

SECTION C
MINERALS AND WASTE DISPOSAL

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 also as might be additionally indicated.

Item C1

KCC/DA/0270/2014 (DA/14/1259) - Operation of an aggregates recycling facility to accept 150,000tpa of construction and demolition waste including a fixed processing plant to utilise certain fractions of the recovered materials in order to produce hydraulically bound materials (HBM) at Land to the South of Manor Way, Swanscombe, Kent, DA10 0PP

A report by Head of Planning Applications Group to Planning Applications Committee on 21 January 2015.

This application has been submitted by SLR Consulting on behalf of Sheerness Recycling Ltd for the temporary operation of an aggregates recycling facility to accept 150,000tpa of construction and demolition waste including a fixed processing plant to utilise certain fractions of the recovered materials in order to produce hydraulically bound materials (HBM) at Land to the South of Manor Way, Swanscombe, Kent, DA10 0PP

Recommendation: Permission be granted subject to conditions.

Local Member: Mr P Harman and adjoining Members, Mrs S Howes and Mr V Thandi
Classification: Unrestricted

Site Description

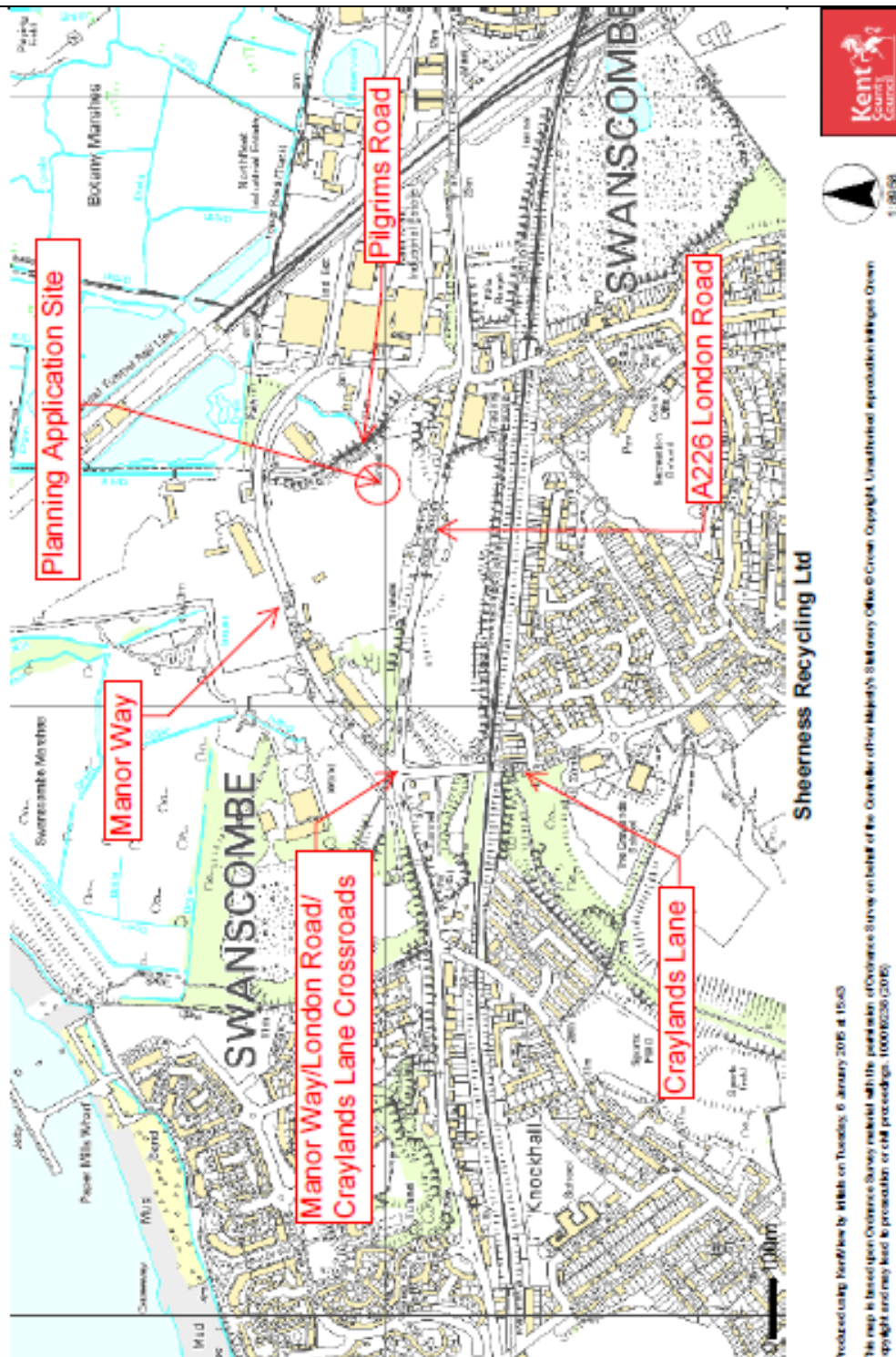
1. Planning permission is being sought by Sheerness Recycling Limited (SRL) to use brownfield land at Manor Way Business Park, Swanscombe for a temporary 5 year period to accept construction, demolition and excavation materials from local developments along with crushing and screening, via industry standard processes, into recycled secondary aggregates for re-sale into the local market. The site covers an area of some 2.4 hectares and comprises partly of concreted slabs and areas of other hard-standing. The site has been dormant for several years.
2. The site would also include a fixed processing plant (similar to a small Ready Mixed Concrete batching plant) to utilise certain fractions of the recovered materials in order to produce hydraulically bound materials (HBM) for sale into the local market.
3. A temporary short-term lease of the site has been agreed between the applicant and landowners, (Lafarge) who wish to retain the option to re-lease land as may be required, for future redevelopment of the area. Lafarge are landowners of a significant proportion of the Swanscombe Peninsula including the proposed London Paramount Leisure Resort Site (LPRS). A short term lease arrangement with SRL would therefore ensure the proposed temporary development would not compromise the LPRS scheme. The landowners and applicants lease arrangement is subject to renewal in the event that the LPRS scheme is either delayed or indeed does not go ahead.

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Drawing Number 001: Site Location Plan

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Planning History

4. The site forms part of the Swanscombe Peninsula, which is an area of flat land alongside the River Thames, close to the towns of Dartford and Gravesend. The Peninsula has traditionally accommodated heavy industrial uses along the edge of the chalk outcrop, including a major cement works, tar/chemical works, refuse tip, numerous chalk pits, paper mills and factories. Since the 1960s this has generally declined and there is now a more mixed number of uses which includes a number of waste management facilities some of which are located in close proximity to the application site.
5. The Manor Way Business Park is part of a swathe of mixed general industrial users along the Peninsula. This runs from the east of Pilgrim's Road to the eastern side of the Peninsula, where there are major users associated with the river wharfage. Kent Craft Industrial Estate lies to the east of HS1, which connects to Northfleet Industrial Estate and which accommodates Britannia Refined Metals refinery (with its 90m chimneys), the Bradley Shaw Ironworks and many other heavy industrial uses. The character of the area is currently one of large industrial buildings, chimney stacks and pylons.

London Paramount Development

6. In October 2013 a formal request was made on behalf of London Resort Company Holdings (LRCH) to Dartford Borough Council to adopt a Screening Opinion under Regulation 5 of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011. The request was made in order to determine whether proposals for the redevelopment of land within and to the south of the Swanscombe Peninsula to provide what was claimed to represent a world class resort and leisure entertainment district including the largest and only world class Theme Park resort in the UK (the London Paramount Development), was required to be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The area of land identified in the Screening request included Manor Way Business Park within which the Sheerness Recycling Limited application site is located.
7. Before issuing a decision on the Screening Request the Borough Council undertook formal consultations with a number of bodies, including Kent County Council (KCC). In its response KCC agreed with the applicant's conclusion that a development of the scale proposed justified the need for an EIA to be prepared in accordance with the 2011 Regulations, albeit pointing out that given the applicant's intentions/proposals were insufficiently clear at that stage, further information would be required in order to establish the full extent of what is proposed. Dartford Borough Council subsequently issued a formal opinion to the effect that what was proposed would require to be accompanied by an EIA.

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8. On 9 May 2014 the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government issued a Direction under Section 35(1) of the Planning Act 2008 (as amended) and the Infrastructure Planning (Business or Commercial Projects) Regulations 2013, to the effect that the London Paramount Development would be a project that would benefit from the 'single authorisation' process offered by the Planning Act 2008 regime. The Direction was given without prejudice to the Secretary of State's consideration of any future application for an order granting development consent relating to the proposal.
9. Last November LRCH submitted a formal Scoping Opinion request to the Planning Inspectorate as part of the pre-application phase who undertook consultations with various bodies including the County Council before issuing a formal Scoping Opinion Report which was published on 22 December 2014. The report sets out the matters required to be addressed in the Environmental Statement which will need to accompany any future application and which will be formally considered through the Nationally Significant Project planning regime managed by the Planning Inspectorate. Until such times as an application is formally submitted, which is not expected until August 2015 at the earliest, the project remains at a relatively early stage in its design evolution.

