

Maidstone Borough Council

Mr R Mellor
C/o Programme Officer
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By Email.

30 January 2017.

Alison Broom
Chief Executive

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Dear Mr Mellor

Re: Maidstone Borough Local Plan Interim Findings – response to claims made by Kent County Council (ED 121).

I write to give further clarification in regard to your request for a more detailed consideration of the points raised by Kent County Council in their response to your interim findings, posted on the examination website with reference ED 121, notably in paragraph 2 on page 4.

With regard to the specific claim by KCC concerning a lack of control of land in relation to the A274 improvements, I can confirm that this is ill founded. The genesis for such improvements is 'saved' policy T2 of the adopted Local Plan. Transport Planners from Mott MacDonald confirm that in the A274 Corridor Study (TRA 028 and 028A) the planned widening of the Carriageway was within the Highway, generally narrowing a Footway or cutting into the grass verge between the Carriageway and the Footway (Highway, Footway and Carriageway having meanings as set out in the Highways Act 1980). In a couple of cases, proposed options involved cutting into a grassed/hedged area which appeared to be in municipal ownership, (likely in the ownership of Maidstone Borough Council), and therefore acquisition of the land could be assumed reasonable. Where this is not the case in any particular location, there are design options avoiding the necessity to acquire third-party land while still delivering good quality bus priority measures. In any case, there will certainly be considerably less land acquisition required for the bus priority proposals compared to the Leeds-Langley Relief Road.

No evidence was put forward by KCC in relation to this matter, nor previously in conjunction with 8 planning applications along or close to the A274. Further, at the Examination hearings, KCC did not at any time substantiate their specific reasons for opposing mitigation measures. It was understood from the hearings that KCC would not implement any mitigation at the Wheatsheaf junction (at least) until such time a "strategy" was agreed. The estimated date for this "strategy" was 2022. It would now appear,

Page 1

however, that KCC are intent on progressing preparatory work on a Leeds / Langley relief road.

You may also be interested to note that when my officers were undertaking the A274 Corridor Study, consultants Mott MacDonald sought to engage with KCC, as a key stakeholder, at an early stage of the project, but KCC would not engage.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "R. L. Jarman".

Rob Jarman
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