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Extraordinary Council Meeting

Remote Meeting (Teams Live Event)

Tuesday, 9 February 2021

Summons and Agenda

Nadeem Aziz
Chief Executive

Democratic Services
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2 February 2021

To the Members of the Council,

You are hereby summoned to attend an Extraordinary meeting of the **COUNCIL** to be held as a Remote Meeting - Teams Live Event on Tuesday 9 February 2021 at 6.00 pm for the transaction of the business set out in the Agenda.

Chief Executive

Members of the Council:

M D Conolly (Chairman)	N J Collor	O C de R Richardson
D Hannent (Vice-Chairman)	D G Cronk	J Rose
J S Back	J P Haste	M Rose
T J Bartlett	M J Holloway	C A Vinson
M Bates	S J Jones	R S Walkden
D G Beaney	P D Jull	P Walker
S H Beer	L A Keen	H M Williams
E A Biggs	N S Kenton	C F Woodgate
T A Bond	S C Manion	C D Zosseder
P M Brivio	K Mills	Vacancy (Mill Hill Ward)
S S Chandler	D P Murphy	

AGENDA

1 **APOLOGIES** (Page 5)

To receive any apologies for absence.

2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** (Page 6)

To receive any declarations of interest from Members in respect of business to be transacted on the agenda.

3 **PROPOSED RESPONSE TO THE ENGAGEMENT BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR**

TRANSPORT ON PROPOSALS TO ESTABLISH A BORDER CONTROL FACILITY AT THE WHITE CLIFFS BUSINESS PARK (Pages 7 - 57)

To consider the joint report of the Strategic Director (Operations and Commercial) and Head of Planning, Regeneration and Development.

It is expected that this document will be published on 5 February 2021.

4 **URGENT BUSINESS TIME** (Page 58)

To consider any other items deemed by the Chairman of the Council to be urgent in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.

Access to Meetings and Information

- Members of the public are welcome to watch remote meetings of the Council, its Committees and Sub-Committees using the link on the Council website. You will not be able to watch the consideration of exempt or confidential information.

- The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 have changed the basis of the public's legal right to attend meetings. This means the public now has the right to hear Councillors attending the remote committee meeting that would normally be open to the public to attend in person. It is the intention of Dover District Council to also offer the opportunity for members of the public to view, as well as hear, remote meetings where possible. You may remain present throughout them except during the consideration of exempt or confidential information.

- Agenda papers are published five clear working days before the meeting. Alternatively, a limited supply of agendas will be available at the meeting, free of charge, and all agendas, reports and minutes can be viewed and downloaded from our website www.dover.gov.uk. Minutes will be published on our website as soon as practicably possible after each meeting. All agenda papers and minutes are available for public inspection for a period of six years from the date of the meeting.

- If you require any further information about the contents of this agenda or your right to gain access to information held by the Council please contact Rebecca Brough, Democratic Services Manager, democraticservices@dover.gov.uk, telephone: (01304) 872304 or email: democraticservices@dover.gov.uk for details.

Large print copies of this agenda can be supplied on request.

AGENDA ITEM 1: APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies for absence.

Declarations of Interest

Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI)

Where a Member has a new or registered DPI in a matter under consideration they must disclose that they have an interest and, unless the Monitoring Officer has agreed in advance that the DPI is a 'Sensitive Interest', explain the nature of that interest at the meeting. The Member must withdraw from the meeting at the commencement of the consideration of any matter in which they have declared a DPI and must not participate in any discussion of, or vote taken on, the matter unless they have been granted a dispensation permitting them to do so. If during the consideration of any item a Member becomes aware that they have a DPI in the matter they should declare the interest immediately and, subject to any dispensations, withdraw from the meeting.

Other Significant Interest (OSI)

Where a Member is declaring an OSI they must also disclose the interest and explain the nature of the interest at the meeting. The Member must withdraw from the meeting at the commencement of the consideration of any matter in which they have declared a OSI and must not participate in any discussion of, or vote taken on, the matter unless they have been granted a dispensation to do so or the meeting is one at which members of the public are permitted to speak for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the matter. In the latter case, the Member may only participate on the same basis as a member of the public and cannot participate in any discussion of, or vote taken on, the matter and must withdraw from the meeting in accordance with the Council's procedure rules.

Voluntary Announcement of Other Interests (VAOI)

Where a Member does not have either a DPI or OSI but is of the opinion that for transparency reasons alone s/he should make an announcement in respect of a matter under consideration, they can make a VAOI. A Member declaring a VAOI may still remain at the meeting and vote on the matter under consideration.

Note to the Code:

Situations in which a Member may wish to make a VAOI include membership of outside bodies that have made representations on agenda items; where a Member knows a person involved, but does not have a close association with that person; or where an item would affect the well-being of a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc. but not his/her financial position. It should be emphasised that an effect on the financial position of a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc OR an application made by a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc would both probably constitute either an OSI or in some cases a DPI.

Subject:	**PROPOSED RESPONSE TO THE ENGAGEMENT EXERCISE BEING UNDERTAKEN BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT ON PROPOSALS TO ESTABLISH AN INLAND BORDER CONTROL FACILITY AT THE WHITE CLIFFS BUSINESS PARK**
Meeting and Date:	**COUNCIL - TUESDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2021**
Joint Report of:	**Roger Walton, Strategic Director (Operations and Commercial)** **Lois Jarrett Head of Planning Regeneration and Development.**
Classification:	**UNRESTRICTED**
Purpose of the report:	To advise Council of the government's proposal to construct an Inland Border Facility (IBF) on a 37.6 hectares site at the White Cliffs Business Park, Dover and seek Council's views on the proposed response to the engagement process.
Recommendation:	Having been appraised of the details of the proposal by the Department of Transport (DfT) to create an additional Inland Border Facility (IBF) in Kent, on a 37.6 hectares site at the White Cliffs Business Park, Dover, Council are asked to: 1. Note that the response to the engagement process is a matter for the Executive to determine. 2. Endorse the proposed response to the engagement process as set out in this report.

1. Summary

1.1 The Department for Transport (DfT) is undertaking an engagement exercise in relation to a proposal to create an additional Inland Border Facility (IBF) in Kent, on a 37.6 hectares site at the White Cliffs Business Park, Dover which it has acquired as they consider that this provides the appropriate strategic location for this facility.

1.2 The government is granting approval for facilities such as these across the country under the provisions of a Special Development Order (SDO), the Town and Country Planning (Border Facilities and Infrastructure) (EU Exit) (England) Special Development Order 2020, which was laid before Parliament on the 3 September 2020 and came into force on 24 September 2020.

1.3 Unlike other development proposals within the District, the use by the government of the SDO powers means that the Council's usual controls as a planning authority do not apply and the legislation treats the Council as a stakeholder within the SDO process, and identifies both the Local Authority and the Local Planning Authority as engagement parties.

1.4 In accordance with the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000, the response to the engagement process is properly a matter for the Executive to determine, but it is keen to seek the views of Council members in finalising the draft responses as set out in this report.

1.5 However, this formal engagement with the Council as part of the SDO process, should be seen as only the first stage in an ongoing discussion with government concerning this proposal. It is intended to seek further and immediate high level engagement with

the Secretary of State on behalf of our local residents to ensure that the points raised in the Council's response as both Local Authority and Local Planning Authority are being acted upon.

2. Introduction & Background

2.1 As the UK has now left the European Union, the government needs to establish a series of Inland border facilities (IBFs) where customs and document checks can take place close to ports of entry or within reasonable proximity to port locations, where they are constrained by geography.

2.2 The proposed facilities to be established within the IBF will, so it is understood, act as a Government office of departure (for outbound journeys) and a Government office of destination (for inbound journeys), where hauliers can start and end journeys when moving goods in and out of the UK, under the Common Transit Convention (CTC – also referred to as Transit). They can also be used for Admission Temporaire or Temporary Admission (ATA) Carnets, Transport International Routiers (TIR) Carnets and Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) checks.

2.3 To date, IBFs have or are being established at seven other sites within the UK: Ashford Waterbrook, Ashford Sevington, Ebbsfleet, Birmingham Airport, Manston Airport, North Weald, and Warrington.

2.4 With regards to the facility proposed at White Cliffs Busines Park, the Department for Transport (DfT) are proposing to construct this IBF on a site near the existing White Cliffs Business Park in Dover, Kent, which is currently an area of arable land located directly to the south of the A2, behind the DDC owned B&Q site and to the east and south of the existing White Cliffs Business Park (WCBP). This site is located within an area designated in the Local Plan as an extension to the White Cliffs Business Park, referred to as WCBP Phase 3, which has a long-standing designation for employment use.

2.5 The site area totals some 37.59 hectares and has been identified by DfT due to its strategic location being close to the Port of Dover and providing access directly from the A2, via Honeywood Parkway, which has been constructed to standards sufficient to serve HGV traffic movements. The A2 serves as a strategic route for HGVs travelling to and from the Port of Dover.

2.6 Road access and egress to the site would be from the existing B&Q roundabout via Section 2 of the Dover Fast Track scheme road (subject to approval and construction). If approval of the Dover Fast Track scheme was not given or delayed, DfT have indicated that alternative access arrangements for the IBF would be proposed to ensure the IBF can be fully accessed and exited in a safe manner.

2.7 It is understood that DfT, subject to the granting of the SDO, intend that the IBF will be available to facilitate the management of the new custom and border controls from 1 July 2021. The site is proposed to act as a location for starting and ending the transit movement of goods to and from the UK; as well as a border control post, in bio-secure purpose-built structures, to check the animals, animal products or high-risk food and feed of non-animal origin in a consignment from outside of the UK.

2.8 This work on site will directly involve the Council, as the Port Health Authority.

2.9 As indicated above, the government intends to seek approval for facilities such as this under the requirements of a Special Development Order (SDO), namely the Town and Country Planning (Border Facilities and Infrastructure) (EU Exit) (England) Special

Development Order 2020, which was laid before Parliament on the 3 September 2020 and came into force on 24 September 2020.

2.10 This legislation provides for the granting of temporary approval to government departments to provide facilities in specified local authority areas for the stationing and processing of HGVs entering or leaving the UK. It also allows for the provision of associated temporary facilities and infrastructure. The legislation specifies that the facilities will cease operation prior to 31 December 2025.

2.11 The SDO process as set out in this legislation requires a report to be prepared for the Secretary of State of Housing, Communities and Local Government, which needs to include, amongst a number of matters, details of the engagement with stakeholders and the responses received.

2.12 The engagement process for this proposal commenced 13 January 2021 and will end on 10 February 2021.

3. Response to the engagement process

3.1 As explained above, the list of engagement parties within the legislation includes Dover District Council in its capacity as both the Local Authority and the Local Planning Authority.

3.2 This formal stage within the legal processes as set out in the SDO legislation is the first stage in an ongoing discussion which the Council intends to have with the government regarding the IBF proposal, it's operation and the wider impact on the District and it's residents.

3.3 The draft response to the engagement process, which the Executive propose to submit on behalf of the Council as the Local Authority is as follows:

> "This response has been prepared on behalf of Dover District Council, with regards to the proposal to establish an Inland Border Facility (IBF) at White Cliffs Business Park, Dover.
>
> The Council is pleased to see that, by bringing forward this proposal, the government has recognised the vital role that the Short Straits crossing plays as a key UK gateway for integrated supply chains and global deep-sea air/cargo distribution hubs transiting by road between the UK and mainland Europe and that ensuring fluidity and efficiency is crucial to this operation.
>
> The Council recognises the need to establish inland border facilities to ensure that effective border controls can be established now that the UK has left the European Union and welcomes the government's decision to make this major investment in infrastructure at the White Cliffs Business Park (WCBP) recognising the potential this offers to provide significant employment opportunities and attract further investment to the District.
>
> The site chosen for the proposed development has been designated as employment land within the Local Plan for more than 20 years. Development at WCBP since then has taken place in phases, commencing with Phase 1 in the 1980's running through to the present day where the bulk of Phase 2 is now substantially complete. The Council continues to see WCBP as a premier location for employment as set out in the Land Allocations Local Plan, which effectively incorporates WCBP Phase 3, the proposed location of the IBF.
>
> As was the case with WCBP Phases 1 and Phase 2, the provision of additional infrastructure has been a key consideration in bring forward development at Phase 3. The proposal for a new access road in the form of the Dover Fastrack/BRT scheme which, subject to achieving permission as standalone infrastructure, will facilitate access to the IBF was also intended to open-up

access to Phase 3. As a local authority focused on delivering economic growth, we are keen to see the investment in this site acting as a catalyst for further economic investment in the locality.

The Council will of course have an active role to play in the operation of the IBF through it's Port Health responsibilities and should the SDO be granted will be keen to work with the relevant agencies to further develop the Operational Management Plans for the site.

However, whilst recognising the economic and employment benefits that this investment brings, the Council is equally aware that the construction of a facility of this size, all be it on land designated within the Local Plan for employment use, has inevitably raised many concerns with local residents and if not planned carefully, could adversely affect the Councils' growth plans for the regeneration of Dover and the wider District.

It is therefore vital that appropriate mitigation measures are put in place to manage any adverse impacts that may potentially be caused by the White Cliffs IBF proposals and, whilst welcoming the proposal in principal, there are four key areas of concern, on which the Council is seeking detailed discussion with the relevant government departments:

1. Traffic Management and the impact on the growth agenda.

As outlined above, the proposed access to the IBF is from the A2/A256 junction and then via the existing B&Q roundabout and Section 2 of the proposed Dover Fastrack scheme.