Garden City Announcement

10. In his Budget Speech in March 2014, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced plans to create a new garden city for the 21st Century at Ebbsfleet, capable of providing up to 15,000 new homes based predominantly on existing brownfield land. This would be supported by up to £200 million of Government investment, to help unlock the infrastructure needed to create a garden city.
11. Despite planning permission having already been granted for the new international rail station at Ebbsfleet which is now operational, and the area identified as the location for 10,000 new homes in the last Government's 2003 Sustainable Communities Plan, progress on house building has been slow and has not delivered the scale of development expected. To unlock the potential of the area, and to accelerate development, Government announced in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Budget speech that an Urban Development Corporation would be created to help coordinate development, and bring in skills and expertise.

Ebbsfleet Development Corporation

12. In August 2014 the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) issued a formal consultation on a proposed Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC). The consultation documentation makes it clear that it is not a consultation on the details of the development that will come forward as part of the garden city. This would be a matter for the EDC, once established, to work with local communities and other partners on how to take forward the development of the area, consistent with the local plans developed by the local authorities. It also makes it clear that it is separate and unconnected with any consultation related to the London Paramount

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Development, indicating that if taken forward, consent for this nationally significant infrastructure project will be through a Development Consent Order under the provisions of the Planning Act 2008.

13. The proposed area of the EDC is formed around 7 key strategic sites located within the Dartford and Gravesham Boroughs and are already identified in the Borough Council's Core Strategies and Local Plans. These are:

Eastern Quarry	Ebbsfleet
Northfleet West Sub Station	Swanscombe Peninsula
Springhead Quarter	Northfleet Embankment East
Northfleet Embankment West	

14. Assuming it becomes established it is proposed that the EDC will deal with all scales of planning applications including mineral and waste management applications which are currently made to Kent County Council. Live cases which are being handled by the local authorities will be transferred to the EDC for determination. Appeals against any refusal of planning permission by either the district authorities or the County Council will continue to be handled by the authority who issued the decision. The authority must take account of any comments which the EDC make and these must be forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate. The 7 strategic sites identified to be covered by the EDC will provide for a range of developments including housing and hotel/leisure facilities, along with employment uses. Swanscombe Peninsula and therefore the application site is identified as one of the seven strategic sites.

Proposal

15. Planning permission is being sought to use the site for a temporary 5 year period to accept construction, demolition and excavation materials from local developments along with crushing and screening, into recycled secondary aggregates for re-sale into the local market. It is proposed that the development would have the potential to process a throughput of 150,000 tonnes per annum of construction and demolition waste which, the applicant states, would be sourced from within the local area. On site plant and equipment would include a screener, crusher and loader.
16. The site would also include a fixed processing plant (similar to a small Ready Mixed Concrete batching plant) to utilise certain fractions of the recovered materials in order to produce hydraulically bound materials (HBM) for sale into the local market. A site layout plan is included below.

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Drawing Number 002: Proposed Site Layout

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Process of Development

17. The site would receive construction and demolition waste for reprocessing to create recycled aggregate. On site processes would include screening and/or crushing (not permanent fixtures) and production of Hydraulically Bound Materials.

HBM process

18. The protocol for the HBM process is set out below and a photograph of a typical plant is shown as Figure 1:

Figure 1: Typical Looking HBM Plant



- Arisings delivered to facility by HGV;
- Load is weighed and each driver issued a delivery ticket with ref number;
- Visual and olfactory inspection (acceptance criteria followed) if not non-compliant materials rejected, sample taken, material removed to licensed landfill facility for disposal;
- Compliant material tipped in designated area;
- Secondary visual inspection (non compliant material rejected);
- Arisings screened graded and stored;

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- Graded materials loaded into plant and mixed with a primary binder producing a stabilised material then mixed with a secondary binder to produce HBM/PV1;
 - Material loaded into lorries and weighed and ticket issued with batch no. (conformity testing as necessary); and
 - Material delivered

19. The typical type of product the Site would produce comprises the following:

- building sand;
- silica sands;
- certified topsoil to BS3882;
- ironstone hoggin;
- reject sands;
- recycled aggregates;
- ironstone;
- crushed concrete;
- hydraulically bound materials:

The type of product produced at the facility could be used for:

- Concrete roads;
- Bituminous roads;
- Hydraulically bound roads;
- Ground Improvements;
- Earthworks including embankments and cuttings;
- Shallow and deep foundations;
- Utilities;
- Concrete sub-structures and or concrete structures ;
- Industrial buildings; and
- Construction uses such as water engineering and sea defences

Site Access

20. Material would be brought to and from the site by HGV therefore access to the site would be gained via an existing entrance off Manor Way which also co-serves a site to the west. The access forms an informal simple priority junction.

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21. The site layout drawing number 0002 is designed to safely accommodate large vehicles associated with the transportation of material; all routes are wide and have sufficient inter-visibility.
 22. On entering the site, the staff car park is located immediately opposite which also includes the provision of staff cycle parking stands. The access road bends round to head in a southbound direction where the weighbridge and weighbridge office are located which control access to the main site. The main operational elements of the proposal site are located in the main body of the site towards the south which includes a Screening Plant, HBM Remediation Plant, Mess Room, Crusher and areas for material stock piles.
 23. It is proposed that the site would be open Monday to Fridays 07.00am – 17.00 pm and on Saturdays at 07.00am to 12.00pm however the site would be closed on Sundays and Bank Holidays.
 24. The application includes within it, amongst other matters, information on flood risk, air quality, noise, ecology and traffic and transport, as well as details of the plant and equipment proposed to be used at the site.

Further Supporting Information

25. Following formal consultation and the receipt of various comments from statutory consultees, the applicant provided a preliminary land quality risk assessment and further information in relation to noise and air quality.

26. National Policy Context

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): came into force on 27 March 2012 and should be read in conjunction with the National Planning Policy for Waste published in October 2014 which sets out detailed waste planning policies which local planning authorities should have regard to when discharging their responsibilities to the extent that they are appropriate to waste management. .

Local Planning Authorities are expected to work proactively with applicants to secure development that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Local Planning Authorities should now approach decision-making in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development with decision-takers at every level seeking to approve applications for sustainable development where possible¹.

Sustainable development seeks to ensure that society can meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own

¹ NPPF, paragraphs 186 and 187

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needs. The new Framework also refers to the UK Sustainable Development Strategy Securing the Future which sets out 5 guiding principles for sustainable development: living within the planet's environmental limits; ensuring a strong, healthy and just society, achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance and using sound science responsibly. The role of the planning system is seen as contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF identifies that there are 3 dimensions to sustainable development which create 3 overarching roles in the planning system namely economic, social and environmental. These roles are mutually dependent. In facilitating the delivery of these roles the Framework also requires that local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems. It states that those determining applications should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

The National Planning Policy Framework requires that:

- proposed development that accords with an up-to-date Local Plan should be approved, and
- development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.

National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG): Requiring in the case of waste related development, that applicants should be able to demonstrate that their proposals will not undermine the waste planning Strategy through prejudicing the waste hierarchy.

The Waste Strategy for England (2007)(WSE): represents the overarching framework for national waste policies which establishes as one of its key principles the concept of a waste hierarchy, where it identifies a ranking for waste management techniques with preference given to managing waste further up the hierarchy.

National Planning Policy for Waste (October 2014): The Waste Management Plan for England sets out the Government's ambition to work towards a more sustainable and efficient approach to resource use and management. Positive planning plays a pivotal role in delivering this country's waste ambitions through:

- delivery of sustainable development and resource efficiency, including provision of modern infrastructure, local employment opportunities and wider climate change benefits, by driving waste management up the waste hierarchy;
- ensuring that waste management is considered alongside other spatial planning concerns, such as housing and transport, recognising the positive contribution that waste management can make to the development of sustainable communities;
- providing a framework in which communities and businesses are engaged with and take more responsibility for their own waste, including by enabling waste to be

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disposed of or, in the case of mixed municipal waste from households, recovered, in line with the proximity principle;

- helping to secure the re-use, recovery or disposal of waste without endangering human health and without harming the environment; and
- ensuring the design and layout of new residential and commercial development and other infrastructure (such as safe and reliable transport links) complements sustainable waste management, including the provision of appropriate storage and segregation facilities to facilitate high quality collections of waste.
- Policy support for development in industrial locations

27. Development Plan Policy

Kent Waste Local Plan March 1998 (Saved Policies): Policy W11 sets out the criteria against which proposals are required to be considered including support for waste management development within major established or committed industrial or industrial type areas. Policy W17 sets out the need to ensure airborne emissions will not adversely affect neighbouring land uses and amenity. Policy W18 requires adequate controls over noise, dust odours and other emissions. Policy W19 provides Surface and Ground Water protection. Policy W20 Land Stability, Drainage and Flood Control. Policy W21 seeks the satisfactory protection of Ecological Interests. Policy W22 Road Traffic and Access. Policy W25 Site Design and External Appearance

Dartford Borough Council Core Strategy (September 2011): Policy CS6: Thames Waterfront – The Council will promote the creation of a vibrant mixed-use riverfront incorporating sustainable communities, new employment opportunities, leisure use of the river/riverside and use of the river for sustainable transport by amongst other matters supporting employment at Swanscombe Peninsula and seeking the redevelopment of sites for alternative uses, where they become available through relocation or rationalisation of existing uses. Policy CS14 requires new development to contribute 20% to the green grid network.

