splays for both vehicles and pedestrians to be retained and kept clear of any vegetation. I am therefore satisfied that the application has satisfactorily considered the proposed junction arrangements with both the new entrance and exit into the electric bus charging hub and how it fits into the existing highway layout, with the current vehicular entrance and exit into the remaining Acacia Hall car park.

81. The vehicle swept path analysis also demonstrates that each of the proposed set down locations for the electric buses are independently accessible, that access to the facility would occur via a right turn entry movement into the northern crossover (access only – 6.8m wide) and that egress would occur from the southern crossover (egress only – 9.2m wide) which would allow both left and right turn egress, with junction radii to

accommodate the swept path, ensuring the vehicle body does not encroach into any pedestrian margins. Furthermore, road markings would be included to define the one-way entry/egress arrangement, supported by no-entry road signage. The applicant has confirmed that the proposed facility would only be served by 12.2m long buses which is the size of the vehicle that has been used to define the dimension and kerb realignment of the proposed electric bus charging hub and the size of the electric buses that would be used along this Fastrack route.

Junction Visibility

82. The proposal is also supported by junction visibility splay information, which encompass both the egress crossover from the proposed facility and the adjacent Acacia Car Park egress. Junction visibility splays of 2.4m x 33m are indicated based on a 25mph design speed. The outcome of the junction visibility splays confirm that there would be intervisibility between the site egress and the Acacia Hall car park access, with no vertical features between such that would obstruct visibility and thus allowing drivers to acknowledge each other before entering the Kent Fastway. A planning condition has been requested by Kent Highways to ensure the provision and permanent retention of the vehicle visibility splays, as shown on the submitted drawings, with no obstructions over 0.6m above carriageway level within the visibility splays, are to be provided prior to the use of the site. This condition is incorporated in my recommendation below.

Pedestrian Visibility and Accessibility

83. The proposal is also supported by pedestrian visibility splays. The applicant has confirmed that the pedestrian visibility splays encompass each of the proposed informal pedestrian crossings on Kent Fastway, achieving 1.5m x 43m in each direction, confirming that there are no vertical features that would obstruct this splay. Traditional drop-kerb crossings are proposed rather than raised crossovers. A planning condition has been requested by Kent Highways and incorporated in my recommendation below to ensure the provision and permanent retention of the pedestrian visibility splays, as shown on the submitted drawings, with no obstructions over 0.6m above carriageway level within the visibility splays, to be provided prior to the use of the site.

Operational Management

84. The application proposes the following bus movements at the electric bus charging hub:
    - Routes A and AZ: These services would enter from the north, charge at the hub, and use the internal loop to rejoin the Fastrack route. They would not interact with the Acacia Hall car park or its access.
    - Route B (formerly B/C): Would continue to use the existing junction with no change in frequency.

    The estimated bus movements up to 275 buses/day would represent maximum operations, and no increase in vehicle conflicts beyond the current arrangement is anticipated. The facility is primarily intended as a layover and charging point for Fastrack electric buses, rather than a high-traffic passenger terminus. Passenger activity is expected to remain minimal, primarily limited to those who previously used the former Mill bus stop, which historically saw low usage.

Fastrack bus route map close up on Dartford Station

85. The proposed facility has been designed to accommodate standard Fastrack electric buses currently operating within the network . In terms of site operations, the facility would be managed in line with established Fastrack procedures, and a clear operational framework already exists for layover and charging management. With regard to driver welfare, the anticipated layover times are short, as the facility is not designed for buses to stop for extended periods. Drivers would remain within their vehicles and use existing facilities already available within the wider Fastrack network.

Pedestrian movements

86. The applicant has acknowledged the Borough Council's concerns regarding the pedestrian environment between the Acacia Hall car park, the town centre, and Darenth Road and have considered the Council's ongoing efforts to improve pedestrian connectivity and active travel infrastructure throughout the town centre and wider Acacia site. The current pedestrian access arrangements to and from the Acacia Hall car park are limited with no dedicated or formal pedestrian route connecting the car park with the surrounding footway network. While there is an existing drop-kerb adjacent to the vehicular access, this serves primarily as a carriageway crossing point and not as a designated pedestrian entrance. There is also no internal pedestrian infrastructure within the car park itself to facilitate safe or accessible movement.