The traffic modelling including within the Transport Assessment for the new facility makes it clear that the location of the IBF will inevitably lead to a significant increase in the use of the M2/A2 corridor by HGV traffic which is currently using the M20/A20. This has the potential to create significant traffic management issues on the local road network and in particular to further exacerbate the existing capacity issues at both the A258/A2 Duke of York's Roundabout and the A2/ A256/Sandwich Road roundabout at Whitfield.

The Council has had serious concerns regarding the capacity issues at these two junctions for some years recognising the limitations these constraints could potentially place on the Council's plans for economic and housing growth.

Highways England clearly share similar concerns as evidenced by the objections they have made in response to several recent planning proposals on the grounds of the impact that such developments would potentially have on the capacity of the strategic road network.

In order to mitigate the additional impact that the IBF will place upon the local road network, and thus safeguard the Council's plans for growth, the Council would be grateful for an early meeting with the Secretary of State for Transport to discuss how plans can be brought forward as soon as possible to address the following key issues:

- The upgrading of the on and off slip roads to the A256/A2 junction to current design standards.

- Improvements being delivered to the configuration and capacity of the A258/A2 Duke of York's Roundabout to ensure that Deal bound traffic is not hindered by increased traffic on the strategic road network.

- Improvements to the A2/ A256/Sandwich Road roundabout at Whitfield including the introduction of a signalised junction to ensure that local traffic is not hindered by increased traffic on the strategic road network.

In addition to these short-term measures, the Council has been lobbying for many years for the dualling of the section of the A2 between Lydden and Dover. This route provides vital resilience to the M20/A20 corridor and given that the proposed IBF will increase traffic on this route, we would reiterate once again our request that the Lydden to Dover A2 dualling scheme be included in the next Roads Investment Strategy programme.

2. Impact on Local Residents & the Environment

Whilst this site has of course been designated as employment land within the Local Plan for more than 20 years, the Council is none the less pleased to note the efforts made within the site layout to shield the proposed development from the residential properties to the east, through the provision of buffer zones and additional planting together with the other environmental measures as set out in the Environmental Management Plan.

Comments associated with the site layout and the measures taken to mitigate the impact of the development are contained within the Council's response as Local Planning Authority and to avoid duplication are not repeated here. The Council is concerned however that these proposals have yet to be relayed in a detailed format to the residents most affected during the course of the engagement period.

The Council would therefore urge, as a matter of some urgency, that the Department of Transport engages with the residents and provides them with responses to those issues of concern, which include the provision of a scaled layout plan of the proposed site together with details of the proposals to ensure that the environmental issues around sound, light and air pollution will be soundly addressed.

The construction of the IBF does affect a section of the North Downs Way, which it is noted is proposed to be diverted along the eastern edge of the site. The current Local Plan does in fact provide for the route of the North Downs Way to be restored to its original alignment along the Roman road and across the A2 on a new bridleway bridge to continue to Pineham when the area is developed for employment use.

Whilst the Council understands the reasons for the diversion of the footpath, there are local concerns that this diversion will become permanent and the opportunity to improve the national trail lost. We would therefore ask that should the IBF cease operation by 31 December 2025 as indicated within the SDO legislation, that the footpath being restored to its original alignment along the Roman road.

Developments such as this, will inevitably have an impact on the environment and the activities associated with it's operation are potentially detrimental to the objectives contained within Council's Climate Change Strategy, prepared following the Council's agreement to declare a Climate Emergency in January 2020.

The suite of documents prepared to support the proposal covers these issues in considerable detail, which it is not appropriate to seek to duplicate within this response. However, the Council would ask that every effort be taken to mitigate those impacts identified within the Analysis of the Likely Environmental Effects of the Development Report as prepared by WSP and that this Analysis be shared with those residents most affected by the development.

3. Impact of Development on Dover Fastrack and Local Businesses

As outlined above, the proposed access to the IBF is from the existing B&Q roundabout via Section 2 of the Dover Fastrack scheme. The Dover Fastrack proposal forms part of the masterplan for the development of at c5,750 new homes, at Whitfield with a mix and quality of housing supported by the provision for a fast bus link to the town centre and rail station as integral to the development. The Fastrack scheme has attracted significant grant support from Homes England and detailed design is well advanced with construction planned to start in late 2021.

The design of the scheme, which includes bus priority measures, segregated busways, and camera enforcement on sections of route, including a new bridge over the A2, had always been intended to open-up access to WCBP Phase 3.

However, the volume of traffic generated by the IBF is likely to be far higher than usage levels previously envisaged and so the Council is concerned that should queues of traffic form beyond the boundaries of the site that this could adversely impact upon the operation of the Dover Fastrack Scheme and indeed on other businesses operating from White Cliffs Business Park.

We would therefore ask that every effort is made in developing the Operational Management Plan to ensure the effective operation of the IBF site access and egress arrangements and thus eliminate any risk that queues of HGVs extending outside the site obstruct the efficient operation of the Dover Fastrack scheme or queue back onto Honeywood Parkway.

4. Support for Local Economic Growth

As noted earlier, the site chosen for the proposed development has been designated as employment land within the Local Plan for more than 20 years and the Council welcomes the investment in infrastructure at the White Cliffs Business Park (WCBP) that the IBF proposal offers.

WCBP has been identified as a premier location for employment, as set out in the Core Strategy and Land Allocations Local Plan, and whilst the IBF brings forward some employment opportunities in the short-term, the Council is keen to see plans developed for the longer term noting that the Town and Country Planning (Border Facilities and Infrastructure) (EU Exit)

(England) Special Development Order 2020, specifies that any facilities provided under this order will cease operation prior to 31 December 2025.

This therefore raises questions as to the future of the site after this date.

There appear, at this stage, to be two possible outcomes:

i. That the site is surplus to requirements and the IBF is closed.

ii. That continued use of the site is required and, subject to granting of planning consent, usage of the site as an IBF continues on a permanent basis.

Given that this area of the WCBP forms a key part of the Council's allocation of employment land as set out in the Land Allocations within the current Local Plan and as a local authority focused on delivering economic growth, we welcome the investment in infrastructure, which facilities access to the IBF and the remainder of WCBP Phase 3.

We equally assume that the government would be keen to support the Council's growth agenda and we would therefore wish to engage with the Secretary of State for Transport and the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy at the earliest opportunity to discuss future plans for the site.

In particular, should operations on the site cease in 2025, as to whether ownership of the site could be transferred to Dover District Council to enable the Council to take forward plans to facilitate economic growth within the District.

Alternatively, should use of the site, especially by HMRC, continue beyond 2025, then there would seem to be an opportunity to consolidate HMRC activity on this site and potentially relocate facilities currently sited elsewhere in Dover, such as those located at St. Johns Road to this site enabling land to be released for housing.

In conclusion, the Council would like to reiterate that the provision of major investment in infrastructure and early job creation in the Dover locality is to be particularly welcomed at this time and, whilst seeking reassurance on the matters outlined above, the Council offers its support for the proposal."

3.4 A separate response has been prepared on behalf of the Council as a Local Planning Authority, which is set out at Appendix 3.

4. Resource Implications

4.1 This report places no direct resource implications on the Council.

5. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

5.1 There are no direct climate change implications from this report. Clearly the construction of the IBF and the activities associated with it's operation will have an impact, which have been set out in and considered within the Analysis of the Likely Environmental Effects of the Development Report prepared by WSP as part of the suite of documents to be submitted to and considered by the Secretary of State as noted above.

6. **Corporate Implications**

6.1 Comment from the Director of Finance (linked to the MTFP): The Strategic Director (Corporate Resources) has been consulted during the preparation of this report and has no further comment to make. (MD)

6.2 Comment from the Solicitor to the Council: The Head of Governance has been consulted during the preparation of this report and has no further comment to make. (LM)

6.3 Comment from the Equalities Officer: This report does not specifically highlight any equality implications, however in discharging their duties members are required to comply with the public sector equality duty as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149

7. **Appendices**

Appendix 1: DfT Consultation Document

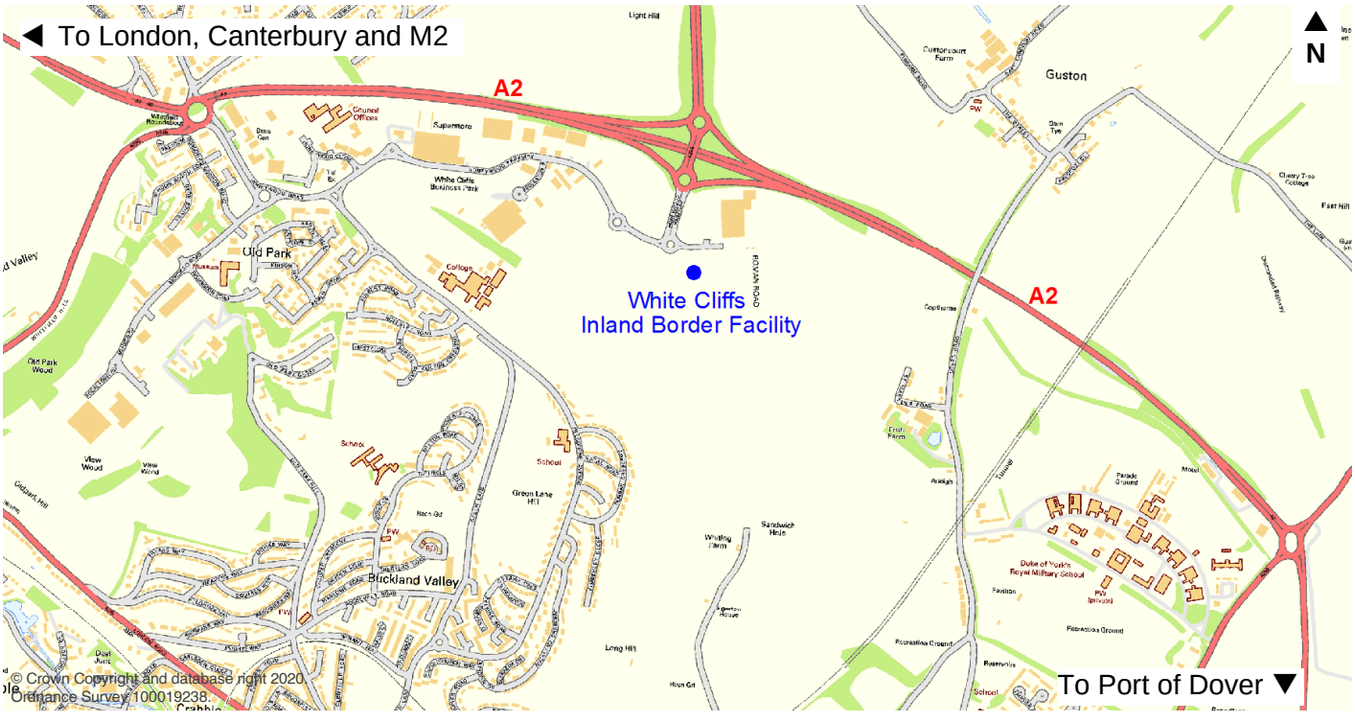
Appendix 2: Plan of proposed IBF

Appendix 3: Draft response to DfT on behalf of DDC as Local Planning Authority

White Cliffs Inland Border Facility, Dover

Information Booklet

Department for Transport



White Cliffs Inland Border Facility

The United Kingdom (UK) has left the European Union (EU) and a transition period was in place until 31 December 2020. This booklet explains the Government's plans to introduce an inland border facility alongside the A2, near Dover. The facility will provide customs and transit checks required for hauliers from 1 July 2021.The booklet also details how interested individuals and organisations can submit comments on the proposals.

Background

The Department for Transport (DfT) is progressing plans for the White Cliffs inland border facility. The site will act as a location for starting and ending the transit of goods to and from the UK for Defra and HMRC. This includes a Border Control Post (BCP) to support the Port of Dover where inbound consignments to the UK may be inspected in a biosecure facility, such as plants, animals and products of animal and plant origin (e.g. food). It will include parking areas for HGVs, while waiting to be processed, and other vehicles as well as security measures and facilities to enable the checking of vehicles and goods entering and exiting the site. The DfT's proposed use of the site will require approval, which is being sought by the Government under the requirements of a Special Development Order (SDO). The White Cliffs inland border facility proposals are planned for temporary use and are designed to ensure that there are no significant or long-term environmental effects. The DfT does not expect to use this site as a temporary lorry holding facility.

The DfT, alongside other Government departments, has undertaken a review of options for the use and layout of the site and, based on current planning, expect the site to be needed for up to five years. The DfT is engaging with community and technical stakeholders. You can view copies of letters sent to local residents on our webpage: **www.inlandborderfacilities.uk**

Inland border facility location

The White Cliffs inland border facility is located alongside the A2 in Kent, near to the villages of Guston and Whitfield, just outside of Dover. The facility is located off the Whitfield Interchange between the A2 and the A256, providing access to the Port of Dover and the M2 motorway. The White Cliffs site is approximately 37.6 hectares in size, comprising two parcels of land, divided by the Roman Road which runs through the area north to south.

How to comment on the proposals

This booklet provides information about the Government's proposals for the White Cliffs Inland Border Facility.

If you would like to submit comments about this proposal, you can do so from **13 January 2021 until 10 February 2021** by completing this Online Feedback Form (https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KWV6STR).