28. Emerging Policy

Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan (MWLP) 2013-30 (Submission Document):

This plan sets out the long term spatial vision for minerals and waste for the period up to and including 2030. In terms of waste the main aims are to drive waste up the Waste Hierarchy enabling waste to be considered as a valuable resource, while at the same time providing a steady supply of minerals to allow sustainable growth to take place consistent with the principles set out in the NPPF. The strategic objectives to achieve this is to increase the amounts of Kent's waste being re-used, recycled or recovered.

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Policy CSW1 – Sustainable Development

Policy CSW2 – Waste Hierarchy

Policy CSW3 – Waste Reduction

Policy CSW6 – permission will be granted at non- strategic sites, including within identified sites, providing there are no unacceptable impacts from noise, dust or odour

29. Consultee responses

Dartford Borough Council: The Borough Council wish to raise objection to the proposal subject to the reasons specified hereunder:

1. By virtue of its location, the proposed development will prevent the Council's objective of achieving the comprehensive redevelopment of Swanscombe Peninsula and is therefore contrary to Policy CS6 of the adopted Core Strategy.
2. The nature of the proposed use will prejudice the Council's objective of achieving a vibrant mixed use development on Swanscombe Peninsula and is contrary to Policy CS6 of the adopted Core Strategy.
3. the proposed development will prejudice the proposal for the London Paramount leisure resort and the subsequent regeneration of the wider area which is a key Thames Gateway objective.
4. There will be an unacceptable increase in traffic along local roads which is detrimental to air quality and the quality of life of residents and occupiers within the surrounding area.
5. The proposed location of the plant is not considered to be sustainable, particularly as all waste delivered to the plant is to arrive by road and it appears to meet a need from outside of the local area.
6. No evidence has been submitted of where the waste for recycling will come from or the need for it to serve the surrounding area.
7. The assessment has predicted a slight deterioration in air quality at sensitive receptors, but no mitigation measures have been proposed.

INFORMATIVES

If the County Council is minded to grant planning permission, the Borough Council requests that the County Council first ask the applicant to consider the air quality impacts with regard to the cumulative impact potential from, for example, Teal Energy and other recycling proposals in that area, as well as the proposals in Northfleet. If the County Council consider the air quality and traffic impacts acceptable then the Borough Council requests that planning permission be granted for a temporary period

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of 2 years only so that this does not prejudice the implementation of the London Paramount proposals.

Gravesham Borough Council: Raise objections to the proposed development on the following grounds:

Kent County Council is advised that an OBJECTION is raised by the Borough Council to the construction and operation of an aggregates recycling facility in this location due to the future impact on the development potential of Swanscombe Peninsula East and the environmental impact of the development.

Kent County Council is advised that the adopted Council's Core Strategy policy CS03: Northfleet Embankment and Swanscombe Peninsula East Opportunity Area indicates that the whole of the area has a substantial opportunity for major riverside regeneration and that any future proposals for the Swanscombe Peninsula East Undeveloped Area will be the subject of a comprehensive master plan but does not indicate the likely permissible uses or the likely quantum of development.

Nevertheless the Borough Council considers that the proposed development needs to be carefully assessed on the basis of the likelihood of development coming forward in the longer term for the development of the Swanscombe Peninsula East Undeveloped Area and the construction and operation of an aggregates recycling facility in this location should therefore not prejudice any future mixed use development that may take place or have any material adverse environmental impact on emerging development.

The Borough Council is not convinced that the impact of the facility has been fully and properly assessed on the development plan policies and emerging proposals for Swanscombe Peninsula.

In particular Kent County Council is advised that in May 2014 the land at Swanscombe Peninsula, including the application site, was designated as a nationally significant infrastructure project (NSIP) as a result of a direction on 9 May 2014 by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in connection with proposals by London Resort Company Holdings (LRCH) to bring forward a leisure resort development for London Paramount. The application proposals are considered to be prejudicial to the London Paramount project and wider regeneration of the area.

Kent County Council is advised that the application proposals would do little to enhance the visual quality of the location. In addition it would provide only very limited new employment opportunities with only 8 full time jobs being created on this expansive site.

Kent County Council is advised that the Council's Regulatory Services (Environmental Health) has assessed the development in environmental terms as it affects Gravesham.

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They consider that whilst the site is not within the Borough of Gravesham its proximity to the boundary means that there is potential for the site to cause dust problems in Gravesham.

Moreover they consider that all three of the suggested mitigation measures are not suitable for this site in that they are unlikely to be strictly adhered to and are suit (SIC) the particular operation, that fine particles can be transported for significant distances and definitely beyond 500m, that fine particles emanating from the construction, demolition, excavation materials will have a varying degree of contamination and may contain carcinogens and other potentially harmful substances that should not be allowed to be windblown, that the Air Quality Expert Group's (AQEG) report to, The Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) on Fine Particulate Matter AQEG have stated in relation to PM2.5 that "No wholly safe level has been identified" and that the only way that this operation can be suitably mitigated and the dust levels from the site controlled so as not to affect adjacent areas is for the operation be enclosed in a warehouse type building with doors to remain closed when the operations are taking place.

There are therefore serious concerns about the environmental impact of the development.

Swanscombe and Greenhithe Parish Council: *Members strongly object to the application on the following grounds:*

Firstly, members strenuously oppose the application because they are seriously concerned about the environmental impact this site would have on the local area.

Members also object to the application because it is in the vicinity of the proposed Paramount Resort and could interfere with the needs of the resort which could in turn prejudice the objective of achieving a vibrant mixed use development on Swanscombe Peninsula and is contrary to Policy CS6 of the Planning Authorities adopted Core Strategy.

Members are also concerned about the Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) that will to and from form the site and the need for them to be directed away from the town's inner roads. Members request that, if planning were to be granted, that a condition should be made on the operator to only utilise the main roads to the site and not use the town's inner roads. Operators generally employ contracting firms that would not necessarily follow road signage stating "no HGVs" etc and therefore unless KCC is to marshal all of these roads, it must be made an obligation on the contractor to keep to the proper routes if there is a chance that the operator could lose its licence.

Members do not feel that the proposed location of the facility is sustainable, particularly as all materials delivered is to arrive by road.

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Protect Kent (Campaign to Protect Rural England): No comments received.

English Heritage: No comments to make.

Environment Agency: No objection raised subject to the imposition of a planning condition which requires that, in the event that any contamination not previously identified on site is found to be present, then no further development may take place until a remediation strategy is submitted to and approved by the County Planning Authority. 31 October 2014

Highways Agency: No objection raised.

HS1 Ltd: No comments to make.

National Grid: No comments to make.

Network Rail: No comments to make.

KCC Bio-diversity Officer: No objection is raised subject to an appropriately worded planning condition which seeks to secure a biodiversity method statement which should accord with the recommendations as set out in the planning application, a timetable for implementation demonstrating accordance with the phasing of the proposed development and any seasonal requirements for reptiles and nesting birds.

KCC Archaeological Officer: No comments to make.

KCC Conservation Officer: No comments to make.

KCC Landscape Officer: No objections raised.

Natural England: No objection is raised.

Amey (Noise, Dust and Odour): No objection is raised subject to conditions restricting plant and equipment to that proposed within the application, working hours and dust mitigation measures.

SUDS Officer: No objection raised.

Kent Highways and Transportation (KHT): It is noted that Transport Assessment estimates (up to) 60 HGV movements per day, with an average load of 20 tonnes. Access to the strategic road network is proposed to be via the A226 London Road (Greenhithe) and A206 Crossways Boulevard.

The main Highways issue is the suitability of the proposed access route, in particular the London Road through Greenhithe. Characteristics of this road include relatively

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steep gradients and narrow footways and several pedestrian crossings. The road cuts between the Ingress Park development and the local primary school in Eynsford Road, so “severance” is an issue to some extent.

Traffic pollution also requires to be considered, as the A226 is an Air Quality Management Area, and heavy lorries labouring up the steep hills are part of the problem. It should be noted that the footway alongside the A226 is used by children walking to and from primary school due to lack of alternative direct routes.

Table 2-4 of the Transport Assessment shows that the A226 London Road already has 91 HGV movements 8am-9am on the hill east of the St Clements Way roundabout.

I have checked our records of road traffic crashes on the A226 between St Clements Way and Thames Way, and can find no personal injury crashes involving an HGV greater than 3.5 tonnes in the 5 years 1/4/2008 – 31/3/13.

Clearly this application requires to be assessed against current planning policy. The National Planning Policy Framework requires that:

- proposed development that accords with an up-to-date Local Plan should be approved, and
- development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.