87. In terms of specific concerns raised, the application proposes an alternative north-south pedestrian route through the site, which would provide a more direct and accessible

connection to the town centre. This would help address issues of permeability and support longer-term aspirations for improved access across the Fastrack corridor, particularly for users with reduced mobility, wheelchair users, or those with pushchairs. Pedestrians would be able to cross over the bus exit onto the triangular island and then safely either cross Kent Fastway or the bus entrance via the proposed crossings. I consider that the changes to dropped kerbs, tactile paving, and designated crossing points would address Dartford Borough Council concerns without compromising the safety or operational requirements of the Fastrack system. It should be noted that the proposed electric bus hub would not introduce any new bus route opportunities, and no material increase in passenger numbers is expected.

88. Subject to the imposition of conditions regarding the permanent retention of both vehicular and pedestrian visibility splays, and the size of the electric bus using the site to be no larger than a 12.2m long bus, I consider that the development would not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the local highway network including vehicular and pedestrian activity, and bus operational impacts and would accord with paragraphs 105, 109, 115, 117, 161, 168 and 187 of the NPPF and Policies S1, S2, S3, M1, M2, M3 and M16 of the Dartford Borough Local Plan. I would give this significant weight.

Public Rights of Way (PROW)

89. The PROW (public footpath DB53) runs to the north of the application site The PROW crosses Kent Fastway and there are dropped kerbs to assist pedestrians with crossing this road. To create the proposed entrance into the electric bus charging hub, the alignment of this crossing needs to be moved slightly northwards and the dropped kerb crossings relocated. Following confirmation from the Council's PROW officer, that the PROW falls outside of the red line boundary of the application site, an order to amend the alignment of the PROW where it crosses the Fastway route is not required. The PROW, where it crosses Fastway, would be subsumed within Highways land (as PROWs are inherent with highways the alignment can fall anywhere within that land without requiring formal diversion). The PROW Team has raised no objection to the proposed work. I am satisfied that there are no further works required to the PROW.

Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain

90. On 12 February 2024 the Government introduced legislation under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) requiring developers to deliver a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) over the existing habitat and biodiversity value on the site. Policy M14 of the Dartford Borough Local Plan (2024) states that there should be no net loss of biodiversity in the Borough, and opportunities to enhance, restore, re-create and maintain habitats will be sought.

91. In support of the application a Biodiversity Net Gain feasibility assessment was submitted alongside the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation and a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. The County Councils Ecologist has confirmed that they are satisfied that no further information on protected/notable species is required and if planning permission was granted, details of any precautionary mitigation required to clear any vegetation were to be included within a Construction Environmental Management Plan.

92. The site is in close proximity to the River Darent. However the red line boundary of the application site is over 10m from the riverbank and therefore the County's Ecologist is satisfied that a river condition assessment would not be required as part of this application.

93. Furthermore the County's Ecologist noted that there were small areas of shrubs within the site that had not been specifically included within the metric but instead incorporated as part of the grassland. They advised that as details of the proposed habitat creation were not required prior to determination for mandatory BNG, they were satisfied that this did not need to be changed prior to determination, but advised that this point should be addressed within the biodiversity gain plan post determination.

94. A BNG of over 10% would be achieved through the enhancement of the grassland within the west of the site to other neutral grassland and the planting of at least 10 trees. The BNG may change due to the above changes requested but it is advised that this would not impact the proposal achieving a minimum of 10%.

95. The County Council's Ecologist has confirmed that sufficient information has been submitted to assess the impact of the development on ecology and was satisfied (following the revised BNG assessment) that the scheme as proposed would meet the requirements of the legislation. It was noted that onsite net gains reported for Area Habitats of 391% were anticipated and deemed feasible, alongside a required 30-year monitoring schedule.

96. It should also be noted that no trees are proposed for removal as part of this planning application, and the existing mature landscaping is proposed to be preserved and reinforced where appropriate. Measures have been carefully considered to maintain the character of the area while supporting biodiversity in line with the site's proximity to the River Darent and location in part within a designated Biodiversity Opportunity Area. In response to these sensitivities, a range of assessments have been undertaken, and measures incorporated into the proposals to mitigate potential impacts. These include the careful control of lighting, operational noise management through the transition to electric vehicles, and the retention of buffer landscaping zones adjacent to ecological receptors.

97. Development shall be subject to the deemed condition requiring the submission and approval of the Biodiversity Gain Plan prior to the commencement of development. Additional conditions are proposed to secure the submission of a landscaping management plan; precautionary mitigation required to clear any vegetation to be included within a construction environmental management plan, and a landscaping scheme to be implemented as submitted and be managed and maintained for 30 years. Subject to these conditions, I consider that the development accords with Policy M14 of the Dartford Borough Local Plan (2024) and with the aims and objectives of the NPPF, in that there would be no net loss of biodiversity and that opportunities to enhance biodiversity would be secured.