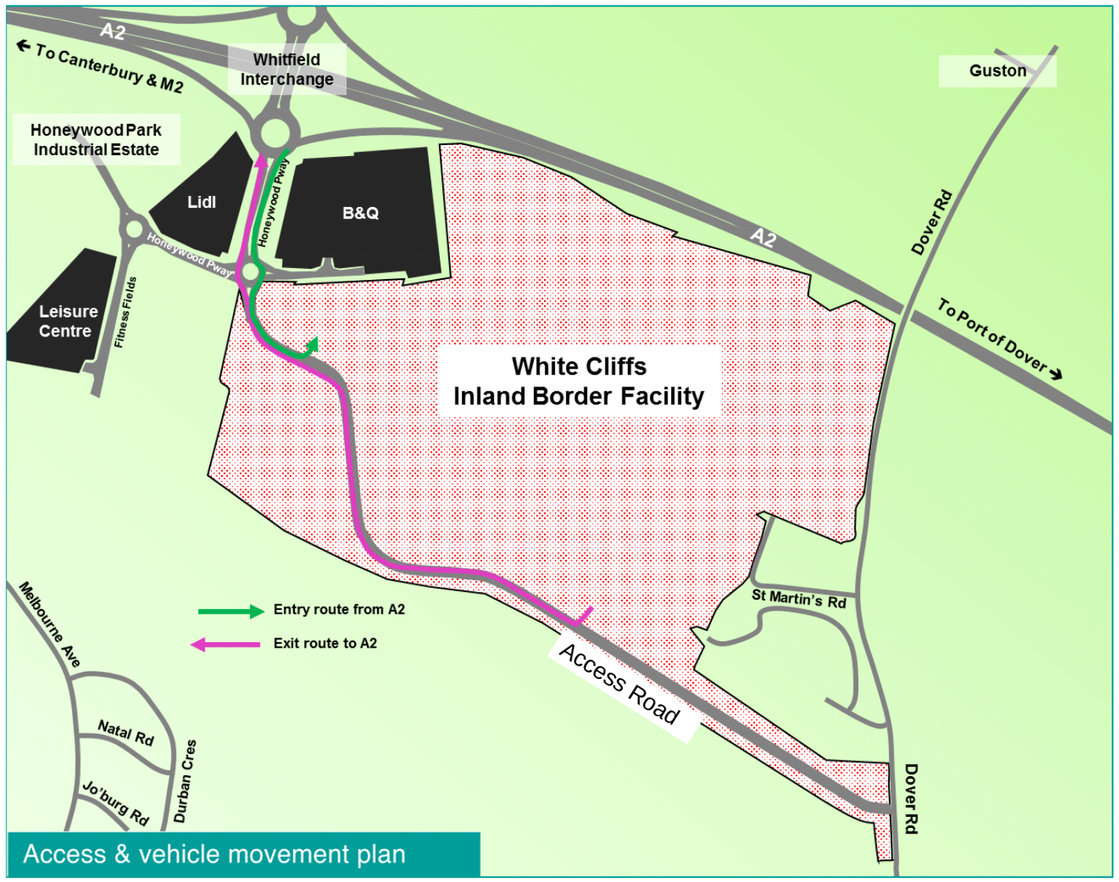
Details about how the inland border facility will operate can also be viewed on our website.

Why do we need inland border facilities?

The Department for Transport (DfT), Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) are engaging with interested individuals and organisations to explain the need for Inland Border Facilities (IBFs). Our dedicated website **www.inlandborderfacilities.uk** sets out further details of the inland border facilities that will provide customs checks required for hauliers from 1 January 2021.

Previous rules on trade, travel, and businesses for the EU and UK continued to apply during the transition period, until new rules were brought into effect from 1 January 2021.

The new rules require additional customs and transit checks. Where there is no space at ports for new border infrastructure, the Government has provided new inland border facilities where these checks and other activities will take place. At White Cliffs, lorries importing plants, animal products, certain food and live animals from the Port of Dover will be checked as part of biosecurity border checks.



Access & vehicle movement plan

Border Control Post (BCP)

Inbound consignments to the UK will require Sanitary & Phytosanitary (SPS) checks to be carried out. Legislation states that this must be at a designated Border Control Post. Government is constructing BCPs where a port is unable to within its boundary. White Cliffs BCP will support the Port of Dover to carry out inspections on plants, live animals and products from plant and animal origin. The BCP will be biosecure to prevent cross contamination, be temperature controlled and will operate under strict procedures to inspect, store and transfer consignments. A range of specialist inspectors will carry out checks including the Food Standards Agency, Animal and Plant Health Agency and the Port Health Authority to ensure minimum delays for perishable goods and animal welfare.

Highways and transport

Traffic modelling

The Inland Border Facility will not be used as a lorry park for traffic management. Initial strategic traffic modelling assessments have taken place which show no significant impacts as a result of the scheme. Further traffic modelling is ongoing and will be reported in detail in the Transport Assessment. Modelling is being undertaken for multiple junctions in the vicinity of the Inland Border Facility (IBF) site.

DfT will be working closely with Highways England to manage the Strategic Road Network, and Kent County Council to manage the local road network, when the site is in operation.

When the site is operational, there will be regular monitoring and reporting of potential traffic effects on neighbouring roads caused by vehicles travelling to and from the site. Where necessary, mitigation will be implemented through a Operational Management Plan (OMP)

Traffic flow & access

Directing vehicles to the inland border facility

HGV traffic will access the site via the Whitfield Interchange on the A2 (junction with the A256).

From London, the Midlands, the East of England and the North of England

HGVs travelling eastbound on the M2 will join the A2 and pass Canterbury. Entrance to the inland border facility will be via the eastbound off-slip of the Whitfield Interchange. The A20/M20 can also be used as an alternative route to access/leave the site.

From the Port of Dover

HGVs will use the elevated Jubilee Way to exit the port and continue northbound on the A2, following signs for Canterbury and the M2. The White Cliffs IBF will be signposted via the westbound off-slip from the A2 at Whitfield Interchange.

Prominent road signage

Prominent road signage will be located on the route to and from the Port of Dover along the A2 corridor for those HGV drivers required to report to the White Cliffs Inland Border Facility. There will also be signs outside the site entrance to advise hauliers about the use of site facilities and providing site contact details.

Environment and landscaping

As part of the site-specific proposals for the inland border facility environmental studies will be completed and relevant bodies,including the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England continue to be engaged about the use of the site.

The inland border facility proposals are temporary and are designed to ensure no significant long-term environmental effects. DfT, alongside other Government departments, has reviewed the options for use of the site and, based on current readiness planning, expect the site to be needed for up to five years.

Given the temporary nature of the inland border facilities, reinstatement plans will be prepared for implementation when activities on the site cease with the intention to ensure a biodiversity net gain.

The site will be operational 365 days a year and 24 hours a day, with night lighting required. A landscape strategy will therefore be implemented on the site which will provide measures to reduce the potential for adverse environmental effects. The landscaping will also reduce the visual and noise impacts for local residents. We plan to mitigate visual impacts for those potentially impacted. For St Martin's Road in Guston, it is intended that this is done through the construction of a grassed and planted earth bund, to acoustically and visually screen the site from local residents.

As part of the SDO approval, a study of the likely environmental effects report will be produced. This study will include consideration of air quality, cultural heritage, landscape and visual effects, biodiversity, road drainage and water, and noise. The report will also consider geology and soils, material assets and waste, population and health, and climate.

Biodiversity

Potential scheme impacts on local biodiversity are being assessed through a number of ecological studies. Where impacts are identified, appropriate mitigation will be implemented to ensure no adverse effects on local biodiversity.

The ecological studies being undertaken include an analysis of the habitats on site and studies of protected species.

Archaeology and heritage

A series of archaeological studies have also been taking place since October in conjunction with Kent County Council. The investigations have provided a range of results with some areas lacking in archaeological remains and other areas providing findings dating from the prehistoric to post-medieval periods. Investigations are ongoing and further analysis is currently being undertaken.

Public Rights of Way

A Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT) and the North Downs Way National Trail pass through the site and will be impacted temporarily by the proposed inland border facility. As a result of this, we propose to re-route the BOAT and National Trail along the eastern boundary of the White Cliffs site.

Drainage

We are working with a range of stakeholders including the Environment Agency and Kent County Council to implement a design that protects ground water from pollution, as well as managing surface water run-off from the site. This will include underground tanks to retain water from the BCP which will be tankered off site to a treatment facility. The drainage infrastructure will include swales and basins to manage surface water effectively. The drainage infrastructure will be integrated within the landscaping strategy.

How the site will operate

Subject to planning approval, it is intended that the site will become operational from 1 July 2021. Staff will be on-site and preparation activities will commence from 1 June 2021. The site will be managed by an appointed contractor. Staff will be working on site in shift patterns and there will be parking provisions, offices and welfare facilities provided for them.

The site will operate 24/7. An Operational Management Plan will explain how the site will be managed and operated safely. Site staff will include fully trained security personnel, and emergency response staff. Should medical staff be needed they will be provided privately as to not burden the NHS. Closed circuit television cameras are positioned across the site to monitor site activities.

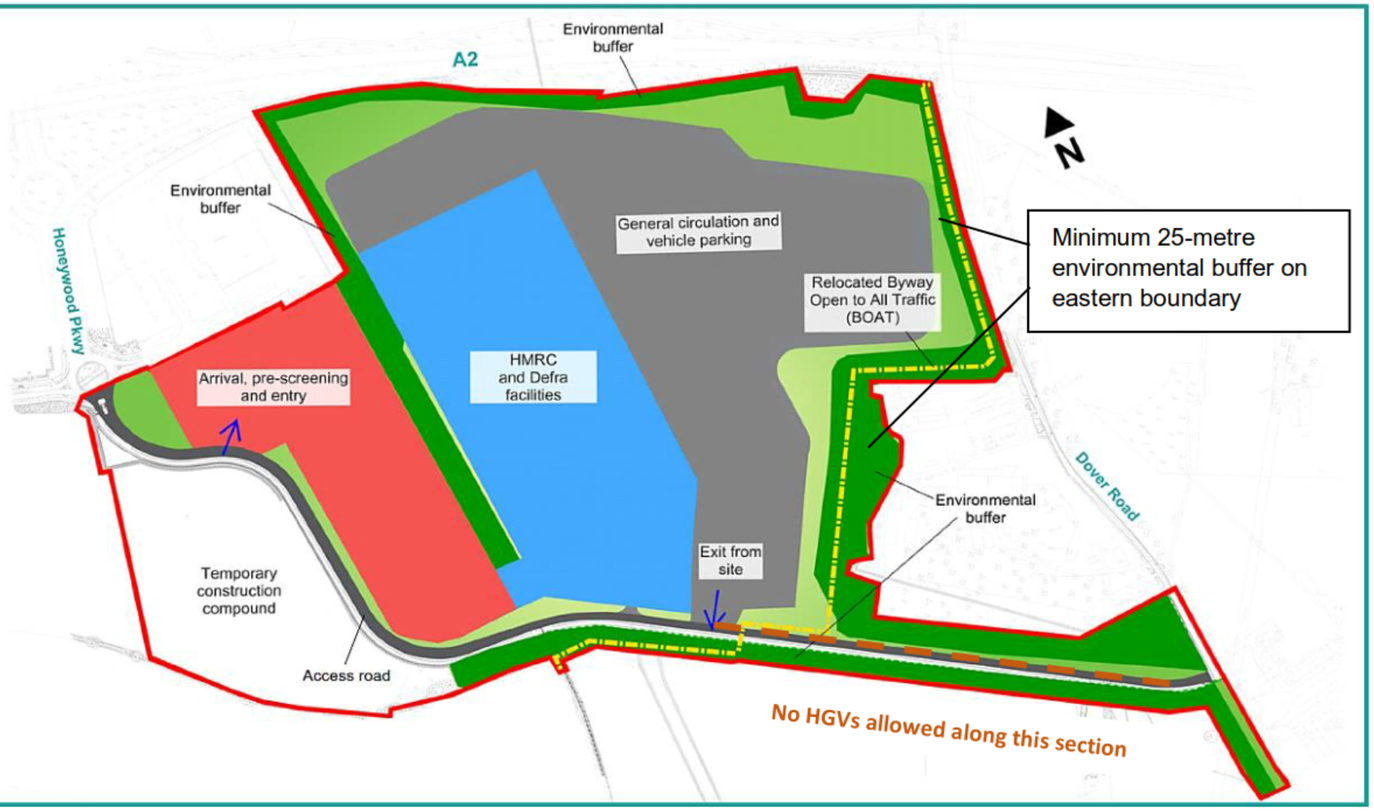
After entering the site, HGVs and other goods vehicles will visit the Vehicle Entry Check Point before being directed to a vacant HGV parking space. From there, the HGVs will be directed to the appropriate check. HMRC will undertake customs and transit checks as required. Defra will conduct checks on imports as part of the UK biosecurity border inspections which are necessary after leaving the EU. During processing, drivers must remain on the site. Once the checks have been completed, the vehicles will leave the site via the exit gates to continue on their journeys.

Covid-19 readiness

To limit risks from the Covid-19 virus, drivers will spend a limited time on site, there will be hot and cold running water, toilets, hand cleaning facilities and provision of drinking water. The site has been designed taking social distancing into consideration, and the latest Government guidelines on Covid-19 will be followed in all circumstances.

Proposals for the site

The general arrangement plans show the red line boundary of the site, as well as its internal configuration and layout.



Planning and next steps

Approval for the site will be sought under the requirements of a Special Development Order (SDO).

