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Date: 14 June 2023

**Sent by e-mail**

Councillor David Brazier  
Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport  
Kent County Council  
c/o Members Desk  
County Hall  
Sessions House  
Maidstone  
ME14 1XQ

Dear Councillor Brazier

In my capacity as the (former) Chairman of the Dover Joint Transportation Advisory Board, I have been charged with writing to you to express the Board's concerns about the report entitled 'Involvement in Highway Aspects of Planning Applications' that went to the Board's meeting held on 30 March 2023.

Members were disappointed that an officer from Kent County Council was not present at the meeting to explain the statements made within the report about the new 'Vision and Validate' policy and the disclosure of pre-application advice. They commented that the 'Vision and Validate' policy is such a major shift in policy that it would have been courteous for KCC to attend the meeting in order to clarify this strategic change in position and to answer Members' questions. I appreciate that the report went to a number of Boards around the same time, but consideration should at least have been given to an officer attending these meetings remotely. Members also raised concerns that there appears to have been a lack of publicity and wider consultation around this policy which will potentially affect all Members, and particularly those serving on the Planning Committee.

The Board also took issue with the report's assertion that pre-application planning advice could not be disclosed, even under a Freedom of Information request. One Member cited informal advice received from this Council's Planners that pre-application advice was likely to be disclosable under an FOI request.

Finally, I should add that there was disquiet amongst Members about the tone of the report which they perceived to be somewhat dictatorial and discouraging scrutiny or challenge.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

**Councillor James Back**  
**(Former) Chairman of Dover Joint Transportation Advisory Board**

Copied to: Councillor Kevin Mills (Leader of Dover District Council)  
Councillor Edward Biggs (current Vice-Chairman of Dover Joint Transportation  
Advisory Board)