Drainage and Contamination

98. This application has been supported by the submission of a Surface Water Strategy Report. The proposed development would be located on an existing brownfield site (a

surfaced car park) which is located in Flood Zone 1, which has a low probability of flooding.

99. The applicant has confirmed that the existing site is drained via porous paving, which (from the survey information available) drains to the existing water course adjacent the site. The existing parking bays form part of this original SuDs scheme with overland flow passing through the porous paving into the open graded sub-base into the existing water course. The applicant's Drainage Engineers were instructed to complete the drainage plans and drawings for this proposal, and these have been submitted alongside the planning statement for the application.

100. The proposed scheme extends the existing grass verge which is located to the western side of the application site and is proposing additional planting. This landscaped area extends across this permeable paved area. New drainage features would be required to adequately treat and attenuate the rainwater associated with this development. This would include below ground attenuation tanks or hydro-brake (a category of components that use hydraulics to control or enhance braking or to regularise water flow) to restrict the outflow, together with an engineered solution in the form of a vortex separator (removes pollutants from surface water drainage) in respect of pollution mitigation. The drainage scheme has been based upon disposal of surface water runoff via the adjacent water course. The drainage solution proposed limits outflow to 1l/s, ensuring that no increase in flood risk would result from the proposed development.

101. The County Council's Flood and Water Management Team have considered the details submitted in the Surface Water Strategy Report and have raised no objection, subject to the imposition of a condition requiring the submission of a verification report pertaining to the surface water drainage system prior to first use of the development.

102. The Environment Agency (EA) have commented that the previous use of the proposed development site as a car park presents a medium risk of contamination that could be mobilised during construction to pollute controlled waters. Controlled waters are particularly sensitive in this location because the proposed development site is within Source Protection Zone 1 and located upon a principal aquifer. However the EA concurs that the risks posed could be managed, however additional information would need to be secured via a planning condition prior to construction being undertaken. Further conditions include a verification report to be submitted before the development is first bought into use; no further development being undertaken if additional contamination is found that had not previously identified; and no infiltration of surface water into the ground without consent. A drainage informative has also been requested which reminds the applicant that only clean uncontaminated water should drain to the surface water system. Subject to these conditions, which are included in the recommendation below, the EA raise no objection to the development.

103. Given the above and subject to the imposition of conditions regarding water resources, I am satisfied that the proposals would accord with the aims of Policy M4 of the Dartford Borough Council Local Plan for flood risk and riverside design and paragraph 187 of the NPPF. I would give this moderate weight.

Construction

104. Given the proximity of the development site to the existing Kent Fastway, neighbouring residential properties and the remaining and operational Acacia Hall car park, the scheme would need to be constructed in accordance with a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) which would set out measures to protect local amenity and the local highway network. The CEMP should include matters such as the hours of operation for construction; the number, frequency and routing of all construction and delivery vehicles accessing the site; parking and turning areas for construction and delivery vehicles and site personnel; timing of HGV movements; the provision of wheel washing and other facilities to prevent dust, dirt, detritus from entering the public highway (and a means to remove it if it occurs); and access arrangements. The CEMP would also need to include precautionary mitigation requirements to clear any vegetation as discussed above (in the BNG section). A condition to secure the above is included in the recommendation which would need to be submitted prior to commencement of development.

Conclusion

105. This planning application proposes the installation of electric bus charging infrastructure, and associated equipment including 3 electric bus chargers and a new triangular island bus stop, the creation of a new entrance and exit for buses and pedestrians, new lighting columns and associated landscaping at Acacia Hall car park in Dartford. The proposal has given rise to a variety of planning issues including the principle of development and the need; funding and associated considerations from the Localism Act; siting and design; impact on residential amenity including noise and light pollution; heritage and archaeological impacts; transportation and highway considerations; ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain; drainage and contamination, and construction. These matters have been considered and addressed in detail throughout this report. Subject to the imposition of the conditions listed below, I am satisfied that the design of the proposal would not have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the adjacent Conservation Area, or the setting of nearby Listed Buildings, and that the amenity of local residents would not be significantly adversely affected by the operation of the charging hub. Further, the access and on site layout are, subject to conditions, considered to be acceptable from a highway safety perspective. The development would incorporate additional tree planting and landscaping, which would also meet the requirement for a Biodiversity Net Gain of over 10%.