An SDO was laid in Parliament on 3 September 2020 (The Town and Country Planning (Border Facilities and Infrastructure) (EU Exit) (England) Special Development Order 2020) and came into force on 24 September.

The legislation provides for the granting of temporary planning permission to government departments, to provide facilities to critical infrastructure in specified local authority areas for the stationing and processing of HGVs and consignments entering or leaving the UK. It also allows for the provision of associated temporary facilities and infrastructure. The legislation states that the facilities will have planning permission until 31 December 2025.

The 2020 SDO includes four sections and can be viewed at: **www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2020/928/schedule/2/made**

Next steps

The submission of a site-specific proposal is required under Article 4 (Relevant Approvals) of the 2020 SDO.

A number of separate documents are required as part of the submission:

- Site boundary plans
- Site access plans
- Confirmation of site duration use
- A report considering the likely environmental effects and appropriate mitigation proposals
- A Transport Statement
- A Stakeholder Engagement Report
- A Planning Statement (including a description of the proposed development and its intended uses, planning context,application of relevant national and local planning policies, assessment of the relevant planning issues and any other material considerations which are relevant, along with compliance with Human Rights and Equalities Legislation).

Further subsequent details will also need to be submitted, following the Article 4 Submission, including:

- A Construction Management Plan
- An Operational Management Plan
- A Scheme of Restoration

Stakeholder engagement

DfT has been engaging with range of national and local stakeholders regarding the proposals for White Cliffs Inland Border Facility, including the local community. You can view copies of letters sent to residents regarding the proposals at our website at: **www.inlandborderfacilities.uk**

Questions and answers

What is the role of the inland border facility?

The White Cliffs site will act as a location for starting and ending the transit of consignments to and from the UK. Each location includes parking areas for HGVs and other vehicles as well as security measures and facilities to enable the checking of vehicles and consignments entering and exiting the sites. There are also temporary buildings as well as staff and driver welfare amenities.

Why this location?

With its location on the A2, approximately 3 miles (5km) from the Port of Dover, 50 miles (80km) from the M25 and just under 70 miles (110km) from Central London, the site provides direct connectivity to the Port of Dover and the Strategic Road Network.

Will construction and operation of the site impact local communities?

HGVs that access the site will also not pass by residential properties. However, for properties that are close to the site, an acoustic bund and landscaping will be established to provide further mitigation from visual and noise impacts. The site manager will be contactable by local residents should there be any adverse impacts.

How many staff will be on site?

Site staff will include fully trained security personnel, traffic management staff and emergency response personnel. The number of staff needed on site will be determined as part of the Operational Management Plan, which will explain how the site will be managed and operated safely. A number of local jobs could be created as a result of the need for staff on the White Cliffs IBF site.

What type of vehicles are expected to use the inland border facility?

The inland border facility will be used by HGVs, cars and vans, including staff vehicles.

Are refrigerated vehicles expected at the inland border facility?

Provision is being made for refrigerated vehicles. No idling will be permitted by any vehicles as engines of all stationary vehicles must be switched off while on site.

Will vehicles be inspected at the inland border facility?

The overall parking capacity for HGVs on the site (that will include for all regulatory checks and inspections) is up to 550 HGVs including the pre-screening area. There will be inspection bays on site and the time required for each HGV check (excluding physical inspection) is expected to be two to four hours however some may take longer.

Will this site be needed in addition to the Sevington site?

Legislation states that inbound consignments requiring SPS checks (e.g. food, plants, live animals) must be carried out at a BCP as close to the port of entry as possible. White Cliffs will host the BCP required for the Port of Dover and Sevington BCP will support the port of Eurotunnel. White Cliffs is close to the strategic road network (the M2/A2 corridor) while Sevington is located in Ashford close to the M20.

Will consignments be unloaded at the inland border facility?

There are examination facilities on site, and it is anticipated that some consignments that are brought to the site will need a physical examination.

Will there be any hazardous materials brought on to the inland border facility?

An Operational Management Plan will be developed for the inland border facility which will explain how the site will be managed and operated safely, including in relation to any hazardous materials.

How will traffic be managed?

Traffic impacts on the local and strategic road network are being assessed and managed in conjunction with local and national stakeholders. When the site is operational, there will be regular monitoring and reporting of potential traffic effects on neighbouring roads caused by vehicles travelling to and from the White Cliffs Inland Border Facility. Where necessary, mitigation will be implemented through a Operational Management Plan (OMP). The emergency services may occasionally need to access the site from Dover Road along the eastern section of the access road.

When will construction work start?

It is intended that construction of the White Cliffs internal border facility would commence in early 2021, subject to any approval. Some on-site survey work has been undertaken as part of the site investigation work.

Further information

The Government announced its plans for new border infrastructure on 12 June 2020. You can view details of this announcement and follow the relevant links to find out more about the transition period and the Government's plans for new border infrastructure via the web page below:

www.gov.uk/government/news/government-accelerates-border-planning-for-the-end-of-the-transition-period

Privacy statement

1. Data controllers and processors

Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and Department for Transport (DfT) are the data controllers. Data Protection Officers can be contacted at:

- DfT: **dataprotectionofficer@dft.gov.uk**
- HMRC: **advice.dpa@hmrc.gov.uk**

2. Why we are collecting the data

Your personal data is being collected to support the Inland Border Facilities Special Development Order (SDO) planning submissions. To support site specific planning proposals for new inland border facilities from the 1 July 2021, stakeholder engagement is required. To ensure that proposals have been considered and informed by the engagement process, Article 4(2)(j) of the Town and Country Planning (Border Facilities and Infrastructure) (EU Exit) England Special

Development Order 2020 requires that a report summarising the engagement with stakeholders is submitted to the Secretary of State as part of the approval process. As part of this stakeholder engagement process you are being invited to participate via a contact form and website equivalent. Although we are not specifically asking for your personal data as part of this you may provide your name and contact details so we can contact you. You do not have to give us any personal information to participate in the stakeholder engagement process but any personal data you do provide will be used for this purpose only.

3. Legal basis for processing the data

The data protection legislation sets out when we are lawfully allowed to process your data. The lawful basis that applies to this processing is that it is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest in accordance with Article 6(1)(e).

4. With whom we will be sharing the data

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra), Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), Border Protocol Delivery Group (BPDG) and any external department consultants are the data handlers.

5. For how long we will keep the personal data, or criteria used to determine the retention period.

- Your personal data will be held for three months following the completion of the dissertation and then securely destroyed.

6. Your rights, e.g. access, rectification, erasure

The data we are collecting is your personal data, and you have rights that affect what happens to it. You have the right to:

- know that we are using your personal data
- see what data we have about you
- ask to have your data corrected, and to ask how we check the information we hold is accurate
- complain to the ICO (see below)

7. Sending data overseas

The feedback form is being hosted by Survey Monkey which has data centres in the US, Ireland, and Canada. HMRC and DfT have taken all necessary precautions to ensure that your rights in terms of data protection will not be compromised by this.

8. Automated decision making

We will not use your data for any automated decision making.

9. Storage, security and data management

Following the close of the stakeholder engagement process, your personal data will be moved from Survey Monkey to a secure Government IT system.

10. Complaints and more information

When we ask you for information, we will keep to the law, including the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation. If you are unhappy with the way HMRC and DfT have acted, you can make a complaint:

- **https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-fortransport/about/complaints-procedure**
- **https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-hmrc**

If you are not happy with how we are using your personal data, you should first contact dataprotectionofficer@dft.gov.uk or advice.dpa@hmrc.gov.uk If you are still not happy, or for independent advice about data protection, privacy and data sharing, you can contact:

The Information Commissioner's Office,
Wycliffe House, Water Lane,
Wilmslow, Cheshire. SK9 5AF
Telephone: 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545 745
https://ico.org.uk

Department for Transport

White Cliffs Inland Border Facility, Dover

DO NOT SCALE

- Individual Small Specimen Trees
- Individual Large Specimen Trees
- Woodland Core Mix
- Woodland Edge Mix
- Proposed Native Species Hedgerow
- Cut Grassland
- Wildflower Grassland Meadow
- Wildflower Grassland for SUDS
- Amenity Grassland
- Bund Area
- Synthetic Porous Interlocking Pavers
- Hoggin Path
- Security Fence
- Redline Boundary

REV	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	CHK	APP

DRAWING STATUS: S0 - WORK IN PROGRESS

wsp
4th Floor, 6 Devonshire Square, London, EC2M 4YE, UK
T+ 44 (0) 207 337 1700, F+ 44 (0) 207 337 1701
wsp.com

CLIENT: Department for Transport

ARCHITECT:

PROJECT: White Cliffs Inland Border Facility (IBF)

TITLE: Environmental Masterplan

SCALE @ A0:	CHECKED:	APPROVED:
1:1250	CC	MP
PROJECT No:	DESIGNED:	DRAWN:	DATE:
70077720		IS	January 21

DRAWING No: WIBF-WSP-XX-IBF-DR-LA-201 REV: P01

0 63
SCALE(m) 1:1250

N

Appendix 3: Draft response to DfT on behalf of DDC as Local Planning Authority

Introduction

The Department for Transport (DfT) is proposing to construct an Inland Border Facility (IBF) on a site at the White Cliffs Business Park to the north of Dover ("**the Site**"). The purpose of the IBF is to provide additional space for customs and transit checks for goods starting and ending the transit movement to and from the UK, in response to new rules on trade, travel and business between the UK and European Union that came into effect from 1 January 2021.

More specifically, the DfT advises that the Site will also be used to process/inspect vehicles (predominantly heavy goods vehicles (HGVs)) importing plants, animal products, certain food and live animals through the Port of Dover.

Details of the Site and the proposed IBF development are set out further in the report below (including plans of the Site, the surrounding area and general proposed layout), but in broad terms:

- the Site comprises 37.6 hectares of agricultural land between Honeywood Parkway and Dover Road, to the south of the A2;
- vehicles would enter the Site via the A2 at the Whitfield Interchange and Honeywood Parkway roundabout, queue on site as necessary in a stacking arrangement, before being processed through a centrally located built compound;
- the central compound would be used for the inspection of vehicles/documents, part by the 'Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs' (DEFRA) and part by 'Her Majesty's Revenues and Customs' (HMRC);
- it is intended that HMRC inspections would be for inbound and outbound vehicles, whilst the DEFRA element would only be for those inbound (into the UK);
- the eastern part of the Site would be used as necessary for the parking of HGVs in connection with the IBF; and
- vehicles would exit to the south of the site onto a new road between Dover Road and Honeywood Parkway (with vehicle movement to be restricted to turn right only towards Honeywood Parkway and the A2 only), which would have the same alignment as the intended Dover Fastrack / BRT route.

The consenting process for the proposed IBF utilises specific legislation – 'The Town and Country Planning (Border Facilities and Infrastructure) (EU Exit) (England) Special Development Order 2020' ("**the SDO**") – which provides extensive powers for the Government

to develop the proposed IBF without express planning permission from Dover District Council (DDC) as Local Planning Authority.

The SDO grants temporary planning permission (until 31 December 2025) for the change of use of land, construction of buildings and associated infrastructure and landscaping works, as sought by HMRC or certain Secretaries of State (the Secretary of State for Transport in this instance) in connection with the inspection of vehicles and goods entering or leaving the UK in various locations throughout England and Wales.

However, the planning permission is subject to a process of 'relevant approval' by the 'Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government', requiring a submission under Article 4 (1) (on behalf of the DfT) of information to enable the likely environmental effects of the development to be considered in the context of relevant national and local planning policies (across environmental, social and economic objectives of sustainable development), with regard to any other relevant material considerations.

This submission must also include information on how specific consultees (referred to as 'engagement parties' by the SDO) have been engaged with regarding the proposed IBF, as well as then providing the representations received.

Dover District Council (DDC) as Local Planning Authority is one such engagement party, whilst others include relevant parish councils and nearby and surrounding residents and businesses.

To inform the engagement response of the Local Planning Authority, this report considers the proposed IBF development, with regard to the information made available to officers by the DfT, against the relevant planning policy framework and other material considerations.

It should be noted that the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government is able to impose conditions to control the construction, operation and management of the proposed IBF, should relevant approval be granted. Some model conditions are identified by the SDO, including for a 'construction management plan' and 'operational management plan' to be submitted and approved, but the development can be subject to other conditions as may be considered necessary, relevant and reasonable.

To assist members consideration the report below follows the structure of how planning applications for proposed development are usually presented to the DDC's Planning Committee, providing details on planning policy and guidance, relevant planning history, the response of internal consultees, and the site and proposed development, before making an assessment of the main planning issues and reaching a recommendation.

a) The development of an Inland Border Facility, comprising the change of use of land, erection of buildings, and associated landscaping and infrastructure works, on land to the east of Honeywood Parkway and south of the A2, White Cliffs Business Park, Dover.

Development pursuant to the 'Town and Country Planning (Border Facilities and Infrastructure) (EU Exit) (England) Special Development Order 2020'.

b) Summary of Recommendation

That this report and its recommendations are submitted to the Secretary of State for Transport, as the Local Planning Authority's engagement response to the proposed IBF development at White Cliffs Business Park, pursuant to the 'Town and Country Planning (Border Facilities and Infrastructure) (EU Exit) (England) Special Development Order 2020'.

c) Planning Policy and Guidance

Dover District Core Strategy (Adopted February 2010)

The stated aim of the Core Strategy is to regenerate the District so that economically and socially it out performs the region. The District contains some of the most deprived areas in the country and its economy is weaker than others in the region.