In the absence of any relevant crashes for HGVs over 3.5 tonnes weight, it would be difficult to raise a robust objection on highways safety grounds, likewise the predicted traffic movements do not provide any clear evidence of increased congestion.

Nevertheless, the issues of the appropriateness of the steeply graded access route through residential areas needs to be considered carefully, likewise amenity, air-quality and community severance issues.

Could the applicant please explain why all HGV movements would be to the west via Crossways Boulevard and Junction 1A? Would they be willing to comply with a traffic management strategy requiring some of the HGV traffic to access the strategic transport network via Ebbsfleet?

If notwithstanding the above concerns the application is granted permission, I would recommend:

1. A planning condition should limit the site to no more than 60 movements of HGVs greater than 3.5 tonnes weight per day, this total being the sum of inbound and outbound movements;
2. A planning condition should limit the site to no more than 8 movements (in or out) of HGVs greater than 3.5 tonnes between 7:45am and 8:45am and 3pm and 4pm, in order to limit the impact on children travelling to and from school;

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3. All loaded vehicles using the site to have their loads covered;
 4. Details of wheel washing facilities to be submitted for approval;
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Local Members

30. The Local County Council Member Mr P Harman and two adjoining Members Ms S Howes and Mr N Thandi were notified of the planning application on 5 September 2014. To date, no comments have been received.

Publicity

31. The application was publicised by the posting of a site notice, advertisement in the local newspaper and the individual notification of 172 neighbouring properties.

Representations

32. 8 letters of representation have been received raising objections to the proposal. These are summarised as follows:

Highways

- The existing road network is already overloaded and lacks the appropriate infrastructure to cope with additional HGV movements;
- Safety issues associated with vehicles trying to get out of Craylands Lane with the amount of lorries going in and out of Manor Way;
- No investment in road infrastructure;
- Pot holes;
- Near collapsed drains;
- Difficulties for buses gaining access in the area due to parked cars;

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Amenity

- Noise impacts
- Dust impacts
- The area is already within an AQMA
- Lighting impacts
- Increase in litter
- The extra noise and dust would be unbearable and detrimental to health.

Other

- The proposed development would not complement the Paramount proposals
- Additional to new development in the area (Ingres) – lots of proposals in the vicinity

Discussion

33. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The application will need to be examined having regard to both national guidance and the relevant development plan policies applying to the site together with any relevant material planning considerations arising from consultation and publicity. In my opinion, the main determining issues in this particular case can be summarised under the following headings:

- Need
- Traffic
- Air Quality
- Noise
- Nature Conservation and Ecology
- Landscape and Visual Impact
- Ebbsfleet Garden City Announcement
- London Paramount Development
- Emerging Policy

Need

34. One of the key aims of Government policy is to reduce the volume of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) and Commercial and Industrial Waste (C&I) being sent to non-hazardous landfill through the establishment of alternative more sustainable waste management facilities. The processing and recycling of C&I waste is seen as playing an important role in helping to achieve this objective, which not only helps divert these types of waste from landfill but also by producing a secondary aggregate to supplement raw materials. This contributes towards maintaining a steady and

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adequate supply of materials to the construction industry. This in turn helps support economic growth which is another of Government's key objectives. Furthermore, in helping to meet a demand that would otherwise be met from raw materials, it helps to ensure that raw materials are exploited to their full potential in a more sustainable manner, rather than being used in construction projects whose needs could otherwise be met from materials of a lower specification.

35. Provided it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that there would be no adverse impacts from the development, in my view what is proposed is fully consistent with the principles of sustainable development as advocated in the NPPF.

Traffic

36. Access to and from the site would be along Manor Way which connects via a staggered crossroads with Craylands Lane to the A226 London Road approximately 500m west of the proposed site entrance and links to the Manor Way Business Park to the east. This is a no through route.
37. In terms of HGV numbers, the proposed development would generate some 60 daily movements, (i.e. 30 in and 30 out), and these movements would be spread out over a normal 10 hour working day, equating to some 6 movements per hour.
38. Additional traffic on the local road network continues to be a concern locally therefore the planning application includes within it a traffic and transport assessment in order to assess any potential impacts from traffic associated with the development. Notwithstanding these local concerns, the Applicant's assessment concludes that having regard to the existing levels of traffic on the local network, the proposal would have no adverse impact. In terms of vehicle numbers, the traffic assessment concludes that the numbers generated by this proposal would be imperceptible on the local highway and would not materially impact the operation of the local links or junctions.
39. Following formal consultations, the Highways Agency (H.A.), who are responsible for Trunk Roads, have raised no objection. Whilst drawing attention to the characteristics of the local road network and the need to take into account potential pollution from traffic, given that the A226 is within an air quality management area, on the basis of no personal injury crashes involving HGVs in the 5 year period between 2008 and 2013 KHT are satisfied with the conclusions of the assessment and also raise no objection. However they recommend that a condition restricting the number of vehicle movements to 60 per day and requiring the applicant to limit the site to no more than 8 movements (in or out) of HGVs greater than 3.5 tonnes between 7.45am and 8.45am and between 3pm and 4pm, in order to limit any potential impact on children travelling to and from school during these times be imposed on any future permission. In

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addition KHT have recommended that all loaded vehicles using the site should be covered and that details of wheel washing facilities be submitted for approval.

40. With regard to vehicle routing it is proposed that all HGV movements would be to and from the west via Manor Way and the A226, then onto the A206/B255 roundabout towards the A206 Crossways Boulevard onto the A282. I am mindful that whilst raising no objection on highway grounds KHT have questioned this and have asked that the applicant consider adopting a Traffic Management Strategy which would require some of the HGV traffic associated with the proposed development to access the strategic transport network via Ebbsfleet. The applicant has agreed to this, which in my view would help address many of the concerns raised over potential traffic impacts. Therefore in addition to those conditions recommended by KHT set in paragraph (29) above, should Members be minded to grant permission, I would recommend that a condition also be imposed requiring the submission of a Route Management Plan which avoids vehicles using minor residential roads. Members may recall a similar approach was adopted in respect of the nearby Teal Energy proposal which they resolved to permit at their meeting held on 10 September 2014².
41. I am satisfied that provided the measures set out under paragraphs (39) and (40) are put in place, there are no overriding reasons for refusing the application on traffic impacts.

Air Quality

42. There is an existing Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) which runs along the A226. An air quality assessment has been submitted in support of the planning application which assesses the potential effects of the proposed development in relation to impacts from any potential dust generated from the site, as well as from vehicle emissions. The assessment considers whether air quality impacts are likely to arise and draws conclusions as to whether they are likely to have significant effect. Drawing number AQ1 identifies potential receptor dust and exhaust emissions locations (see appendix 1)

Dust

43. The Applicant considers that the crushing, screening and handling of aggregates has the most potential to generate dust. It is proposed that the site would receive 150,000 tonnes of construction, demolition and excavation materials from local developments per year. These materials would undergo crushing and screening, into recycled secondary aggregates for re-sale into the local market.

34. ² this application has since been called in by the Secretary of State for his own consideration which will be subject to a local inquiry later this year.

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44. The site would include a fixed processing plant (similar to a small RMC batching plant) to utilise certain fractions of the recovered materials in order to produce hydraulically bound materials (HBM) for sale into the local market. The potential sources of dust have been assessed and the principal activities that could give rise to potential for dust emissions are identified as:
 - stockpiling of material;
 - crushing and screening;
 - material handling; and
 - vehicle movements
45. The closest residential receptors to the site are those located to the south-east, and south of the site. There are commercial receptors to the north and east of the site which are considered to be low sensitivity. The closest receptor, Swanscombe Business Park, which is considered low sensitivity is located 30m from the site boundary. The closest receptors to the south east include 19 London Road, All Saints Church and car showroom at 100m, 150m and 60m from the site respectively.
46. Although dust from such activities would be expected to deposit on the ground within 100-200m of the source, receptors within a distance of 500m have been assessed in this case. The assessment concludes that there is likely to be a low risk of dust nuisance as a result of operations provided mitigation measures are put in place at the site to reduce the risk of impact. Those measures are set out in table 7-1 below and relate to the handling of material on site, processing, HBM mitigation, haul roads and storage of material.
47. The County Council's air quality consultants, Amey, have been consulted on the planning application and the mitigation measures proposed as part of the application. They have raised no objection subject to a suitably worded planning condition restricting any plant and equipment on site to that proposed within the application. In the event that Members resolve to grant planning permission I would also recommend that a planning condition also be imposed to secure those measures listed in Table 7-1.