106. There is strong strategic and policy support for the provision of electric buses to be used along the existing Kent Fastrack routes, and the requirement to minimise carbon emissions and energy consumption. The development would satisfy the local priority objectives of the County Council's 'Local Transport Plan 5: Striking the Balance and there is further support in the NPPF, at the heart of which is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It is evident from the above that there is clear policy support and backing for the delivery of the infrastructure required for the electrification of the Dartford Fastrack scheme.

107. Having had due regard to the planning documents submitted as part of this application, the consultation responses received and representations made, I am of the opinion that the proposed development, subject to the conditions listed below, would not give rise to any material harm, is acceptable and is otherwise in accordance with the general aims

and objectives of the relevant Development Plan Policies and the guidance contained within the NPPF. I therefore recommend that planning permission be granted subject to the planning conditions and Informatives set out below.

Recommendation

108. I RECOMMEND that PERMISSION BE GRANTED, SUBJECT TO the imposition of conditions covering (amongst other matters) the following:

1. Development shall commence within 3 years of the date of the permission;
2. Development to be carried out in accordance with the submitted details;
3. Development to be carried out using external materials and colour finishes as specified within the planning application documents, unless otherwise agreed;
4. Development to be carried out in accordance with the submitted landscaping scheme (and be managed and maintained for 30 years);
5. Submission of a landscape management plan;
6. Prior to any groundworks the applicant (or their agents or successors in title) shall undertake archaeological field evaluation (monitoring) works, in accordance with the submitted and approved Written Scheme of Investigation (PCA January 2025);
7. Following completion of the archaeological evaluation, no groundworks shall take place until the applicant or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of any safeguarding measures to ensure preservation in situ of important archaeological remains and/or further archaeological investigation and recording in accordance with a specification and timetable which has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority;
8. The archaeological safeguarding measures, investigation and recording shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed specification and timetable;
9. Inclusion of baffles on the lights closest to the River Darent;
10. Submission of lighting strategy including exact specifications of the luminaires, their siting, mounting heights, beam angles, shielding measures and illumination levels;
11. Prior to any part of the development being occupied, a post-installation verification of the installed lighting to be submitted;
12. No additional lighting to be installed on site unless further approval is first obtained;
13. Submission of a Verification Report, pertaining to the surface water drainage system and prepared by a suitably competent person prior to first use of the development;
14. Submission of a strategy to deal with the potential risks associated with any contamination of the site prior to commencement of the development;
15. Submission of a verification report demonstrating the completion of works set out in the approved remediation strategy and the effectiveness of the remediation prior to first use of the development;
16. If, during development, contamination not previously identified is found to be present at the site then no further development (unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority) shall be carried out until a remediation strategy detailing how this contamination will be dealt with has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The remediation strategy shall be implemented as approved;
17. Submission of a Construction Environmental Management Plan, prior to the commencement of the development;
18. Completion and maintenance of the access and egress points shown on the submitted plans (drawing number 14358-002-Y Revision Y) prior to the use of the site commencing;

19. Provision and permanent retention of the vehicle visibility splays shown on the submitted plans (drawing number 14358-008-B Revision D) with no obstructions over 0.6 metres above carriageway level within the splays, prior to the use of the site commencing;
20. Provision and permanent retention of the pedestrian visibility splays shown on the submitted plans (drawing number 14358-007-D Revision D) with no obstructions over 0.6 metres above carriageway level within the splays, prior to the use of the site commencing;
21. Removal of the pedestrian crossing points, as identified on the submitted plans (drawing number 14358-002-Y Revision Y), and reinstatement of the footway and kerb in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved by the County Planning Authority, prior to use of the site commencing:
22. The development hereby approved shall be operated using 12.2 metre long buses only.

109. The development shall also be subject to the submission of a Biodiversity Gain Plan, prior to the commencement of development, in accordance with paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

110. The following Informatives are also proposed:

- The Environment Agency reminds the applicant that only clean uncontaminated water should drain to the surface water system;
- The County Ecologist has requested that if there are periods when the lighting is not required, that the lighting is switched off or dimmed that period;
- Kent Highways remind the applicant that planning permission does not convey any approval to carry out works on or affecting the public highway about seeking highway land approval.

Case Officer: Mrs Lidia Cook	Tel. no: 03000 413353

Background Documents: see section heading