The objectives of the Core Strategy cover multiple aspects of sustainable development, including:

- to transform Dover to become a location of choice to live, work, visit, shop and enjoy leisure time;
- to boost the local economy to at least match regional averages, including through local skills and training initiatives;
- to ease travel for both people and freight, concentrating development where it can best align with facilities and infrastructure, and encourage sustainable modes of transport;
- to maintain and enhance the quality of the District's natural environment and green spaces to better support wildlife and human health;
- to protect the historic environment, recognising its regeneration potential at Dover;

- to use land and natural resources efficiently, as well as adapting to the impacts of climate change; and
- to ensure sufficient infrastructure is in place to accommodate future development.

The strategic policies of the Core Strategy seek to achieve these objectives:

- Policy CP1 identifies Dover as the highest tier and most sustainable settlement in the District – suitable for the largest scale developments;

- Policy CP2 seeks to provide significant job creation through identifying land for employment growth;

- Policy CP5 promotes higher standards of sustainable construction through the application of BREEAM;

- Policy CP6 requires that where development generates a demand for infrastructure that infrastructure must be in place or provided at the time it is needed;

- Policy CP7 recognises the importance of the District's network of green infrastructure and that it should be protected and enhanced; and

- Policy CP11 relates to the expansion of Whitfield for 5750 houses. Development should maximise the potential for walking, cycling and use of public transport to the White Cliffs Business Park.

The Core Strategy contains various other policies to manage development:

- Policy DM1 defines the settlement boundary of Dover, outside which development would normally be resisted;

- Policy DM2 protects land allocated for employment uses;

- Policy DM11 requires detailed assessment of the transport impacts of any development;

- Policy DM12 deals with development affecting the strategic road network – appropriate mitigation will required where development would otherwise result in significant additional congestion;

- Policy DM13 refers to Kent County Council guidance on parking standards;
- Policy DM15 seeks to protect the character and appearance of the countryside, but recognising some greenfield sites will be allocated for development to meet the needs of the District;
- Policy DM16 addresses landscape character – development that would harm the character of the landscape should only be permitted if its impacts can be reduced or mitigated to an acceptable level; and
- Policy DM17 seeks to ensure the protection of areas of groundwater to safeguard potable water supplies.

Dover District Land Allocations Local Plan (Adopted January 2015) ("**the LALP**")

The LALP sits alongside the Core Strategy as part of the statutory Development Plan. It allocates land for employment and housing development across the District.

Policy LA2 identifies land for employment development at White Cliffs Business Park, referred to as Phase 2 and Phase 3, as shown at **Figure 1**. Phase 2 comprises the eastern end of Honeywood Parkway, where recent development including the B&Q store, Dover Leisure Centre and Lidl are located, as well as yet undeveloped agricultural land. Phase 3 consists of land to the east of Roman Road, up to Dover Road / St Martin's Road.

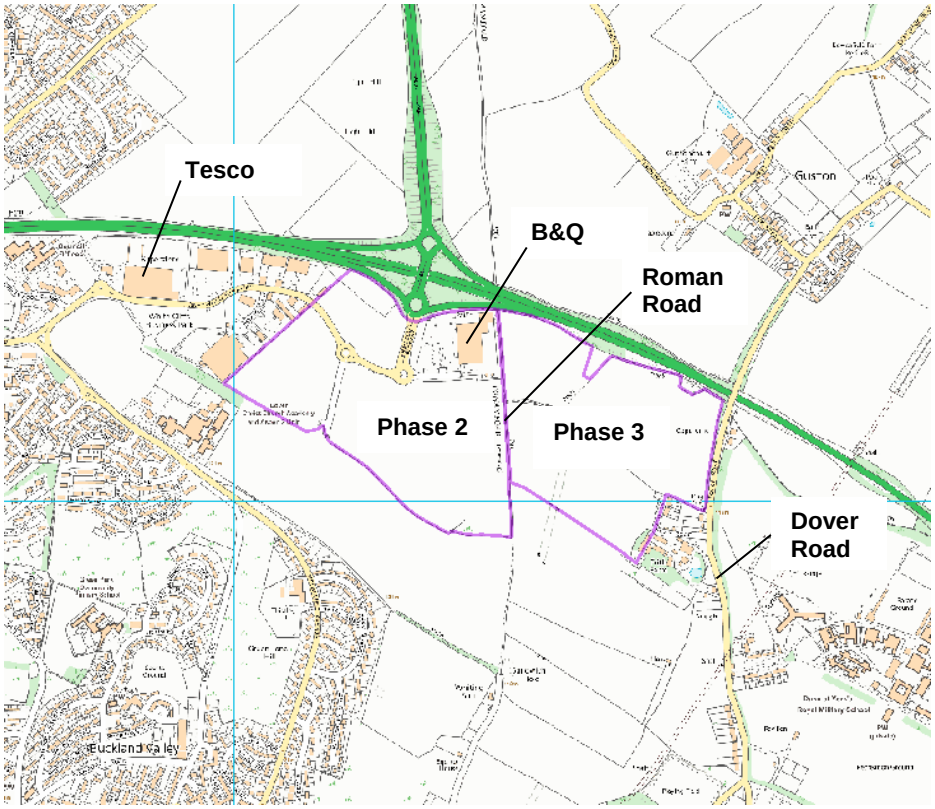


Figure 1: White Cliffs Business Park - Allocation

Policy LA2 makes provision for light industrial, general industrial and storage & distribution development, as well as other employment generating uses. It also seeks to manage development including to ensure that:

- the route and setting of the North Downs Way National Trail ("**the NDW**") is protected as it crosses the allocation site along Roman Road; and
- adequate structural landscaping is provided along perimeter boundaries.

The supportive text of Policy LA2 makes reference to the adjacent houses on Dover Road / St Martin's Road, requiring at least a 25m wide landscape buffer with earth bunds and dense planting to be provided, as well as limiting the type of business / industrial activity closest to those houses to that compatible with their residential amenities.

Dover District Local Plan (Adopted 2002) - Saved Policies

Policy TR9 seeks to provide and safeguard cycle routes.

Policy TR10 seeks to protect major urban footpaths – whilst it does not explicitly refer to the NDW its objectives are nonetheless relevant.

Policy CO8 protects hedgerows and requires suitable replacement if there is no alternative to their loss.

Policy ER6 seeks to ensure the sensitive use of external lighting.

Consultation Draft Dover District Local Plan (2021)

The Draft Dover District Local Plan sets out planning policies and proposals for new development in the District over the period from 2020 to 2040 and when adopted will replace the existing Development Plan documents (Core Strategy and Land Allocations Local Plan). While the plan is a material planning consideration for the purposes of this consultation, it's currently at a very early stage in the plan making process and as such its policies have little weight at this time.

- Policy SP1 seeks for all new development to contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change;

- Policy DM1 and Policy DM2 set out specific standards for development to reduce carbon emissions and to adopt standards of sustainable design and construction;

- Policy DM4 relates to sustainable travel, seeking for development to maximise alternatives to the private car, to provide electric vehicle charging points, and to accommodate cycle parking;

- Policy DM5 seeks to ensure water efficiency standards are incorporated into development;

- Policy DM6 and Policy DM7 require that flood risk is properly assessed and considered in accordance with national guidance; and that appropriate and sustainable surface water drainage measures are provided;

- Policy SP8 identifies the Council's support for development that delivers economic prosperity, job growth and investment;

- Policy SP9 continues to allocate White Cliffs Business Park for business and employment purposes;

- Policy SP13 emphasises that the Council will continue to work with relevant service providers to ensure that infrastructure is delivered, in the right place, at the right time, to meet the needs of the District;

- Policy SP14 explains the Council's commitment to major, long term improvements to the A2;

- Policy DM29 seeks to prevent development that would generate levels and types of traffic movements resulting in severe cumulative residual impacts in terms of capacity and road safety;

- Policy SP16 protects the District's various designated sites for ecology and biodiversity;

- Policy DM38 introduces a requirement for development to achieve at least a 10% biodiversity net gain;

- Policy DM39 addresses the importance of landscape character and the setting of the AONB;

- Policy DM41 seeks to ensure development does not result in exceedances of National Air Quality Objectives; and

- Policy SP18, Policy DM44 and Policy DM46 identify the importance of the historic environment, including archaeology, and seek to protect it;

National Planning Policy Framework (2019) ("**the Framework**")

The Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It is therefore a material consideration, to which significant weight should be attached.

At paragraph 8, the Framework states that sustainable development has three overarching objectives – an economic objective, a social objective and an environmental objective. These are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways, seeking net gains across each.

Paragraph 80 states that planning decisions should create conditions in which business can invest and expand, with significant weight to be afforded to economic growth and productivity.

At paragraph 102, the Framework seeks for transport issues to be considered at the earliest stages of development proposals, so that impacts on transport networks can be addressed. Environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure must be identified, assessed and taken into account – including opportunities for avoiding and mitigating .adverse impacts.

Paragraph 107 recognises the importance of providing adequate lorry parking facilities, to reduce the risk of parking in locations that lack proper facilities or could cause a nuisance.

At paragraph 108, development must provide safe and suitable access, and significant impacts on the transport network should be mitigated to an acceptable degree.

Paragraph 109 is clear that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds where it would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or its residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

Paragraph 165 – development should incorporate sustainable drainage systems unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate.

Paragraph 170 seeks for development to contribute and enhance the natural and local environment, including by enhancing valued landscapes and recognising the intrinsic

character of the countryside; providing net gains for biodiversity and establishing coherent ecological network; and preventing unacceptable risks to soil, air and water, as well as noise pollution.

Paragraph 180 – noise that gives rise to significant impacts on health and quality of life should be avoided.

Paragraphs 184 – 202 address development and the historic environment. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.

Planning Policy Guidance ("**the PPG**")

The PPG provides guidance on matters relating to main issues associated with development and is underpinned by the Framework.

Draft revision to the National Planning Policy Framework

The Government is currently consulting on draft changes to the National Planning Policy Framework, comprising focussed revisions to the existing text.

At a high level, the proposed revisions refer to commitments made to pursue goals of sustainable development to address social progress, economic well-being and environmental protection (under the 'Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development').

At a more local level, other relevant proposed changes include reference to:

- the National Design Guidance and National Model Design Code;
- the importance of trees in contributing to the character and quality of urban environments as well as helping mitigate and adapt to climate change; and
- sensitively locating and designing development to avoid adverse impacts on the setting of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Other Documents

- Landscape Character Assessment (2006)
- Dover District Heritage Strategy (2013)
- National Design Guide (2021)

- Kent Design Guide (2005)

d) Relevant Planning History

There are a number of planning applications relevant to White Cliffs Business Park:

Phase 2 White Cliffs Business Park, Honeywood Parkway

i. DOV/95/00828 – Outline application for proposed development of land for business (B1), general industrial (B2), storage and distribution (B8) uses. Approved 15/03/96.

ii. DOV/97/00951 – Erection of Class B1, B2 and B8 commercial buildings and ancillary highway and development works. Approved 24/02/98.

Phase 2 White Cliffs Business Park, Honeywood Parkway (including B&Q)

iii. DOV/05/00519 – Outline application for the construction of approximately 65,000sqm of employment development (use classes B1, B2 and B8) and a fully detailed application for a non-food DIY retail warehouse (approximately 5,734sqm of retail floor space), garden centre and builders yard with servicing, parking, access, landscaping and spine road and internal road. Approved 05/05/06.

Land to south of Honeywood Parkway, part of Phase 2 White Cliffs Business Park

iv. DOV/07/00237 – Erection of 2no. office buildings and external store, construction of vehicular access, formation of parking and associated works. Approved 30/07/07.

Land to south of Honeywood Parkway, part of Phase 2 White Cliffs Business Park

v. DOV/15/00815 - Erection of 7no. units for Class B2/B8 use (with ancillary trade counter(s)) and sui generis use(s) within the specified categories: ((i) Storage, distribution of sales of tiles, floor coverings, bathroom and kitchen furniture and fittings and other building materials; (ii) Machinery, tool and plant hire; (iii) Auto Centre for fitting and associated sale of tyres and car parts (including MOT); and (iv) Plumbers and Building Merchants), together with the erection of 1no. unit (Use Class A3/A5) and the creation of new access and parking. Approved 19/11/15.

vi. DOV/17/00305 – Erection of a detached flat roof building for use as a leisure centre (Use Class D2, 5,700sqm internal floor area), together with two external 5-aside football pitches, and associated parking, external lighting and landscaping. Approved 18/08/17.

vii. DOV/17/00500 – Erection of 1 no. building containing 3 no. units for Class B2/B8 use (with ancillary trade counter(s)) and sui generis use(s) within the specified categories: (i) Storage, distribution of sales of tiles, floor coverings, bathroom and kitchen furniture and fittings and other building materials; (ii) Machinery, tool and plant hire; (iii) Auto Centre for fitting and associated sale of tyres and car parts (Inc. MOT); and (iv) Plumbers and Building Merchants) and 1 no. unit (Use Class A3/A5, together with the creation of new access and parking). Approved 23/07/17.

viii. DOV/17/00823 – Erection of a detached storage building (Use Class B8), creation of vehicular access, parking and landscaping. Approved 09/10/17.

<u>Land adjacent to Lidl, east of Honeywood Parkway, part of Phase 2 White Cliffs Business Park</u>

ix. DOV/19/00964 – The erection of a building for use as a gym (Class D2), a drive-thru restaurant/coffee shop (Class A1/A3/A5) and 2 no units for Class B2 and/or B8 use (with ancillary trade counters and sui-generis uses), together with the creation of a new access, parking arrangements, outside storage and servicing area with associated works. Approved 20/01/20.

