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Public Protection

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Ask for: Kate Beswick
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Date: 10th May 2023

Your Ref: 23/00484

By Email:

Dear Andrew

Application Ref: 23/00484 Outline

Location: Land At The Hill Bokesbourne Lane East Of Bokesbourne Hill Bokesbourne Canterbury CT4 5EA

Proposal: Outline planning application for up to 300 residential dwellings (including affordable housing and older person accommodation), a new community hub, introduction of structural planting and landscaping, informal public open space and children's play area and surface water flood mitigation and attenuation. All matters reserved except for access. |

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above consultation. As a general statement, KCC's Public Rights of Way and Access Service are keen to ensure that their interests are represented with respect to our statutory duty to protect and improve Public Rights of Way (PROW) in the County. The team is committed to working in partnership with the applicant to achieve the aims contained within the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) and Strategic Statement for Kent. Specifically these relate to quality of life, supporting the rural economy, tackling disadvantage and safety issues, and providing sustainable transport choices.

KCC PROW and Access Service have no objection to the application, however we would request that a s106 contribution (detailed below) is allocated due to the impact on the surrounding network, in order to support the aims and objectives of the KCC Rights of Way Improvement Plan and to ensure sustainable Active Travel opportunities are achieved and to ensure modal shift away from car use.

There are no Public Rights of Way directly affected by the development as shown on the accompanying site plan. KCC PROW and Access Service note that the wider PROW network is

included within the Transport Assessment, (Appendix 4.C), however, disappointingly, there is no mention of improvements to the network to provide quality links to the amenities in Littlebourne.

Transport Assessment

4.3.1 The 2km walking distance detailed here incorporates the PROW routes into Littlebourne, for connectivity to the school, church and doctor's surgery. The s106 request therefore reflects the significance of the network.

4.3.5 "School Path" – see above.

4.3.6 identifies Public Footpath CB143. Disappointingly, the application omits inclusion of PROW in achieving Active Travel connections.

The size of this development will have an impact on the PROW network, through increased use, loss of amenity and potential generation of traffic. Significant measures should be taken to help mitigate all these impacts and future proof sustainable Active Travel in the wider area. The increase in investment and policy from both central and local government towards this modal shift is the focus of our request. Pedestrian connectivity to local facilities, Littlebourne Primary School, shops, church and local facilities is essential and Public Footpaths CB143, CB156, CB147, CB155A all provide the above opportunities. We would therefore seek a **s106 contribution of £30,000 (index linked)** for clearance, surface repairs and in the case of CB143 a new tarmac surface. These routes all provide direct local access away from a roadside to the amenities identified as within walking distance for the purpose of education, health and retail.

Reason: Directly related to the development; Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

General Comments

KCC PROW and Access would also take this opportunity to raise concern regarding the impact of the proposed development on the local rural Highway network and NMU. Rural lanes are often used by users to connect between PROW routes, as well as provide Active Travel and leisure routes for both pedestrians and cyclists. In particular the connection to Bekesbourne station is along a rural lane and significant consideration should be given to this impact.

We would also raise concerns regarding the illustrated layout of the dwellings in relation to proportional green space available; access to a high-quality natural environment is essential to the health, wellbeing and prosperity of people and communities, and this should be reflected in a development with the vision to "*provide a high quality development designed using Garden City principles as outlined within Policy R15 of the Draft Canterbury District Local Plan. The development will create a strong sense of place, embracing and reflecting the character of Littlebourne*" (Design Statement).

Comments are made in reference to the following planning policy:

- **National Planning Policy Framework - Paragraph 98**

States that planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails.

- **KCC ROWIP and Kent Design Guide**

- **Canterbury Local Plan Policies – SP1 / SP3 / SP5 / T1 / T2 / T16 / DBE1 / DBE7 / OS11 / OS12**

This response is made on behalf of Kent County Council Public Rights of Way and Access Service. The views expressed should be considered only as the response of the County Council in respect of public rights of way and countryside access matters relating to the application.

Yours sincerely

Kate Beswick

Countryside Access Improvement Plan Officer
Public Rights of Way & Access Service