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Table 7-1: Summary of Dust Control Measures and Estimate of Effectiveness³

Site Operation	Dust Control Measures	Estimate of Effectiveness
Material Handling	<p>Use of water sprays as and when necessary on material to be handled Temporary cessation of activities in the event of unacceptable dust emissions towards the south east in the direction of receptor properties. Drop heights to be minimised at all times Avoid double handling of material where possible</p>	<p>High High Moderate Moderate/Low</p>
Processing	<p>Use of variable height conveyors and wind boards and chutes on conveyors. Use of dust spray bars on crusher is available Materials should be deposited carefully into screens Conveyors should be fitted with belt scrapers and dust catch plates</p>	<p>Moderate/Low High Moderate/Low Moderate</p>
HBM Mitigation	<p>Dust Suppression bars Silos fitted with high level alarms Reduce drop heights Dust arrestment bag filters or similar in loading area + Silos</p>	<p>High Moderate/Low Moderate High</p>
Haul Roads/trackout	<p>Controlled use of haul routes Haul routes to be regularly maintained to minimise dust generation Speed controls to be implemented and enforced on all haul routes Water bowsers to be used as required Road to be swept as and when necessary Sheeting of vehicles when carrying load Wheel wash to be located at the exit of the site No idling of vehicles</p>	<p>Moderate/High High Moderate High High Medium Medium/High Medium</p>
Storage	<p>Ensure long term stockpiles are profiled in order to optimise wind dynamics to reduce dust entrainment Reduce drop heights and height of stockpile Ensure the base of the stockpile is marked to stop vehicles tracking over the base of the stockpile Storage areas with vehicle movements should be kept clean and in good repair, or should be kept wet. Use water sprays to moisten surfaces during dry weather</p>	<p>Low/Moderate Moderate Low Low/Moderate Moderate</p>

³ Table 7-1, Air Quality Assessment

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Vehicle Emissions

48. In terms of vehicle emissions, the Application site lies within the administrative area of Dartford Borough Council (DBC), and close to the boundary of Gravesham Borough Council (GBC). There a number of AQMA's in proximity to the site.
49. DBC has declared 4 AQMA's within their administrative area. Those AQMA's relevant to the planning application site include:
 - Dartford AQMA2 A226 London Road - designated for Annual Mean NO₂ and 24-hr PM₁₀. This is located adjacent to the site to the south; and
 - Dartford AQMA4 Bean Interchange - designated for Annual Mean NO₂. This is located 2,700m to the south east of the site.
50. GBC has declared 7 AQMA's within their administrative area. Those AQMA's relevant to the planning application site include:
 - Northfleet Industrial Area AQMA - designated for 24hr PM₁₀. This is located 270m east of the application site, in which there have been significant improvements in recent years; and
 - Gravesham A2 AQMA - designated for Annual Mean NO₂ and 24hr PM₁₀. This is located 2,400m to the south of the site.
51. The proposed facility would generate some HGV 30 trips (60 movements) per day. The applicant has carried out an assessment of emissions using detailed modelling based on the increase in HGV's within the AQMA. The applicant confirms that the proposed development would generate additional exhaust emissions, such as NO₂ and PM₁₀, on the local and regional road networks and in order to quantify the potential impacts of these emissions, a dispersion modelling assessment has been undertaken and the results taken between R1 and R20 (appendix 1) show a range of between 'negligible' to 'slight adverse'.

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Table 6-3
Summary of Predicted Annual Mean NO₂ Impacts: Road Vehicle Exhaust Emissions

Receptor	2014	
	Magnitude of Impact	Impact Significance
R1 Derelict Building	Imperceptible	Negligible
R2 Collingwood House London Road	Small	Slight Adverse
R3 1a London Road	Imperceptible	Negligible
R4 29 London Road	Imperceptible	Negligible
R5 1-12 Mount Nod	Imperceptible	Negligible
R6 Permitted development Village heights Ingress Lodge	Small	Slight Adverse
R7 18 Calcroft Avenue	Small	Slight Adverse
R8 46 London Road	Small	Slight Adverse
R9 1 Ivy Villas	Imperceptible	Negligible
R10 Greenhithe Library London Road	Small	Slight Adverse
R11 Commercial Restaurant	Small	Slight Adverse
R12 4a Ivy Bower Close	Imperceptible	Negligible
R13 232 London Road	Imperceptible	Negligible
R14 1 Hyndford Crescent	Small	Slight Adverse
R15 MJD Group	Small	Negligible
R16 St Clements Valley Permitted Development	Imperceptible	Negligible
R17 9 Ivy Villas	Imperceptible	Negligible
R18 220 London Road	Imperceptible	Negligible
R19 192 London Road	Imperceptible	Negligible
R20 3 Cobham Terrace	Imperceptible	Negligible

52. Potential air quality impacts associated with development traffic were quantified using the Breeze Roads (CAL3QHCR) dispersion model. The impact of the proposed development on annual mean NO₂ concentrations is predicted to be negligible to slight adverse. For annual PM₁₀ concentration the impact is predicted to be negligible. Concentrations predicted through the dispersion modelling assessment are considered to be worst case, and the proposed development is predicted to result in a 'small' increase in concentrations, at the lower end of this magnitude of impact at 1.9% within the A266 AQMA. The overall significance takes into account high baseline values as well as the fact the 'exceedance area is not substantially increased' which would also reduce the overall significance of the development. The assessment concludes that the overall significance of impact is considered to be less than assessed as a result of the following factors:

- The magnitude on annual mean NO₂ concentrations is predicted to be imperceptible or small at all receptors. The significance of this impact is predicted to be negligible at 13 receptors and slight adverse at 7 receptors;
- At all considered receptors, annual mean PM₁₀ and 24-hr PM₁₀ impacts are predicted to be imperceptible in magnitude and negligible in significance as a result of development trips;

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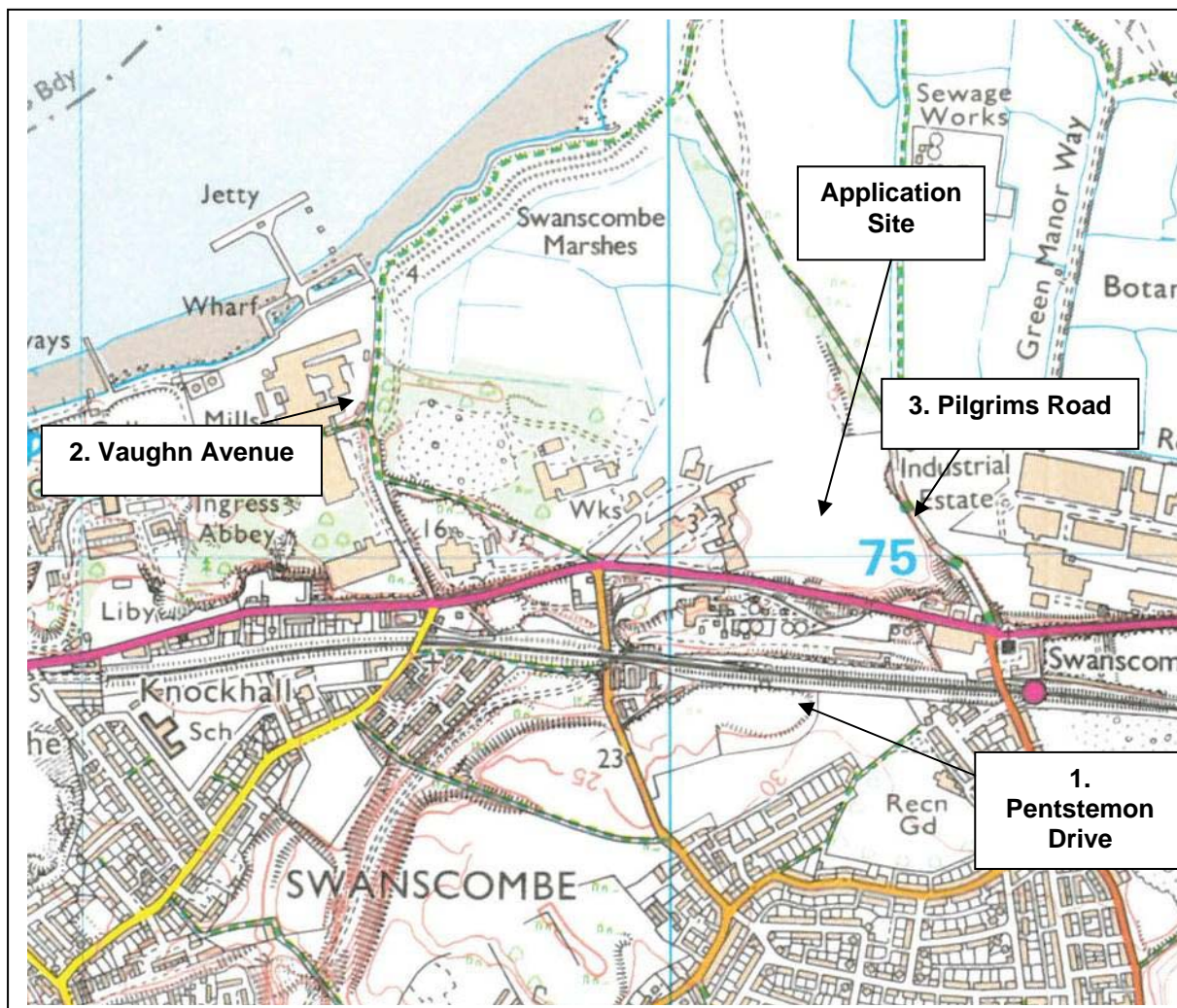
-
- The development proposals will not introduce any receptor exposure into an area of exceedence;
 - The magnitude of change as a result of the development is assessed as 'imperceptible' to 'small' at the lower end of the small category at 1.9% of the objective;
 - The exceedence area is not substantially increased; and
 - Conservative assumptions have been made in the model, including use of 2013 emission factors and not using apportioned background values, as well as including 50m slow down section to pedestrian crossings.
53. The County Council's air quality consultants are satisfied with the assessment conclusions on the basis that given the relatively low number of additional vehicle movements associated with the proposal it is unlikely the contribution from any committed development would change this developments contribution from what is "small" (1-5% change in NO₂) to "medium" (5-10% change in NO₂). They further comment that the applicant's assumption that the significance as detailed in the original air quality assessment would remain at worst "slight adverse" and is therefore sound. I am therefore satisfied that there are no material reasons to justify refusing the application on the grounds of adverse effects on air quality.