<u>Bus Rapid Transit Route</u>

x. DOV/20/01048 (KCC/DO/0178/2020) – Creation of two new sections of road as dedicated Bus Rapid Transit route for buses, cyclists and pedestrians only. **Section 1** - New road, 1km in length, connecting Whitfield Urban Expansion to Tesco roundabout at Honeywood Parkway via new overbridge over A2. Access to bridge will be controlled by bus gates. **Section 2** - New road, 1.1km in length, connecting B&Q roundabout on Honeywood Parkway to Dover Road, near Frith Farm, with access to Dover Road controlled by a bus gate. Providing access to future phases of White Cliffs Business Park at Dover Fastrack. KCC application - Not yet determined.

e) Consultee Responses

As this report is to consider the response of Local Planning Authority to the Department for Transport's consultation on the proposed IBF development, pursuant to the SDO, consultee responses are focussed to those from DDC (internal consultees) plus consultant transport advice.

The SDO requires the DfT to also consult Parish Councils, Environment Agency, Highways England, Historic England, Natural England, Kent County Council (KCC) (as local authority and Local Highway Authority), and relevant owners and occupiers of other properties (i.e. nearby and surrounding residents and businesses). These parties should be responding separately to this engagement.

Transport Consultant

A Transport Assessment (TA) has been submitted with the application, which was the subject of pre-application scoping with Kent County Council Highways and Transportation (KCC H&T) and Highways England (HE). In view of the limited timescales for this consultation and the importance of highway matters to the proposal, it was considered necessary to seek highway consultant advice to assist the local planning authority's assessment of the scheme. The conclusions arising from this inform the comments below.

Whilst the site access strategy is sound and supported in principle, there is a lack of detail in the TA with regard to critical aspects such as advance directional signage, on-site operations, emergency access etc., which reduces the confidence that can be placed on the strategy in practice. Indeed, no assessment has been made in the TA of a 'disruption' scenario, on the optimistic assumption that trader readiness will no longer be an issue beyond June 2021.

The TA states that further detail will be provided within a forthcoming Operational Management Plan (OMP); however in view of the short order in which on-site operations are expected to commence, it is considered that the OMP should be provided for review as soon as possible. In addition to the details referenced above, this should include vehicle swept path analysis of the proposed site layout, outline details of the proposed construction traffic management strategy and a Staff Travel Plan.

A particular concern relates to the potential for HGVs to block back from the site access to Honeywood Parkway, which would have the potential to delay Dover Fastrack services as well as existing users of White Cliffs Business Park. Whilst the indication is that this would be mitigated by the provision of 12 'swim lanes' – where incoming HGVs will be processed – these will be located beyond an initial security check post close to the site access, which could itself be a source of delay. Additional information and clarification is therefore required on this point in particular.

It is critical that the routing of HGVs to and from the A2 at the Whitfield Interchange is actively managed and enforced, particularly during the initial period of IBF operation. Experience from the Sevington and Waterbrook facilities in Ashford has shown that reliance on signage alone is insufficient to avoid HGV drivers becoming disoriented, with associated negative consequences for local residents and businesses.

A further significant omission from the TA is confirmation of the total IBF staffing numbers. Until this is provided, it is not possible to verify whether the proposed level of on-site parking is sufficient. It has been assumed that the shift changeover times for IBF staff will fall outside of the traditional weekday peak hours and therefore no allowance has been made for staff trips in the highway capacity assessments presented.

It is understood that not all inbound and outbound HGVs will need to use IBFs and that over time, the private sector will increasingly take over these operations on new and existing sites elsewhere. The HGV daily trip generation assessment and temporal profile presented in the TA is based on profiled ferry crossing information for the Port of Dover and other UK ports from October 2019. This data has been used to inform forecast demand at the IBF, taking into account the journey time between the site and the port. Whilst this methodology is agreeable in principle, clarification is required as to whether the October 2019 ferry crossing data is representative of pre-Covid vessel movements. Moreover, it is recommended that sensitivity assessments are undertaken, to account for scenarios where ferries arrive/depart in close succession during (or following) periods of disruption.

In terms of HGV trip distribution, drivers will have a free choice as to which IBF to visit and therefore a reasonable proportion of inbound and outbound HGVs via the Port of Dover will use alternative sites (e.g. Ashford, Ebbsfleet or North Weald in Essex). The TA makes the robust assumption that only 35% of HGVs visiting the Whitfield IBF will be ordinarily using the A2/M2 route to and from the Port of Dover, which is welcomed.

However, of the remaining 65%, it is assumed that only half would switch their chosen route to the A2/M2 corridor. This is considered particularly doubtful in respect to outbound HGVs, as it is highly unlikely that some 32.5% would travel via the A20/M20 corridor and past the port to access the IBF, before returning to the port for departure. In view of the length of this diversion and the associated time penalty for 'just in time' hauliers, it is considered that these HGVs would in fact also reassign to the A2/M2 corridor.

The TA identifies that Whitfield Roundabout is a significant crash cluster location and that it will experience a notable intensification of use by HGVs associated with the IBF. This is shown to exacerbate the over-capacity operation of both the existing and future (signalised) junction layouts and on this basis, it is considered that further mitigation is required at this location.

Similarly, mitigation is considered necessary at the Duke of York Roundabout, where the TA forecasts an increase in queue lengths on the A258 Castle Hill Road approach of some 22 vehicles – and an associated increase in average delay per vehicle of over a minute – in the 2025 PM peak hour. This evidently represents a 'severe' residual impact on the operation of the junction, with the consequent potential for driver frustration and unsafe manoeuvres.

In summary, whilst the fundamental components of the highways and transportation strategy for the IBF are considered sound, there is a need for additional information and clarification in a number of areas; most notably with respect to on-site operations and traffic management, to ensure that off-site impacts are minimised. There is also a need for sensitivity assessments of reasonable 'worst case' scenarios, to provide confidence that these can be planned for and accommodated as effectively as possible.

<u>DDC Environmental Protection Officer</u>

Information on matters of air quality from the consultant team promoting the proposed IBF has been requested at the start of the engagement period and is still being sought. If received ahead of Council, members will be updated accordingly at the meeting.

Information on noise has been received, but only late in the engagement period. Officers' consideration of this will be reported to Council in an update.

<u>DDC Natural Environment Officer</u>

The submitted Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening assessment report have been considered.

The findings and recommendations of the PEA are accepted. In summary, it advised that:

- the land is of low ecological value, (being an arable field) and that there are limited habitat opportunities for protected species;
- the only priority habitat identified was hedgerow, but most of that will be retained; and
- further survey work for bats may be needed if the identified trees and military structures cannot be retained. This potential survey work may need to be completed during this winter (hibernation surveys) and during the following spring/summer (dusk emergence/dawn re-entry surveys for transitional or maternity roosts). A decision therefore needs to be made soon as to whether these features can be retained and protected from disturbance.

A number of mitigation measures have been proposed such as a bat sensitive lighting scheme along with suggested ecological enhancements. The report recommends that a biodiversity net gain assessment is carried out. This recommendation is agreed.

It is important that the applicant uses the latest DEFRA metric to complete an assessment which aims to demonstrate at least a 10% net gain, above the ecological baseline, will be achieved , (in line with forthcoming legislative requirements and current policy requirements of the NPPF; although the latter does not state a minimum percentage).

The HRA screening assessment identifies likely significant effects (when acting alone), on three European designated sites, in relation to air quality impacts during the operational phase of the proposal. The screening thresholds of changes in annual average daily traffic (AADT) of 1000 vehicles a day or more, and heavy-duty vehicle flows changes by 200 AADT or more, are exceeded.

These designated sites are:

- Dover to Kingsdown Cliffs (SAC) (1.54km south east).
- Lydden and Temple Ewell Downs (SAC) (2.59km west).
- North Down Woodlands (SAC) (53.8km north west)

Although North Down Woodlands (SAC) is some distance from the Site, it has been included due to its proximity to the affected road network and the exceedance of the screening threshold.

The HRA will therefore need to proceed to Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment, by the competent authority.

DDC Tree Officer

Satisfied that whilst the scheme necessitates the removal of arboricultural features throughout the site, the overall loss of tree stock and resultant impact on landscape will be low. The survey undertaken and Arboricultural Impact Assessment identifies those trees and hedges to be removed as low quality with an estimated life span of no more than 20 years. The proposed planting of a 10 metre landscape buffer within the site and along selected boundaries will act to enhance the site in terms of tree stock and should be comprised of a range native species to ensure that the benefits to wildlife are maximised.

The Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Retention and Removals plans set out how those trees to be retained will be protected. These measures are deemed to be satisfactory and as such it is imperative that all measures set out are secured and adhered to ensure that the scheme does not impact on the trees flagged for retention.

DDC Heritage Officer

Information relating to above ground heritage assets within the historic environment has been reviewed.

There are no designated heritage assets within the site and no above ground heritage assets would be physically affected by the proposed development. However the setting of a number of assets is likely to be affected. These comprise:

- Duke of York Royal Military School, Grade II listed: West Entrance Lodges, Gates. The lodges are located adjacent to the south-east site boundary. The lodges are of high significance. Despite an impact on views outward towards the west, the main aspects of the lodges setting, is its relationship with the rest of the listed structures which make up the Royal Military School, located to the east and would not be impacted. There would also be no impact on the lodge's relationship to Dover Road;

- World War II Pillbox, non-designated heritage. A Type 24 Pillbox located within the southern part of the site. The proposed IBF development would impact the setting of this non-designated heritage asset. The pillbox is located within a rural setting, and has a location likely to have provided a visual vantage point and strategic advantage. This position contributes to its significance. The proposed development would significantly change the immediate setting of the pillbox, introducing new buildings and roads and increasing the lighting, noise and traffic in its immediate environment.

- Frith Farm, non-designated heritage. Historic farmstead dating to the 19th century which has been much altered. Located on the eastern boundary of the Site, off Dover Road. The proposed IBF development would impact the setting of the farmstead – enclosing its west and southern sides, removing rural views which contribute to its significance. Development would also permanently remove the agricultural fields to the west and north of the farm which are historically associated with the complex.

There is a wider study area of historical significance, including Dover Castle and Fort Burgoyne (both are nationally important archaeological sites), for which consultation with Historic England is required. But comments here are that:

- Dover Castle, Scheduled Monument, is 1.4km to the south east of the Site, with extensive panoramic views to the north that contribute to its significance. However, the distance from the Site, rising landscape and a thick tree belt prevent any direct intervisibility.

- Fort Burgoyne, Scheduled Monument, is a mid-19th century Palmerston fort located 750m to the south-east of the Site. It is of very high significance. Whilst views from the Fort towards the Site are obscured by groups of mature trees and rising land, there would likely still be some intervisibility and changes to longer-distance views.

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment includes extensive photographs indicatively showing significant views in and outside of the Site, which can be considered with the general arrangement drawing. But there is no detailed information showing the height and massing of proposed buildings and structures, as well as any lighting scheme. This information is essential to fully understand the impact of the proposed development on the historic character and setting of the heritage assets.

(Archaeological issues are being dealt with by KCC)

DDC Head of Inward Investment and Tourism

White Cliffs Business Park (WCBP) has long been designated as a strategic allocation for employment purposes for the Dover area; also being widely recognised as one of the main allocations in the wider East Kent area.

Development at WCBP has taken place in phases, commencing with Phase 1 in the 1980's running through to the present day where the bulk of Phase 2 is now substantially complete. While the expectation has been that WCBP would provide specific employment and logistic sector related activity (Use Classes B1, B2 and B8) a number of wider, but nonetheless, employment generating uses have been also permitted. Specific exceptions to Policy have also previously been made through the earlier approvals of Tesco and B&Q, where the contributions made to infrastructure at WCBP - the provision of Honeywood Parkway - has benefitted the wider employment base that exists today.

WCBP remains a premier location for employment given both the quantum of remaining allocated land and relationship and accessibility to the main road network. The Land Allocations Local Plan includes land of WCBP Phase 3 (as well as Phase 2), the subject of the proposed Inland Border Facility (IBF).

As was the case with WCBP Phase 1 and Phase 2, the provision of additional infrastructure remains a key consideration in relation to further development at Phase 3. The proposal for a new access road in the form of the Dover Fastrack/BRT scheme would facilitate a possible connection to the IBF. It would also open up the prospect of the remaining portion of Phase 2 coming forward earlier than would otherwise be the case.

While there is a desire to see stronger future economic performance in Dover District, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has brought this need firmly into focus. There is now an even more pressing requirement for employment opportunities as the area seeks to recover from the impacts of the pandemic.

Analysis from KCC's Data Intelligence Unit indicates that current employment levels in Dover district show a total of 4,605 people unemployed (November 2020), an unemployment rate of 6.6% of the available workforce. Significantly, this represents

an 89% increase of 2,170 people over the previous year. For the Dover area, unemployment is significantly worse, where four wards have unemployment levels from 7.6% to 19.3%.

It is expected that unemployment will continue to grow as the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic continue to escalate.

It is understood that the IBF will require a range of specialist and supporting employment needs arising from its operational requirements. While precise job numbers are still to be confirmed, the indications are that several hundred will be required.

(It is noted that Ashford Borough Council, in a recent announcement, estimates that around 130 jobs will be required to support the Port Health requirements at the IBF in their area. The precise number of required for this function at the IBF at WCBF is expected to be approaching a 100 jobs.)

