

Roger Gough
Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Supporting Independence
Member for Darent Valley

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Sue Huggins
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14th August 2007

Dear Ms Huggins

With reference to your belatedly received letter regarding the network change programme in Kent, please find enclosed a range of published documents that, we trust, will fulfil your request for additional information on:

1. Regeneration and development plans in your local authority area
2. Proposed new settlements
3. Major road schemes likely to have a material impact on accessibility between communities
4. Significant public transport changes including enhancements, new provisions and likely withdrawal of key services

We would particularly draw your attention to the County's Structure Plan and the Local Transport Plan [copies enclosed] as these contain information on forthcoming major schemes and significant new housing allocations for Kent. Please also note that the Structure Plan is also to be superseded by the South East Plan and the Inspector's report on housing allocations is due to be published this week. The latter will lead to changes in population catchments for future post office provision – and should be factored in.

With respect to public transport provision across the County I should stress that KCC subsidies apply to less than 20% of bus routes (copy of KCC Bus Strategy enclosed). I am sure that you are aware that significant public transport changes, including enhancements, new provisions and likely withdrawal of key services are dependent on future (and currently unknown) budget allocations e.g. future availability of central government's Rural Bus Grant. The remaining 80% of bus routes are operated by the private sector.

I must also stress that this request has been received at a difficult time of year, when staff resources are most thin on the ground, and the failure of the original copy of your letter to arrive at County Hall at all has not helped matters.

Your letter also fails to mention whether you have approached Kent's District and Borough Councils, along with the unitary authority of Medway. We would ask that you engage with these authorities as they are responsible for allocating sites for development which will further affect the future catchments of specific post offices.

Furthermore, please note that we are providing this information in the interests of accurate decision making, and this should not be taken as any endorsement of the process being undertaken. We continue to have significant concerns about the speed with which this process is being undertaken, its potential impact on many communities in Kent, and the inadequacy of the six-week public consultation period.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Roger Gough', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Roger Gough

Enc.

List of enclosures

Kent and Medway Structure Plan
Local Transport Plan for Kent (2006-11)
The Community Strategy (Vision for Kent)
Kent Prospects (the Kent Economic Strategy) 2007-2012
Kent Rural Delivery Framework
Towards 2010
Bus Strategy for Kent 2006-2011