Noise

54. The proposed development is situated on land located between Manor Way and London Road in Dartford. The area contains within it a number of existing industrial businesses, with railways to the south and east. In the applicants view the topography of the area would help provide significant protection for any nearby noise-sensitive receptors, the closest of which are situated along Pilgrims Road.
55. A noise survey has been submitted in order to establish the existing background and ambient noise levels at the closest noise-sensitive receptors to the site. The applicant also includes details of the proposed fixed and mobile plant to be utilised at the site.
56. The closest residential properties are identified on Figure B-1 below therefore noise monitoring has taken place at the following locations:
- Location 1 - Pentstemon Drive - to the south of the site;
 - Location 2 - Vaughn Avenue - to the west of the site; and
 - Location 3 - Pilgrims Road - to the south east of the site.

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Figure B-1 Site Location and Noise Monitoring Locations



Plant Noise Assessment

57. The applicant has provided details of the fixed and mobile plant likely to be utilised at the site, these are shown in Table 2-1 below along with assumed sound power level. The assessment of operational noise impacts is based on the following principle noise sources:

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Table 2-1
Operational Plant Noise levels

Plant Description	Location on site	Sound Power Level dB(A)
20t Excavator	External	104.0
CAT966 Loading Shovel		108.0
Power screen 1400 warrior x 2		106.3
Crusher saturno		112.0
HBM Remediation Plant		115.0*
Heavy Goods Vehicle	Access Road	105.0

*Data not available so assumed worst-case sound power level

58. The assessment calculates the potential noise impact at the identified noise sensitive receptors. A worse case assessment has assumed that all of the above sources are operating simultaneously.

Table 5-1
Predicted Noise Levels, free-field, dB

Location	Predicted Noise Level LAeq,1hr
Pentstemon Drive	41.5
Vaughn Avenue	37.1
Pilgrims Way	49.6

59. Using the predicted noise levels set out on Table 5-1 above, an assessment has been carried out in accordance with BS4142 to determine whether the predicted operational noise levels from the proposed development is likely to give rise to complaints from the occupants of nearby residential receptors. In accordance with BS4142, a +5dB correction has been applied to the predicted noise levels to account for the acoustic features of the source noises.

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Table 5-2
Midweek BS4142 Assessment, free-field dB

Location	Measured Background Noise Level, LA90	Predicted Rating Level LAr,1hr	Difference
Pentstemon Drive	43.3	46.5	+3.2
Vaughn Avenue	39.2	42.1	+2.9
Pilgrims Way	51.0	54.6	+3.6

60. BS4142 indicates that *“A difference of around 10dB or higher indicates that complaints are likely. A difference of around 5dB is of marginal significance. A difference of -10dB is a positive indication that complaints are unlikely.”*
61. Table 5-2 shows that predicted rating levels from operations at the site would lead to a situation between marginal significance and complaints unlikely, therefore for plant located on site the assessment concludes that noise impact from the proposed development would be insignificant and therefore not likely to have any adverse effects on any noise sensitive receptors. Mitigation measures to reduce noise impacts are therefore considered to be unnecessary.

Haul Route

62. The predicted noise level produced by HGV movements associated with the proposed development has been calculated using the haul route method contained in BS5228. Based on the transport assessment submitted, the number of HGVs visiting the site would be 3 per hour (i.e. 6 movements) during the daytime period only.
63. The haul route assessment predicts noise levels for 6 HGV movements during any given daytime hour. The predicted noise levels have been assessed against the existing ambient noise levels at each of the nearest residential receptors. Table 5-3 below shows the predicted noise level produced by vehicle movements associated with the proposal.

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Table 5-3
Predicted Noise Levels From Vehicle Movements, LAeq,1hr, dB

Location	Predicted Noise Level
Pentstemon Drive	30.5
Vaughn Avenue	31.8
Pilgrims Way	33.3

64. The effect that the vehicle movements would have on the ambient noise levels at the closest noise-sensitive residential receptors can be assessed by logarithmically adding the predicted noise levels to the existing measured LAeq noise levels during the daytime period.
65. The changes in ambient noise levels due to vehicles using the access road have then been assessed using the criteria outlined in *The Guidelines for Noise Impact Assessment 2002* as shown in Table 5-4 below.

Table 5-4
Predicted Changes in Ambient Noise Levels, Façade LAeq,1hr, dB

Location	Existing Ambient Level	Predicted Ambient Level	Change	Impact
Pentstemon Drive	53.3	53.3	0	Negligible
Vaughn Avenue	50.0	50.1	+0.1	Minor
Pilgrims Way	58.5	58.5	0	Negligible

66. Table 5-4 shows that predicted noise levels from vehicle movements would have, at worst, a minor barely perceptible impact at the nearest residential receptors. In view of the above, mitigation measures to reduce the noise impacts of vehicle movements are also considered unnecessary.
67. Amey, the County Council's noise consultants, have been consulted on the planning application. They are satisfied with the conclusions of the noise assessment and agree that mitigation measures are considered to be unjustified given the level of impact resulting from the proposed development is 'negligible'. However, they draw attention to the assessment having taken into account weekday daytime and Saturday morning operations only and is based on the machinery set out in the noise report. I would therefore recommend that should planning permission be granted, suitably worded

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planning conditions should be imposed to restrict the hours of operation and restricting the plant on site to that set out in the planning application.

Nature Conservation and Ecology

68. The National Planning Policy Framework encourages the planning system to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment⁴ and advises that when determining planning applications planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity⁵.
69. The application site covers approximately 2.4 hectares (ha) of brownfield land that is comprised partly of concreted slabs and areas of other hard-standing. Patches of grassland and scrub are also present particularly along the base of the chalk cliff faces that rise circa 20m and which form the eastern and southern boundaries to the site and where Pilgrims Road and the A226 London Road run atop of these respectively. To the west is industrial development and to the north there are remnant areas of marshland comprising Swanscombe, Broadness and Botany Marshes and areas of restored landfill.
70. The Ecological Impact Assessment, submitted with the planning application, provides an evaluation of the habitats and species present within the development site; the identification of potential ecological effects of the proposed development; and an assessment of the likely significance of identified impacts on the valued ecological receptors. Whilst the site is assessed as being low in value and that the proposed development would not result in any direct loss of habitats, some mitigation is considered appropriate in order to prevent, reduce or offset any potential adverse effects on the ecological resource present on the application site.

Breeding birds

71. To avoid the destruction of any nests all suitable nesting habitat (i.e. trees/shrubs and ground nesting vegetation) would be removed from the development outside the breeding season (i.e. removal permitted from October through to February). If this timeframe cannot be adhered to an experienced ecologist or ornithologist will check the areas to be taken for the presence of tree and ground nesting birds prior to disturbance of such habitat, so that breeding sites can be identified and their clearance delayed until any young have fledged.

⁴ Paragraph 109

⁵ Paragraph 118

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Reptiles

72. A low population of Slow Worm and Common Lizard have been confirmed as present in areas supporting more established vegetation. These species are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) from intentional killing and injury, and sale.
73. Based on the low population size and the limited distribution of reptiles at this site it is proposed to maintain the reptiles on this site in *safe areas*. These areas would be in the stand-off zone required to be established for the gas pipeline running along the eastern and southern boundaries of the application site.
74. It is proposed that displacement methods through the manipulation of habitats considered suitable for reptiles would be undertaken at this site.
75. Prior to the onset of construction activities all suitable reptile habitat that would be affected by construction works would be trimmed low to the ground leaving a sward height of 10-15cm above ground as far as is practically possible. These areas would be left in this state for at least five days before being trimmed again to ground level and left for at least a further five days to allow any reptiles to leave. Following this period, a hand search would be undertaken by an experienced ecologist with any reptiles found captured and removed to the safe area away from any risk of damage or disturbance from construction activities.
76. The vegetation would then be stripped using a mechanical excavator under direct supervision of an experienced ecologist with any reptiles found captured and moved to the safe area.
77. If for any reason construction works are delayed, the sward height would be subject to repeat cutting to maintain a sward height of less than 5cm until such time as construction activities are due to start and vegetation stripping can take place.
78. All arisings from the first cut of vegetation would be carefully raked up and would be used to create habitat piles at locations within the safe area and away from any risk of damage or disturbance from construction activities.
79. Any obvious refuges that could be utilised by reptiles (i.e. piles of debris and vegetation) would be inspected and, where possible, removed or disturbed by hand to encourage any reptiles to move from these areas.
80. Before the onset of any displacement of reptiles is attempted, the safe area would be enhanced through appropriate management actions in order to increase its reptile carrying capacity including some scrub management and supplementary planting of a grass and wildflower seed mix to enhance the grassland habitat. Sufficient time will be given to ensure the safe area and the retained and enhance habitats provide suitable habitat for both Slow Worm and Common Lizard.