Plans for the IBF indicate staff car parking areas of 160 and 212 spaces plus cycle facilities. Taking into account the expected Port Health jobs, this suggests a significant number of jobs, notwithstanding the potential for employees to walk, cycle if use public transport.

Overall, the provision of major investment in infrastructure and early job creation in the Dover locality is to be particularly welcomed at this time.

DDC Head of Community and Digital Services

Crime prevention approaches should be incorporated in large scale developments. Even simple changes can be effective in reducing crime (for example, improving street lighting, managing through put in public venues, introducing CCTV and enhanced security checks and/or patrolling), impacting on acquisitive crime in a positive way.

Evidence suggests that an increase in static vehicles (with specific reference to HGVs) may lead to an increase in freight theft, issues around drug related crime, criminal exploitation and organised crime, people trafficking, prostitution etc. However if from the outset suitable design measures are both implemented and advertised strongly this scan help dissipate any potential criminal impact.

There is already an emphasis on 'designing out' crime through the Secure by Design scheme and this has been shown to be effective.

The Dover Community Safety Partnership strongly advocate that any reference of 'well-designed' should extend to seeking to minimise the opportunities for crime and enhance joint working to improve the built environment for the benefits of both ‘users’ and our local communities, ensuring the ongoing ‘safety’ of the Dover District.

f) The Site and the Proposal

The Site

1.1 The site for the proposed IBF comprises land between Honeywood Parkway to the west, Dover Road to the east, and the A2 to the north (“**the Site**”). The southern edge of the Site to be developed is bounded by the proposed Dover Fastrack bus route between Dover Road and Honeywood Parkway. There is a further area of land south of this which it is understood will be used as a construction site.

1.2 The site measures approximately 37.6 hectares in size, comprising open fields in agricultural use (mix of Grade 2 and 3 land).

1.3 The Site is divided east/west by Roman Road (running north-south), which is also the route of the North Downs Way (NDW) National Trail that connects Farnham in Surrey to Canterbury and on to Dover.

1.4 The Site undulates, gently falling from west to east. From the NDW as it crosses the Site, there is intervisibility to the current development at White Cliffs Business Park (to the west) and towards the houses on Dover Road (to the east). To the south of the Site, there are a series of other fields with treed/hedged boundaries, before the topography falls steeply towards Dover town centre and the coast.

1.5 In the main the Site covers the land allocated for employment development under LALP Policy LA2 – part of White Cliffs Business Park Phase 2 and White Cliffs Business Park Phase 3.

1.6 The Site does not fall within a conservation area or contain any designated heritage asset. It is outside the Kent Downs AONB, and within flood zone 1 (land at least risk of flooding).

1.7 A Site location plan is at **Figure 2**; and an aerial photo of the Site and surrounding area is **Figure 3**.

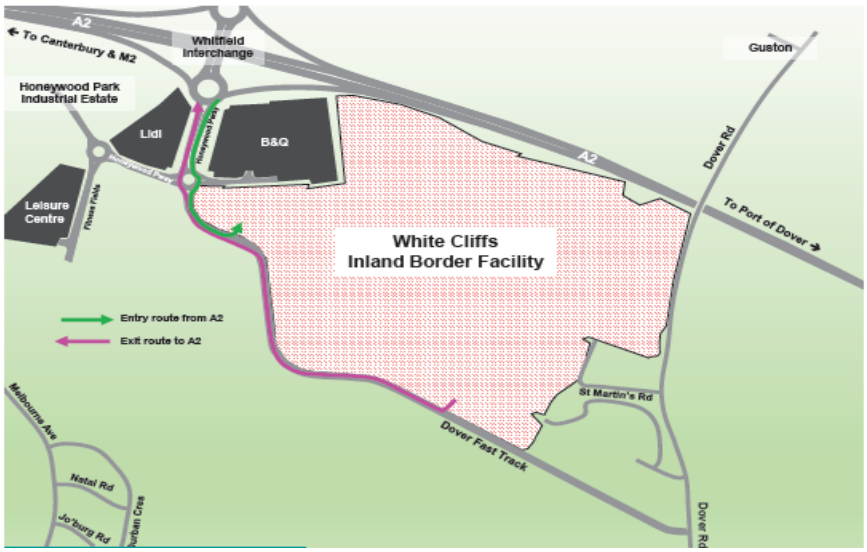


Figure 2: Site Location Plan

Figure 3: Site and Surrounding Context

1.8 To the west of the Site are other parts of White Cliffs Business Park, including employment uses, a large Tesco store and the Council Offices, served off Honeywood Parkway and Honeywood Road as it connects to Whitfield Roundabout.

1.9 To the east, beyond Dover Road, is the Duke of York's Royal Military School, then open agricultural land which, east of the A258, is within the Kent Downs AONB until the coast some 2km away.

1.10 To the north west, beyond the A2, is the area of expansion for Whitfield (see Policy CP11) as it grows towards the A256.

1.11 To the south of the Site are open fields and hedgerow boundaries, as the land falls towards Connaught Park and the Dover town centre.

Proposed Development

1.12 The proposed IBF development includes:

- the construction of a roadway along the southern edge of the built development between Honeywood Parkway and Dover Road;
- vehicular access to enter the Site at its western end off the new roadway;
- an initial entry and security check area just beyond the access;
- an initial HGV holding area, referred to as swim lanes, to the west of Roman Road. 12 swim lanes would each hold eight HGVs. Above the swim lanes would be a gantry to a maximum height of 10.3m;
- the construction of buildings to the east of Roman Road, of up to 8m in height, to be used for vehicle inspections and offices by HMRC and DEFRA;
- the construction of a car park to the north of the built compound for HMRC staff (212 spaces) and to the south for DEFRA staff (160 spaces);
- an access for the DEFRA staff car park onto the new roadway;
- HGV parking bays in the eastern part of the Site – 30 associated with the DEFRA inspection area and 170 for general use;
- access on the Site's southern boundary, onto the new roadway, for HGVs to leave the IBF;
- 2m high security fence near to the Site's eastern boundary;
- lighting columns across the Site up to 8m in height;

- landscaped bund and planting along the eastern edge of the Site; and
- surface water attenuation basin in the north east corner of the Site and various other attenuation features.

1.13 A schematic arrangement of the proposed IBF development is at **Figure 4**, and draft plans showing the preferred layout and general masterplan with areas of landscaping are at **Appendix 2.**

1.14 The IBF development would be temporary for a period until December 2025, whereafter (under the SDO) the Site would need to be reinstated in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved by the 'Secretary of Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government' in due course.

Figure 4: Schematic Layout of Proposed IBF

g) Assessment of Main Issues

2.1 The main issues in the consideration of this application are:

- land use
- highways and transport
- landscape and visual impacts
- design and landscaping
- ecology
- heritage
- archaeology
- noise
- air quality
- flood risk and drainage
- climate change measures

Land Use

2.2 The Site comprises part of DDC's strategic supply of employment land at White Cliffs Business Park, allocated by LALP Policy LA2 for development within former Class B1 (office, research & development, or light industrial) (now Class E)., Class B2 (general industrial) and Class B8 (storage or distribution) uses, as well as for other employment generating uses

2.3 Whilst the proposed IBF development does not fall into any specific class of land use, and was not envisaged by the current Core Strategy and LALP, it would still generate employment and create jobs.

2.4 Consultation information identifies various jobs in connection with the operation of the proposed IBF development, including inspection, security and traffic management staff, as well as roles of administration and site management. The IBF would operate 24 hours a day requiring three eight-hour shift patterns. Information explains that local recruitment is ongoing to fulfil the employment need, but a total number of jobs to be created has not been given. There will also be job opportunities in the construction of the development.

2.5 DDC's Head of Inward Investment and Tourism considers the likely level of direct job creation, including those associated with the Port Health Authority, to be several hundred. Placed in the context of the current unemployment rate for Dover District

(6.6%), which is much greater (up to 19.3%) in some wards of the Dover area, and the expected increase in unemployment from the economic effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, the level of employment by the IBF is significant. The Head of Inward Investment and Tourism welcomes such job creation.

2.6 Whilst the number of jobs from the IBF might be fewer than otherwise would be expected with some other forms of employment development on the Site (although without numbers a more accurate comparison cannot be made), it is relevant that these jobs are being proposed now and other development on that part of the employment allocation has not so far come forward. Overall, the job creation of the IBF is considered consistent with that objective of LALP Policy LA2.

2.7 In terms of the supply of employment land within the District, the proposed IBF is temporary until December 2025, after which the Site must be reinstated in accordance with the SDO. In this scenario the Site would then again be available for other development in accordance with its employment allocation and infrastructure to assist this would already be in place. Should however a permanent facility be sought on the Site in the future (which would require a separate planning application to be considered by the Local Planning Authority), any implications of this on the strategic supply of employment land in the District could be assessed at that time.

Highways and Transport

2.8 The draft Transport Assessment (TA) identifies that the proposed IBF would have an overall capacity of up to 550 HGVs, covering the swim lane entry system and inspection areas, with a peak daily forecast of 1,575 HGVs (or 3,150 two way movements) based on information by HMRC and DEFRA of the intended users of the IBF and ferry crossing information for the Port of Dover. The Planning Statement identifies that most vehicles will be present on the site for an average of 2 hours but those requiring further inspections will be there for an average of 6 hours.

Access to the Site

2.9 Access to the site would be via the A2/A256 Whitfield Interchange, Honeywood Parkway, then a new southern access road consistent with the route of the Dover Fastrack / BRT route. DDC's transport consultant advises that the access strategy is sound and can be supported in principle, but further detail and information should be provided to ensure its operation is robust, including:

- how the routing of HGVs to and from the A2 at the Whitfield Interchange would be actively managed and enforced;
- what advance directional signage would be provided;
- emergency access arrangements;
- swept path analysis of vehicle tracking for the proposed layout;
- adequacy of the swim lane provision and operation of the initial security post to prevent the backing up of vehicles onto the Fastrack / BRT route or wider highway; and
- sensitivity analysis of the schedule of ferry arrivals at the Port of Dover.

2.10 In terms of promoting sustainable travel for staff employed on the Site, a detailed and enforceable Staff Travel Plan with measurable objectives should be provided. Commitment has been made that there will be a dedicated minibus service for staff, to provide greater accessibility and a more sustainable mode of travel.

Wider Highway Network

2.11 The proposed IBF itself would not generate additional HGV trips to or from Dover Port, rather it would provide customs and other checks for vehicles already travelling through the Port. However the development would affect the movement of HGVs around Dover in two key ways:

- for HGVs accessing the IBF and using the A20/M20 corridor, there would be additional movements between the Site and the Port of Dover, with vehicles travelling along Jubilee Way, through the Duke of York Roundabout and the Whitfield interchange; and
- some HGVs would divert from the A20/M20 corridor onto the A2/M2 because of the need to access the IBF.

2.12 This change to HGV movements has been modelled by the draft Transport Assessment (TA), based on the peak daily forecast HGV movements and assumed proportion of vehicles that would use the A2/M2 or A20/M20 corridor.

2.13 The modelling shows that the Whitfield Roundabout will experience a notable intensification of use by HGVs associated with the IBF (notwithstanding some

assumptions which may prove optimistic as set out in the comments above), which would exacerbate current issues of safety and over-capacity. Similarly, development would significantly increase queue lengths on the A258 Castle Hill approach to the Duke of York Roundabout, with the consequent potential for driver frustration and unsafe manoeuvres on that junction.

2.14 DDC's transport consultant advises that improvements to traffic conditions at both these junctions are necessary to mitigate the impact of the proposed IBF; and without such works its residual impact would be severe in conflict with paragraph 109 of the Framework and Policies CP6 and DM12 of the adopted Core Strategy.

Car Parking

2.15 In terms of what level of car parking is required across the Site, this will depend on the number of staff employed, their modes of travel, and how peak demand at shift change over times is managed. KCC as Local Highway Authority should consider and respond accordingly to the consultation on the appropriateness of the car parking being proposed.

2.16 Access to the HMRC car park is through the main HGV entrance, whilst the DEFRA car park has a separate entrance off the new roadway. To avoid conflict between HMRC staff cars and HGVs, access to both car parks should be provided from the DEFRA entrance.

<u>Landscape and Visual Impacts</u>

2.17 There is a draft Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) for the proposed IBF, to consider the impact of the development on the surrounding landscape and specific visual receptors. This takes account of the current baseline as well as future development at Whitfield and the Fastrack / BRT scheme.

Landscape

2.18 The surrounding landscape within the District Landscape Character Area of Guston Hills, comprises large arable and pastoral fields, overlooking the built up areas of Dover, as well as other parts of the White Cliffs Business Park, the Duke of York Royal Military School and Burgoyne Heights. The LVIA considers it to have moderate / medium value, susceptibility to change and sensitivity.

2.19 At night time, the LVIA considers the Site and surrounding landscape is already experienced in the context of existing light sources from roadside and vehicle lights; floodlights at White Cliffs Business Park and the Duke of York Royal Military School; nearby residential properties; and sky glow from Whitfield and Dover. Accordingly, the LVIA considers the landscape to be of low sensitivity to the introduction of further sources of lighting.

2.20 In this context, the LVIA assesses the overall landscape effect of the proposed IBF development to be minor adverse during the construction and operational phases of development.

2.21 For night time effects, the LVIA also considers the impact to be minor adverse. However, as a detailed lighting scheme has not yet been seen by Officers, a more detailed assessment of the lighting impact of the proposed IBF development is considered essential.

