

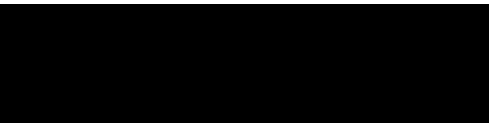


Growth and Communities

Ashford Borough Council,
Civic Centre,
Tannery Lane,
Ashford,
TN23 1PL

Invicta House
County Hall
Maidstone
Kent
ME14 1XX

BY EMAIL ONLY



12th September 2025

Dear Sir, Madam,

Re: Crown Development Notification OTH/2025/1437 - Sevington Inland Border Facility

Thank you for consulting Kent County Council (hereafter referred to as the County Council) on the Crown Development Notification OTH/2025/1437, consisting of buildings, goods vehicle parking spaces, entry lanes, refrigerated semi-trailers, staff car parking spaces, a new access, site infrastructure, utilities, hardstanding, landscaping and ancillary facilities and associated works; and ongoing use of the site for an Inland Border Facility (IBF) and Border Control Post, operating 24 hours per day, seven days per week.

In summary, and in considering the application as it currently stands, the County Council raises a **holding objection** on the following grounds:

- The County Council as the Highway Authority considers that there is a severe impact from the proposals on M20 Junction 10A, specifically on the A20 Hythe Road arms and a suitable mitigation scheme should be submitted and implemented for these arms in order that the proposals will not have a severe highway impact on the junction.
- The County Council as Lead Local Flood Authority considers that it has not been demonstrated that the current drainage network complies with the latest required standards.

Please find the County Council's comments in full below:

Highways and Transportation

This Crown Development application is seeking to make permanent the existing temporary planning consent which expires at the end of this year. A Transport Assessment has been submitted accompanying the application and has been scoped with the County Council Highways and Transportation as part of pre-application discussions. Please see comments on the submitted Transport Assessment below:

Paragraph 6.29 – The 144 dwellings at Waterbrook Park, in the view of the County Council, form part of the original outline planning permission and are therefore not considered as a second phase of development. It is therefore requested that this should be removed as a committed development.

Table 8 – It is the view of the County Council that the vehicle trip rates from the Waterbrook Park development (18/00098/AS) do not add up correctly. The County Council therefore asks that the correct trip rates need to be obtained from the original Transport Assessment and the table is amended.

Table 12 – It is the view of the County Council that the vast majority of the Conningbrook Lakes development was completed in 2024 and therefore only a small number of committed development trips should be added to the assessment. It is also suggested that advice should be sought from Ashford Borough Council as to the number of dwellings that have not been completed at the time of the traffic surveys.

Table 17 – It is the view of the County Council, as the Highway Authority, that this development traffic should be removed from the assessment as this development is not committed at present and has no status in the adopted Ashford Local Plan. The traffic flow scenario future years of 2026 and 2036 are considered appropriate. The extent of junction capacity assessments has been agreed with the County Council Highways and Transportation as part of pre-application discussions on the site.

To clarify, the County Council will only comment on junctions where the junction is either within the ownership of the County Council or arms are under the ownership of the County Council:

- Junction 1 – A2070 Bad Munstereifel Road / Waterbrook Avenue / The Boulevard - The Boulevard arm is under the control of the County Council. The arm currently operates within capacity in a 2024 baseline both with and without the IBF. This is also the same for a 2026 baseline. In a 2036 horizon year the Boulevard arm will operate in excess of capacity in both the AM and PM peak but the proposed development has no impact on this arm of this junction and so no mitigation is required. National Highways will comment on the A2070 arms of this junction.

- Junction 2 – A270 Bad Munstereifel Road / Church Road – The Church Road arm is under the control of the County Council. The junction modelling results predicted that this arm would operate within capacity in all scenarios and so no mitigation is required.

- Junction 3 – Barrey Road / A2070 Bad Munstereifel Road – The Barrey Road arm is under the control of the County Council. In a 2036 horizon year the Barrey Road arm will operate in excess of capacity in the PM peak but the proposed development has no impact on this arm of this junction and therefore no mitigation is required. National Highways will comment on the A2070 arms of this junction.