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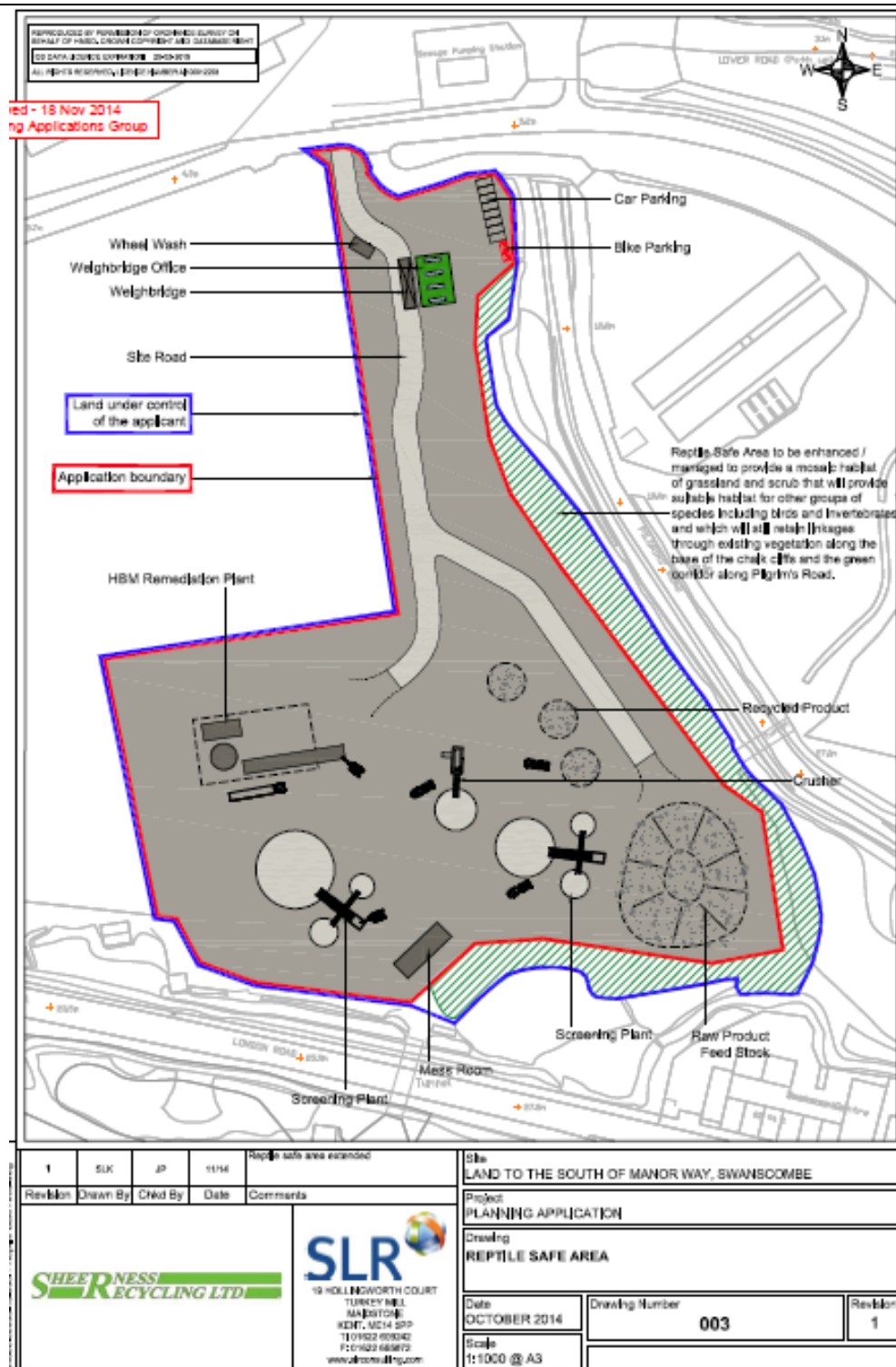
81. One hibernacula of a standard design for reptiles would be constructed using inert waste materials present of the site and from any wood generated through the removal of any trees/shrubs. The hibernacula would be sited within the safe area and away from potential high levels of disturbance.
82. It is proposed that the safe area would be appropriately managed over the lifetime of the aggregates recycling facility for reptiles and other wildlife. The safe area proposed is identified below (*drawing number 003*).
82. The County Council's Biodiversity Officer has been consulted and considers the proposed mitigation measures and identified safe area suitable for this site subject to those measures being secured by way of a planning condition. I am therefore satisfied that with the imposition of the condition recommended by the County Council's Biodiversity Officer that the proposed development meets the requirements of the NPPF and that there are no overriding ecological objections to the proposed development.

Landscape and Visual Impact

83. The NPPF encourages the planning system to contribute and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscape, geological conservation interests and soils⁶. Policy CS14 of Dartford Borough Council's Core Strategy supports the need for new development to contribute 20% of the site area to the green grid network.
84. The site is located within the existing Manor Way Business Park although the site appears not to have been in use for a considerable amount of time, and some natural regeneration along the eastern edge has occurred and which is considerably overgrown.
85. Given the location of the site the applicant considers it to be remote from any sensitive or visual receptors. The proposed development would be temporary in nature (buildings and plant and machinery) and as part of the overall development the applicant intends to retain any existing planting and vegetation on site. The applicant therefore considers that the proposed development would have limited impact on the surrounding area.

⁶ Paragraph 109

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Drawing Number 003 – Reptile Safe Area

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86. The County Council's Landscape Officer considers that whilst this site has not been included in the Kent Landscape Character Assessment, it retains a number of related features to the Western Thames Marshes area, which lies adjacent. These include low-lying flat marshland, scrub, ditches and remnant grazing marsh. Many of these features have been fragmented by industrial developments, affecting their ability to function both in terms of landscape character and ecology. A recommendation to integrate the aims of the ecological impact assessment to ensure enhancements are delivered are therefore supported.
87. In response the applicant confirms that a 10 metre plus wide strip of land running along the eastern and southern boundaries of the site would be left undeveloped to form a buffer zone between the proposed aggregates recycling facility and the base of the chalk cliffs. Although the primary function of this area would be to provide a safe area for reptiles (see above), by actively managing this area (0.35ha) to provide a mosaic of grassland and scrub habitat the applicant considers that this would enhance the overall ecological value of the existing green corridor along Pilgrim's Road and maintain the ecological connectivity along the base of the cliff faces for a wide range of wildlife. This is welcomed and considered to make a contribution of improved green space around this development which represents 15% of the total area of the development site. Whilst I am mindful that this does not strictly accord with Policy CS14 of Dartford Borough Councils Core Strategy, which requires new development to contribute 20% to the green grid network, in my view this needs to be weighed against the temporary nature of the proposed development. In this context overall, I do not consider that the proposal is contrary to policy CS14 which goes some way towards meeting its objectives.
88. On the basis of the supporting information I concur with the views of the County Council's landscape consultant that in this case the integration of the aims of the ecological impact assessment meet the requirements of the NPPF and Policy CS14. I do not therefore consider there are any overriding landscape objections to the proposal.

Other Matters

Ebbsfleet Garden City Announcement

89. The announcement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Budget Speech earlier in March this year for plans to create a new garden city at Ebbsfleet was made in order to unlock the potential of the area, and to accelerate development primarily in order to provide up to 15,000 new homes. To act as the catalyst for achieving this Government announced that a UDC would be created to help coordinate development, and bring in the necessary skills and expertise that will be needed. Last August the DCLG issued a formal consultation document on a proposed Ebbsfleet Development Corporation

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(EDC). It invited views on proposals to create a Development Corporation for Ebbsfleet, focussing specifically on the area in which the corporation will operate, the planning powers it will be granted and the composition of the Board.