Visual Effects

2.22 The LVIA identifies a number of visual receptors with high sensitivity comprising the NDW and other Public Rights of Way; residential properties on Dover Road / St Martin's Road and at Guston; Connaught Park; and Dover Castle. From these receptors, LVIA considers the greatest effects of development to be 'moderate adverse' in respect of the NDW, and 'minor adverse' from the residential properties on Dover Road / St Martin's Road and at Guston.

2.23 These conclusions take account of the design and landscape mitigation measures of the proposed IBF development including:

- the avoidance of built form and hardstanding closest to the residential properties to the east;
- creation of a landscape buffer along the eastern Site boundary to help screen the development from the outlook of the adjacent residential properties;
- the diversion of the NDW through the eastern landscape buffer;
- limiting the height of proposed buildings to 8m; and
- providing a new landscape planting to improve the visual appearance of development.

Residential Amenities

2.24 Beyond the findings of the LVIA, the impact of the proposed IBF on the general outlook and visual amenities of the closest residential properties on Dover Road and St Martin's Road to the east of the Site is considered in more detail.

2.25 Some of these houses currently have open views across the Site towards Roman Road, which would change as a result of the proposed IBF. In response to this sensitivity, a 2m high and 13m wide landscape bund is proposed along the eastern boundary of the Site, which would be vegetated with trees and lower level planting.

2.26 The operational part of the development would also be a significant distance of approximately 120m from the nearest houses, with an area of grassland between the bund and the proposed HGV parking.

2.27 A cross section showing the proposed bund and separation between the nearest houses and the development is provided at **Appendix 2**.

2.28 This approach in principle is considered capable of maintaining an appropriate outlook from these properties. But it is considered the bund should be taller to a height of at least 3m and that the 2m high security fence is placed inside the bund so it is screened from the adjacent residents and users of the PROW or closer to the noise sources to the west.

2.29 Matters of noise from the proposed IBF development are addressed further in this report.

North Down Way National Trail and Byway ER60

2.30 The current route of the NDW, which is also Byway ER60, is shown at **Figure 5** as it follows Roman Road to the north of the A2, then kinks to the east to cross the A2 on Dover Road, before routing back to Roman Road, southwards to Connaught Park and the centre of Dover.

2.31 Whilst the proposed IBF would maintain the alignment of Roman Road with a buffer on either side, the NDW is proposed to be diverted. The diversion would start from where the NDW currently crosses the A2 on Dover Road, for it to pass through the landscaped area on the eastern side of the Site, then run beneath the southern access road (proposed Fastrack / BRT route), before re-joining its current alignment on Roman Road. This diversion is also shown at **Figure 5**.

2.32 It is recognised that some importance and historic significance of the NDW would be lost by diverting it from Roman Road, and that the alternative route would be set within a less mature landscaped setting alongside the IBF boundary fence and closer to nearby residential and farm buildings. However, given this would only be for a temporary period (as proposed until reinstatement works are completed by December 2026) and the NDW (as well as Byway ER60) is capable of being diverted back to Roman Road in due course, the proposed alternative route is considered an appropriate solution at this stage.

Figure 5: Existing and Proposed Route of North Downs Way

2.33 The Rights of Way Officer has confirmed in discussion that KCC is also agreeable to the temporary diversion of the NDW and Byway ER60 as proposed, subject to further details in respect of its surface treatment, width, screening from the development, and landscape treatment.

2.34 Officers are aware of work by the AONB Unit to seek an alternative and potentially permanent rerouting of the NDW, westwards from its current alignment to pass through

Ringwould and St Margaret's Bay, before making its way along the White Cliffs of Dover. Officers would wish to be kept informed of this by the AONB Unit as its plans may progress, but such an alternative route does not form part of the proposed IBF development. Should this ultimately occur officers consider that a route through the WCBP site should still be provided for local access reasons.

Design and Landscaping

2.35 The layout design of the proposed IBF seeks to balance its operational needs and the constraints of the Site. Most notably is the buffer area and landscape screening within the eastern part of the Site, closest to the nearest residential properties.

2.36 Matters of residential amenity are considered above, but from a landscape perspective the areas of open grassland should be better utilised with more biodiverse planting, which would also further screen the operational parts of the Site from near and wider views.

2.37 At the junction between Honeywood Parkway, the access roadway and HGV entrance into the Site, the proposed wildflower grassland is welcomed, but there is opportunity to provide some larger more structural tree planting here to the wider improvement of White Cliffs Business Park.

2.38 Likewise, additional tree planting should also be provided along the access roadway, which not only will benefit the IBF but improve the future setting of the Fastrack / BRT route.

2.39 Elevation details of the proposed buildings have not been provided, other than they would be no greater than 8m in height. But in keeping with their intended use to facilitate the inspection of HGVs, they are likely to be robust with an industrial appearance.

2.40 The external appearance of the buildings is very important, but yet no information on that has been provided. Therefore it is recommended that external materials be agreed in consultation with DDC, which should be dark in colour so to blend in with the surrounding landscape.

Ecology

2.41 In relation to protected ecology on and adjacent to the Site and within the wider area, the draft Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening assessment report have been considered.

2.42 Advice from DDC's Natural Environment Officer is that the Site, as open agricultural land, is of low ecological value with limited habitat opportunities for protected species. The greatest sensitivity on the Site is in relation to bats, but subject to further survey work, mitigation measures including sensitive lighting are available.

2.43 An overall measurable 10% net gain in biodiversity on the Site should be achieved against the DEFRA metric.

2.44 For three identified European designated sites of ecological importance, the HRA screening assessment finds that further work through an Appropriate Assessment will be required to consider the impacts of the proposed IBF development on their conservation objectives and integrity. This Appropriate Assessment will need to be considered by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government as part of the 'relevant approval' application.

Built Heritage

2.45 A Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment has been considered by DDC's Heritage Officer, which confirms there are no designated heritage assets on the Site itself.

2.46 In relation to the setting of the designed built assets, there would be some impact to the Grade II listed West Entrance Lodges, Gates and Wall at the Duke of York Royal Military School, and some change to longer distance views from Fort Burgoyne (Scheduled Monument). These impacts are considered to result in less than substantial harm to each heritage asset, but should still be balanced against the public benefits of the IBF by Secretary of State.

2.47 For the most sensitive Dover Castle (Scheduled Monument and Grade I listed building) the intervening topography and vegetation prevents any direct intervisibility.

2.48 The Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment identifies that the proposed IBF would have a substantial impact on the setting of the non-designated assets of a World War II pillbox and Firth Farm. Officers consider the Roman Road is also a non-

designated asset, which would have a direct and setting impact on its significance. This harm should be taken into account and balanced by the Secretary of State in considering the environmental effects of the IBF.

2.49 Closer the Site the IBF would have some impact on the Grade II listed West Entrance Lodges, Gates and Wall at the Duke of York Royal Military School, this would not harm its heritage significance.

Archaeology

2.50 Whilst matters of archaeology within Kent are addressed by the County Council, who will be responding separately to the proposed IBF consultation, an update to Officers at DDC has been provided by the Archaeological Officer.

2.51 It is understood that:

- several technical studies relating to the Site's archaeological interest have been prepared to assess and evaluate its archaeological potential. These include Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment, a detailed geophysical survey, and a Written Scheme of Investigation;

- the results of the geophysical survey have been seen, and programme of field evaluation (trial trenching) is currently underway;

- the trial trenching should inform the likely environmental effects of the development and inform a mitigation strategy that allows for the 'preservation and safeguarding' or 'investigation and recording' of any archaeological remains;

- a particular focus of the trial trenching is to identify any nationally important archaeological remains that may be present. Based on the assessments carried out to date it is considered that the likelihood of such nationally important remains is not very high, although cannot yet be entirely ruled-out; and

- at least one WW2 pillbox survives within the site and another lies adjacent to the southern boundary of the site, as part of a network defences when German invasion was considered imminent. The proposed IBF should secure the protection of the pillbox(es) during construction and operation of development.

Noise

2.52 Information on matters of noise from the consultant team promoting the proposed IBF has been received, but only late in the engagement period. Officers' consideration of this will be reported to Council in an update at the meeting.

2.53 Notwithstanding more detailed consideration of the information, it is considered an acoustic fence should be provided along the eastern edge of the HGV parking, to help attenuate any noise from that area.

Air Quality

2.54 Information on matters of air quality from the consultant team promoting the proposed IBF has been requested at the start of the engagement period and is still being sought. If received ahead of Council, members will be updated accordingly at the meeting.

Drainage

2.55 A draft surface water drainage strategy and layout across the Site has been provided. This included a network of swales around the edge of the built form and areas of hardstanding, which would then feed into an attenuation basin positioned in the north east corner. Given the nature of the proposed use, shut off valves will be provided at appropriate locations in order to isolate and manage any accidental spills.

2.56 Foul drainage will initially be collected within tanks on the Site, before the IBF is fully connected to the main sewer network.

Climate Change Measures

2.57 The proposed IBF should recognise the challenges of a changing climate and include measures to mitigate and adapt to that – to minimise vulnerability and improve resilience, as well as reducing emissions of carbon dioxide.

2.58 As part of this DDC would expect that:

- electric vehicle charging points to be provide at one for every 10 staff parking spaces;
- tree planting to provide shade and relief from the sun is provided across the large proposed areas of hardstanding;

- the proposed buildings on the Site achieve at least a 31% reduction in carbon emissions below the Target Emission Rate (TER) as set out in Building Regulations Part L (2013)

- the proposed buildings meet a BREEAM 'Very Good' standard overall, including Very Good for addressing maximum energy efficiencies under the energy credits;

- water efficiency measures are included to achieve the relevant BREEAM water credits; and

- through consultation with KCC as Lead Local Flood Authority, the surface water drainage system includes appropriate allowances for climate change.

g) Recommendation

DDC as LPA would wish to see amendments to the scheme, or for additional information to be provided to address the following matters:

a. that a mitigation package of highway improvements to reduce congestion and improve safety at the Whitfield Roundabout and Duke of York Roundabout is included with the submission for Relevant Approval and implemented to a programme to be agreed with the relevant authorities;

b. that the initial security / check in post for HGVs, before the HMRC and DEFRA inspection areas, is repositioned to the south of the swim lanes, to reduce/eliminate any risk that HGVs queuing at this security / check in post might back up onto the new access roadway and wider road network with the potential to cause severe congestion including to Dover Fastrack buses;

c. that a physical bus gate, comprising automatic collapsible bollards, is installed on the new access roadway to control and limit the Dover Road access to authorised buses and emergency vehicles only;

d. that the access to the DEFRA staff car park also be available for those using the HMRC car park, to avoid conflict between staff vehicles and HGVs at the main HGV entrance;

e. that a robust sensitivity analysis is carried out for ferry arrivals at the Port of Dover, where two or more ferries arrive close together, in respect of the resultant HGV movements and highway impacts to inform the off-site highway improvements identified at a;

f. that details of traffic signage and routing controls are provided with the submission of information for Relevant Approval to include real-time advance electronic directional signage showing any operational issues at the site;

g. that electric vehicle charging points are provided for the staff car parks at one for every 10 spaces;

h. that a fully detailed proposed LED lighting scheme (including lux plot) is included with the submission for Relevant Approval, so landscape and visual impacts of the proposed IBF can be properly considered, and that no lighting is provided to the east of the lorry parking areas and no columns exceed 8m in height;

i. that the height of the landscaped bund to the west of the houses on Dover Road / St Martin's Road is increased to at least 3m; and that the bund incorporates denser evergreen planting at lower and higher levels to ensure the proposed IBF is fully screened from the outlook of those residents;

j. that a more biodiverse planting scheme, which would further help screen the operational development, is provided across the areas currently identified as 'cut grassland' and 'amenity grassland' to include further areas of woodland edge planting to the east of the bund and west of the swim lanes;

k. that tree planting is increased along the route of the proposed new roadway/BRT route;

l. that the 2m security fence is re-positioned to inside the bund so it is not visible to nearby residents and users of the realigned North Downs Way National Trail;

m. that an acoustic fence is positioned along the eastern edge of the HGV parking area, to help attenuate any noise from that area;

n. that the HGV parking area is managed so vehicles are sequentially parked as far west into the Site as possible;

o. that the HGV parking area is only lit in areas where vehicles are parked and only where and when it is necessary to do so;

p. that the appearance of all buildings are agreed with the LPA before being constructed and materials of the buildings are sympathetic to and would blend into the surrounding landscape, and would be least obtrusive in views across the Site and are not higher than 8m;

q. that a measurable biodiversity net gain of at least 10% is achieved against the DEFRA metric;

r. that further engagement with DDC on matters of noise and air quality is required before the submission for relevant approval;

s. that there is meaningful engagement with DDC on the information and detail that is to be provided as a 'construction management plan' and 'operational management plan'.

t. tree planting to provide shade and relief from the sun is provided across proposed areas of hardstanding wherever possible;

u. the proposed buildings on the Site achieve at least a 31% reduction in carbon emissions below the Target Emission Rate (TER) as set out in Building Regulations Part L (2013)

v. the proposed buildings meet a BREEAM 'Very Good' standard overall, including Very Good for addressing maximum energy efficiencies under the energy credits;

w. water efficiency measures are included to achieve the relevant BREEAM water credits;

x. through consultation with KCC as Lead Local Flood Authority, the surface water drainage system includes appropriate allowances for climate change.

y. That the WWII pill box is preserved.

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URGENT BUSINESS

To consider any other items deemed by the Chairman of the Council to be urgent in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.