- Junction 6 – M20 Junction 10 – The A2070 Kennington Road arm and A20 Hythe Road arm is under the control of the County Council. These arms currently operate within capacity in a 2024 baseline both with and without the IBF. This is also the same for a 2026 baseline. In a 2036 horizon year the A2070 Kennington Road arm will operate in excess of capacity in the AM Peak and A20 Hythe Road arm will operate in excess of capacity in the AM and PM peak but the proposed development has no impact on these arms of this junction and so no mitigation is required.

- Junction 7 – M20 Junction 10a – The A20 Hythe Road arms are under the control of the County Council. The modelling results demonstrate in a 2024 baseline a severe impact on the A20 Hythe Road arms of this junction (both eastbound and westbound) in both the AM and PM Peaks once the development traffic is added. This is especially the case on eastbound arm in the PM peak where the queue goes up from 7 vehicles to 34 vehicles with the degree of saturation going up from 88% to 104%. The modelling results also demonstrate in a 2026 baseline a severe impact on the A20 Hythe Road arms of this junction (both eastbound and westbound) once the development traffic is added. Again, this is especially the case on the eastbound arm in the AM Peak where the queue goes up from 9 vehicles to 36 vehicles with the degree of saturation going up from 89% to 103% and in the PM peak where the queue goes up from eight vehicles to 42 vehicles with the degree of Saturation' going up from 91% to 108%. There are similar modelling results in terms of the degree of severity for the 2036 horizon year, which again show a severe impact from the proposed development on this junction. The applicant therefore needs to submit a mitigation scheme on the A20 arms of this junction. An accompanying Stage 1 of the Road Safety Audit (RSA) and Designers response also needs to be submitted to support any mitigation scheme. The County Council would welcome further discussions with the applicant and National Highways regarding a mitigation scheme at this junction.

- Junction 8 – A292 Hythe Road / M20 Westbound On-Slip – The A292 eastbound arm is under the control of the County Council. The arm currently operates within capacity in a 2024 baseline both with and without the IBF. This is also the same for a 2026 baseline. In a 2036 horizon year the A292 Hythe Road eastbound arm will operate in excess of capacity in the PM peak with the proposed development with a queue of 10 vehicles and degree of Saturation of 92% but the impact of the proposed development is not deemed severe and so no mitigation is required.

- Junction 9 – Tesco / A20 Hythe Road roundabout – This roundabout junction is under the control of the County Council. The junction modelling results predicted that the roundabout would operate within capacity in all scenarios.

- Junction 10 – Honeysuckle Avenue / A20 Hythe Road / Spires Court – This traffic signal junction is under the control of the County Council. The modelling results show that the junction is currently operating well within capacity in a 2024 baseline. This is also the same

for a 2026 baseline. In a 2036 horizon year the junction is also predicted to operate within capacity. From site observations, however, the operation of this junction is currently affected by the queuing on the A20 eastbound towards M20 Junction 10A in the PM peak which does cause this junction to block up as a result of this queuing traffic. A mitigation scheme is requested for M20 Junction 10A, as this is likely to resolve current issues at this traffic signal junction so that the junction can operate as predicted within the current junction modelling results.

The County Council would also ask that the proposed signage strategy for the site should be reviewed including implementation of signage to date. Signage is helpful for foreign drivers who may not be using Sat-Nav data or if their Sat-Nav data is out of date. It is also noted that local residents have made representations regarding the existing signage being inadequate. There is currently no signage at M20 Junction 10 advising HGV drivers of the route that they should take to the IBF, if they inadvertently exit at M20 Junction 10. There also needs to be better signage at M20 Junction 10A including at the A20 eastbound entry, A20 eastbound exit and then the A2070 exit just before the Inland Border Facility.

The Travel Plan 2022 is considered out of date and needs to be updated based on current staff who work at the site. A new staff travel survey should be undertaken. However, the County Council is happy for a travel plan condition to be attached to any planning permission on the site, requiring a new travel plan and staff travel survey to be undertaken and submitted within three months of any planning permission.