90. The consultation document made it clear that it was not a consultation on the details of the development that will come forward as part of the garden city. This would be a matter for the EDC, once established, to work with local communities and other partners on how to take forward the development of the area, consistent with the local plans developed by the local authorities. It also makes it clear that it is separate from the London Paramount Development, indicating that if taken forward, consent for this would be through a Development Consent Order under the provisions of the Planning Act 2008.
91. In its response Kent County Council welcomed in principle proposals to accelerate development and regenerate part of the Thames Gateway around Ebbsfleet International Station. It recognised that the proposed EDC has the potential to unlock residential and commercial development and provide new sustainable development to meet community needs with the delivery of housing, jobs and economic growth.
92. Notwithstanding this 'in principle' support the County Council aired a number of key concerns that will need to be properly considered and addressed in the creation and working practices of the EDC. Amongst others, these included the need for the EDC to work closely with the existing local authorities to ensure that it achieves its primary objective of accelerating the pace of development and not delay it. Allied to this was the need for recognition to be given to the requirement for clear transitional arrangements to be agreed especially in relation to live cases where the EDC, once it becomes established, will be given powers to determine applications for minerals and waste applications as well as acquiring a range of other planning powers including compulsory purchase powers. It is intended that such transitional arrangements together with the future roles of the existing local authorities will be developed through a *Memorandum of Understanding*. Early indications from DCLG, in respect of mineral and waste planning, are that in recognition that Kent County Council staff hold specialist expertise in this field, there is the possibility that the County Council may undertake this work even when the EDC comes into existence depending on what arrangements are made for the handling of live cases such as this.
93. More importantly, DCLG has signalled a clear message that it would not be appropriate for the County Council to effectively 'shut down' its planning functions while the process of transferring some of its functions to the ED is being drawn up. For this reason, it would be difficult in my view to agree a case for refusing the application on the grounds of prematurity pending the establishment of the EDC where Government clearly foresees a continuing role for the existing local planning authority to process and determine live applications during this transitional process.
94. Statutory instruments are to be laid before parliament early this year with the expectation that the EDC will be established in the Spring. Until such times as this

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occurs, the existing local planning authorities, including Kent County Council acting in its capacity as the minerals and Waste Planning Authority, will retain the responsibility for considering and formally determining any live applications it has before it. This includes the application by Sheerness Recycling Ltd. This is consistent with advice set out in the NPPF which encourages LPAs to work proactively with applications to secure development that is consistent with the principle of sustainable development in a timely manner.

London Paramount Development

95. Objections to the proposal have been received from the Boroughs and Town Council who consider that the proposed development would prejudice the London Paramount Development.
96. The application for the proposed London Paramount development is currently anticipated in August 2015 pending which it is not possible to make a proper assessment of how the Sheerness Recycling application or any other applications which may come forward to develop areas of the Swanscombe Peninsula may or may not prejudice Paramount's future aspirations. It is understood that LRCH's consultant team is currently in dialogue with the extensive range of statutory and non-statutory stakeholders on the key NSIP deliverables including the Transport Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment, Masterplanning, Consultation and Infrastructure provision. It is clear therefore that only once these negotiations have been completed which will enable an application to be properly formulated, will there be any specific details of what Paramount's proposals entail.
97. The London Paramount Development has been recognised by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government as being of "national significance" and would therefore need to be considered through the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project planning regime managed by the Planning Inspectorate. However, in reaching this decision he stated that this was without prejudice to his consideration of any future application for an order granting development consent. On this basis recognition of the proposal being nationally significant does not guarantee any future consent or add support to it, which would need to be considered on its own merits having regard to government policy, the development plan for the area along with other material planning considerations. Meanwhile the Paramount proposal remains at the Pre-Application stage. Assuming no slippage occurs in the timetable for submitting the application, given the formal examination timetable, a decision is not likely to be issued by the Secretary of state until early 2017.
98. Notwithstanding the objections raised by Dartford, Gravesham and Swanscombe Councils, in support of their application the applicants have emphasised that in their view the contractual arrangements they have with the landowner Lafarge, should nevertheless provide them with the assurance that this temporary development would not prejudice the long-term aspirations of London Paramount. Furthermore, they also

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consider that projects such as London Paramount would generate significant large quantities of excavated soils which in their opinion would be best served by a local sub-regional facility such as that proposed. Therefore the valuable contribution it could make to the local construction market should not be overlooked. I fully concur with this view, particularly given that London Paramount have purported to have signed Heads of Terms on the land option with Lafarge in respect of the principle parcels of land required for their development. Therefore, should Members be minded to grant permission for this proposal, this in my view would not prejudice the London Paramount Development.

99. On this basis whilst London Paramount represents a material consideration and in this respect the County Council in recognition of what future economic role it could play in the area, fully supports such initiatives, in my opinion it can only be given limited weight given that at this stage there is no guarantee that any future application will be made, neither are there any specific details as to what the proposal will entail and finally to accredit any greater weight at this stage could be seen as prejudging the Secretary of State's formal consideration and determination of the Paramount proposal.

Emerging Policy

100. In accordance with paragraph 216 of the NPPF, weight should only be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (*the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater weight that may be given*).
101. Paragraph 216 of the NPPF states that decision-takers may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:
- The stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced the preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
 - The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
 - The degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).
102. The site is not one of those allocated in the Waste Sites Plan Preferred Options Consultation Document May 2012, however emerging policies in the MWLP seek to encourage the establishment of waste management facilities consistent with the principle of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF, particularly in respect of emerging policies CSW2 – Waste hierarchy, CSW3 – Waste Reduction and CSW6 which sets out the criteria against which non-strategic waste facilities will be considered subject to no unacceptable adverse impacts on sensitive receptors.

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103. Having regard to paragraph 216 of the NPPF, whilst the emerging Kent MWLP has yet to be given scrutiny before a Planning Inspector at the Examination in Public, in my view given the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in it with the NPPF and NPPG, this affords it sufficient weight such that it is a material consideration in the determination of this proposal.

Conclusion

104. In conclusion, I am satisfied that this proposal meets the key aims of Government policy to reduce the volume of waste C&I waste being sent to landfill. In helping to provide a steady and adequate supply of material for the construction industry it would also help supplement those raw materials currently being used in construction projects whose needs could be met from materials of a lower specification. The proposed development also meets the objectives set out in policies CSW2, CSW3 and CSW6 of the emerging Kent MWLP.
105. Whilst a number of concerns have been raised in relation to the existing vehicle carrying capacity of the surrounding routes to be used locally, in my opinion this proposal in itself represents a relatively small increase on the local road network. Both the Highway Authority and KHT have been consulted on the proposal and neither have sought to raise objections on highway grounds. Having considered their views and the sites close location to the existing highway network and purpose built road to the business park, I am satisfied that the proposal meets the requirements of the NPPF and Policy W22 of the KWLP.
106. In terms of air quality, the potential dust impacts from on site operations and vehicle emissions have been considered and in my view the dust mitigation measures put forward by the applicant are suitable and can be controlled by way of suitably worded conditions and therefore satisfy the criteria of W18 of the KWLP. With regard to potential vehicle emissions no mitigation measures are considered necessary in this case. Having assessed the potential noise impacts of the proposal on the nearest sensitive residential receptors from both operational and traffic noise I am also satisfied that policy W18 of the KWLP can be met.
107. The National Planning Policy Framework encourages the planning system to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment and advises that when determining planning applications planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity. The NPPF also encourages the planning system to contribute and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscape, geological conservation interests and soils. On the basis of the mitigation measures proposed along with the identified reptile safe area I am satisfied that with the imposition of the condition recommended by the County Council's Biodiversity Officer that the proposed development meets the requirements of the NPPF and that there are no overriding ecological objections to the proposed development. I also

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consider that the applicant has sought to contribute to improved green space around the site which goes some way to meeting the requirements of policy CS14 of the Dartford Borough Council Core Strategy. When weighed against the temporary nature of the development, I do not consider there to be an overriding ecological or landscape objection in this case.

108. I am satisfied therefore that provided those conditions specified are imposed on any planning permission that there would be no adverse impacts from the development and that what is proposed is fully consistent with the principles of sustainable development as advocated in the NPPF.
109. Accordingly, I recommend that temporary permission be granted subject to the imposition of appropriately worded conditions.

Recommendation

110. I RECOMMEND that PERMISSION BE GRANTED SUBJECT TO conditions covering amongst other matters;
- Temporary 5 year planning permission
 - Maximum throughputs to 150,000 tonnes per annum
 - Hours of operation to be restricted to between the hours of 07.00am and 17.00pm (Monday to Fridays) and 07.00am and 12.00pm (Saturdays) with no working on Sundays or Bank Holidays
 - No more than 60 vehicle movements per operational day (30in/30out)
 - No more than 8 movements (in or out) of HGVs greater than 3.5 tonnes between 7.45am and 8.45am and between 3pm and 4pm
 - All loads carrying waste shall be covered
 - Details of wheel washing facilities shall be submitted
 - Details of a surface water drainage scheme
 - 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 the developer has submitted a remediation strategy to the local planning authority detailing how this unsuspected contamination shall be dealt with and obtained written approval from the local planning authority. The remediation strategy shall be implemented as approved.
 - Mitigation measures shall be secured as set out in section 8 of the ecological impact assessment and drawing number 003 entitled 'reptile safe area'
 - Restricting the plant on site to that set out in the planning application

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Background Documents: see section heading.
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APPENDIX 1

