
Notice of Rule 13 Status

Ref: CROWN/2025/0000002 Sevington Inland Border

Date 28 October 2025

Sevington with Finberry Parish Council

Under The Town and Country Planning (Crown Development Applications) (Hearings and Inquiries) Rules 2025

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Section 293D Applications)

1. You should ensure that you read the entirety of this Notice as it contains important information and dates.
2. On 27 October 2025, and within the deadline set by the notification of procedure letter, Sevington with Finberry Parish Council sought to be a Rule 13 Party (as detailed in Appendix A). This notification refers to your request for Rule 13(4) status. **We confirm that this status is granted to you.**
3. Please see our Guide to Rule 6 for interested parties involved in an Inquiry – planning appeals and called-in applications - GOV.UK. Although this guidance relates to planning appeals, the same broad principles apply to Rule 13(4) as part of Crown Development Applications procedure.
4. As you are a Rule 13 Party, you should send us a copy of the **Statement of Case** you intend to put forward at the inquiry. You must do this no later than **midday Wednesday 27 November 2025**.
5. In this instance, you will be aware that an expedited timetable has been issued in order that a decision can be issued as soon as possible, and hopefully to coincide with the expiration of the temporary planning permission for the site, and in all instances no later than 9 January 2026.
6. This means that, unusually, in this case the Pre-Inquiry Meeting will take place prior to the Statement of Cases being submitted. Nonetheless, you have already shared written comments previously and this will no doubt assist you and other parties in understanding the comments / observations / concerns you wish to convey to the Inquiry.
7. Your Statement of Case should give full details of the case you will be putting forward at the Inquiry. This should include an indication of whether or not you intend on providing any **Proofs of Evidence** (under Rule 20) to the Inquiry. These are usually documents which have been written by an expert and/or persons who wish to provide issue or matter specific evidence.
8. Should you wish to provide Proofs, the person(s) providing that Proof should ensure that they are available for the dates of the Inquiry. That

person should also be aware that it is likely that advocates for other parties may wish to 'test' the Proof by means of cross-examination and/or questioning.

9. The Applicant and Local Planning Authority – Ashford Borough Council -must send a copy of their Proofs to you.
10. Please contact us at crownapplications@planninginspectorate.gov.uk **as soon as possible** to confirm if you consent to our sharing your contact information with the Applicant and LPA so they may do this. You should also ensure that an electronic copy is sent to the Planning Inspectorate (at the same email address), so that we can ensure it is published on our case website.
11. You must also provide any other documents, maps and plans, you intend to refer to or use in evidence. Seeking to submit these at a later date would be at the Inspector's discretion and you should be aware that you may be subject to an application for costs made by other parties if you submit documents late.
12. Please also include a list of any suggested conditions you would suggest be imposed, if the scheme were to be allowed. These should take into account Paragraph 57 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* which sets out that:
Planning conditions should be kept to a minimum and only imposed where they are necessary, relevant to planning and to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects.
13. You are also encouraged to read our guidance on statements of case in Section 12 of the Procedural Guide: Planning appeals – England - GOV.UK. Whilst the guidance is written for statements of case submitted as part of planning appeals, the same broad principles apply to statements of case submitted as part of Crown Development Applications.

The Inspector and Inquiry date

14. The Inspector appointed to decide the application is Mr C Parker BA(Hons), PGCert, MA, FRGS, MRTPI, IHBC.
15. The **Inquiry is due to open at 10:00 on Tuesday 2 December 2025** and is likely to run for 8 'Sitting' days – though you should be aware that the Inquiry may close earlier.
16. We will write to you shortly to confirm the venue.
17. All parties are reminded that witnesses to the Inquiry – those who are submitted Proofs and/or advocating - should be available for its duration.

Pre-Inquiry Meeting (PIM)

18. The Inspector will hold a Pre Inquiry Meeting (PIM) with the main parties on Microsoft Teams (Inspectorate hosted).
19. This is due to take place at **9:30 on 11 November 2025**.

20. More details will follow including an agenda and details of how to join. Each party should have a single spokesperson nominated to speak; the intended advocates should participate, if possible.
21. **Please provide the name and email address of your spokesperson seven days before the case conference**, along with the names/email addresses of any other participants.
22. In advance of the PIM, parties are requested to focus only on the matters that are in dispute. This will assist the Inquiry process, by allowing the appointed person to focus on areas of dispute between parties and / or matters that require further clarification.
23. The PIM is **not** an opportunity to discuss the planning merits of the proposal. Its primary focus is to enable the appointed Inspector to arrange administrative matters so as to ensure that the Inquiry can run smoothly and that valuable Inquiry time is used as effectively as possible.

Costs

23. In some circumstances, costs can be applied for, and awarded for Crown Development Applications. Further details of this can be found at www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/appeals/guidance. Whilst this refers to appeals, similar principles apply to Crown Development Applications. Therefore, you are advised to read this guidance carefully as it contains important information about how one party might have to pay another party's costs.
24. Such situations may arise where one party considers another party has acted **unreasonably** in the lead up to or during the Inquiry, and in acting unreasonably this has **caused unnecessary or wasted expense** on the party making the application for costs. It is not an opportunity to recover general costs on the basis that you support or oppose the scheme, and / or the costs that you have incurred in supporting your case at the Inquiry. The general expectation is that parties will cover their own costs in participating in the process.
25. Additionally, you should be aware that the appointed Inspector may, on their own initiative, make an award of costs, in full or in part, if they judge that a party has behaved unreasonably resulting in unnecessary application expense.

Yours sincerely,
Crown Development Case Team

Appendix – request for Rule 13 status

Good afternoon

The Parish Council would like to be considered as a main party with the following as the statement.

Kind regards

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Sevington with Finberry Parish Council recognises the employment benefits associated with the site and its necessity for operations post-Brexit. However, the proposals as submitted fail to address the issues fundamental to the site's impact on its surroundings.

The site aesthetics are a significant concern. The site does not blend into its surroundings, with some residents comparing it to living next to a prison. The metal palisade fencing, temporary nature of the buildings, and minimal green screening give the site a temporary aesthetic from all viewpoints, including a main route into Ashford and areas forming the setting of historic buildings. It is unfit for retention without remediation.

Noise issues have been frequently reported by residents. These include horns, reversing sounders, and low-frequency noise, coupled with inadequate or no noise barriers. Sleep and health problems have also been reported. While the operator has changed procedures to help mitigate, this appears to only be possible during times of low use. The noise report submitted makes no consideration of tonal or low-frequency noise and is significantly less thorough than the previous report for the SDO.

The landscaping of the site is not in line with the 2019 approval of which we were informed the development would follow. Poor maintenance has resulted in the death of planting that would otherwise now be established. Landscaping needs to be enhanced beyond that proposed to achieve suitable screening of the site.

The lighting design results in significant sideways and upward spread of light and glare. Lighting has also been added indiscriminately to buildings, increasing glare issues. The proposals make recommendations, but these risk not fully resolving issues.

Littering, particularly discarded bottles with human waste, has become a problem. The operator must provide facilities to resolve.

Footpaths have not been introduced as per the original approved planning for the site in 2019. Opportunities to reintroduce the original and proposed routes should be considered. Poor drainage to the footpaths, particularly at the staff entrance and in the southwest corner, causes constant damage and must be addressed.

In conclusion, the proposals submitted seek to justify the retention of a facility with poorly designed aesthetics that would not be acceptable for any new application. This is our only opportunity to bring this site up to an acceptable standard for the benefit of the Parish, Ashford, the wider towns and villages as well as its employees and users.