As detailed above, the County Council as the Highway Authority considers that there is a severe impact from the proposals on M20 Junction 10A, specifically on the A20 Hythe Road arms. The applicant is therefore required to submit a suitable mitigation scheme for these arms in order that the proposals will not have a severe highway impact on the junction. A review of the signage strategy should also take place to ensure that drivers enter the site from M20 Junction 10A and not M20 Junction 10.

The County Council looks forward to further commenting on the application once a mitigation scheme for this junction has been submitted.

It is important to note that Local Planning Authority (LPA) permission does not convey any approval to carry out works on or affecting the public highway.

Any changes to or affecting the public highway in Kent require the formal agreement of the Highway Authority, the County Council, and it should not be assumed that this will be a given because LPA planning permission has been granted.

For this reason, anyone considering works which may affect the public highway, including any highway-owned street furniture or landscape assets such as grass, shrubs and trees, is advised to engage with the County Council Highways and Transportation at an early stage in the design process.

Some of this highway land is owned by the County Council whilst some is owned by third party owners. Irrespective of the ownership, this land may have 'highway rights' over the topsoil.

Works on private land may also affect the public highway. These include works to cellars, to retaining walls which support the highway or land above the highway, and to balconies, signs or other structures which project over the highway. Such works also require the approval of the Highway Authority.

The County Council has now introduced a pre-application advice service in addition to a full formal technical approval process for new or altered highway assets, with the aim of improving future maintainability. Further details are available on our website below:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/highways-permissions%20and-technical-guidance>.

This process applies to all development works affecting the public highway other than applications for vehicle crossings, which are covered by a separate approval process. Further details on this are available on our website below:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/apply-for-a-dropped%20kerb/dropped-kerb-contractor-informationuncil>

Once permission has been allowed for the scheme, it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that before development commences, all necessary highway approvals and consents have been obtained, and that the limits of the highway boundary have been clearly established, since failure to do so may result in enforcement action being taken by the Highway Authority.

The applicant must also ensure that the details shown on the approved plans agree in every aspect with those approved under the relevant legislation and common law. It is therefore important for the applicant to contact the County Council Highways and Transportation to progress this aspect of the works prior to commencement on site.

Further guidance for applicants, including information about how to clarify the highway boundary and links to application forms for vehicular crossings and other highway matters, may be found on Kent County Council's website:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/highways-permissions-and-technical-guidance.ncil>

Flood Risk Assessment

The County Council, as Lead Local Flood Authority, has reviewed the latest submitted Flood Risk Assessment and whilst it raises no concerns in relation to the existing flood risk, concerns are raised by the statement: *"No assessment of drainage has been undertaken since there are no changes proposed to the existing drainage system."*

Whilst understanding of the reasoning for this, we would highlight that a number of the previously approved features had 'departures from standard' accepted given their temporary nature.

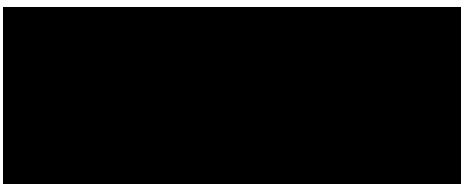
As an example, the County Council would highlight the email correspondence with the applicant, ending 02/03/22, in relation to the original FRA where we accepted the use of a rainfall FSR value of 20.00mm given the temporary nature of the proposals. Further correspondence, ending 21/03/22, demonstrates we accepted the provision of temporary water storage tanks without quantitative information but specifically advised that if permanent we will require the additional information.

Further to this, since the original application, various legislation and guidance has been updated and given that this is a new standalone application for the permanent use of the site we would expect, as a minimum, a drainage strategy and report to be submitted which undertakes a sensitivity check against the requirements of the DEFRA's latest technical standards (e.g. requiring the use of FEH 22 rainfall data) and how any additional flooding now shown will be managed on site but ideally demonstrating compliance with the latest requirements of the NPPF and DEFRA's SuDS NSTS.

Until it has been demonstrated that the current drainage network complies with the latest required standards or, that as a minimum, it does not but manages any flooding experienced safely and within the confines of the redline boundary, we would suggest that an holding objection be registered.

I trust this lays out the Council's comments on the application. If you require any further information or clarification on any matters raised above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,



Stephanie Holt-Castle
Director – Growth and Communities