



Kent International Gateway Limited
Land East of Maidstone

Proposed Rail Freight Interchange
with Associated Development

Development Specification
Informing Environmental Statement

September 2007
(Revised June 2009)



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Kent International Gateway Limited (KIG) has submitted an outline planning application accompanied by an Environmental Statement (ES), for its proposal to develop a strategic rail freight interchange facility with related distribution and commercial development, on land adjoining the built-up area of the east of Maidstone. The 112.3ha site straddles the Ashford to Maidstone East railway line and lies adjacent to M20 junction 8 and the A20 main road.

This Development Specification replaces the original Development Specification submitted with the planning application in September 2007. This revised Development Specification reflects the latest changes made to the illustrative Masterplan 107.N (June 2009) and the Parameter Plans 1-10 (Revised June 2009). Parameter Plans 11-20 have been withdrawn as they do not relate to the amended master plan.

The changes primarily reflect that Buildings 01 and 02 have been reduced in size. Two of the units E & F have been replaced with a single reconfigured and repositioned Unit E. These changes have been implemented to reduce impacts on the surrounding area.

Other principal changes include:

- Amended landscape provision including retention of 'The Belt'.
- Provision of additional green roof to acoustic enclosure for western rail sidings
- Addition of two laybys as a result of additional work undertaken on reviewing the security arrangements
- Amendments to watercourses.

1.2 This Development Specification document underpins the robustness of the ES and also the Supplemental Environmental Statement (SES), by confirming the elements of the scheme to be regarded as fixed, or setting limits of deviation for those elements where appropriate. It includes an allied set of Parameter Plans, which clarify those aspects that cannot be sufficiently demonstrated descriptively. Also forming part of the Development Specification is a draft Construction Method Statement (CMS), explaining how the development is intended to be carried out and forming the basis of the assessment of the environmental effects of the construction stages of the scheme. This CMS will be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval prior to development, reflecting the scheme changes.

1.3 In section 2, we set out relevant existing aspects of the site and details of each element of the proposed scheme. Section 3 contains details of the intended phasing and construction process of the KIG development.

1.4 The following plans are attached:-

a) Parameter Plans:

1. Red line application site with existing site contours.
- 2.B Existing and retained woodland areas.
- 3.B Retained highways and rights of way, with proposed diversions.
- 4.B Watercourses, diversions, culverting and drainage ponds.
- 5.A Services and ancillary service buildings.
- 6.B Landscape armature.
- 7.A Existing and proposed rail layout and intermodal area.
- 8.A Accesses to A20, proposed internal roads and proposed bridges.
- 9.A Development zones, with maximum building floorspace by type of use.
- 10.B Building platforms with heights AOD and building positions.

b) Illustrative Masterplan.

The proposals are illustrated on the master plan 107.N (June 2009).

2 SPECIFICATION OF MAIN ASPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT

a) Parameter Plans

2.1 Initially in this section, the relevant aspects of the development are defined by reference to each of the Parameter Plans in turn below.

1. Red line application site with existing site contours

2.2 The red line site boundary delineates an area of 112.3 hectares. The Plan also shows the existing site contours. The higher areas within the site are in the vicinity of Crismill Road at around 70 m AOD and the lower areas adjoin the three watercourses crossing the site, around 50m AOD.

2.B Existing and retained woodland areas and major hedgerows

Rev.B - Extent of retained woodland areas increased, mainly by retaining the Belt area

2.3 The principal areas of existing woodland as shown on this Parameter Plan are The Belt and Chrismill Shaw on the western and eastern sides of Crismill Road respectively and Common Wood on the central southern boundary of the site. Crismill Shaw and Common Wood will be retained. The Belt will also generally be retained with small parts lost only to make way for connections to the access roads.

3.B Retained highways and rights of way, with proposed diversions

Rev.B – Route of central footpath altered

2.4 This Parameter Plan shows that the two minor roads crossing the site, Crismill Road and Water Lane, are to be retained on their existing vertical and horizontal alignments. The public footpath crossing the central part of the site will be diverted around the Eastern end of the intermodal area. Similarly, the two footpath/bridleways crossing the western portion of the site will be diverted to the east and north around unit 1. The positions of the buildings and the intermodal area can be seen from Parameter Plan 10.B also attached to this Development Specification.

4.B Existing watercourses, proposed diversions & maximum extent of balancing ponds

Rev.B – Watercourses to the west and central area revised in line with the amended building platform

- 2.5 This Parameter Plan shows the alignment of the three existing watercourses, crossing the western, central and eastern parts of the site. The western one, known as The Lilk, will be diverted eastwards around unit 1, with off-line balancing ponds introduced and integrated into a wide landscape corridor designed as part of the development. The central watercourse will be retained on its existing alignment north of the railway, but will need to be culverted beneath the surface of the intermodal area. South of the railway, it will be diverted around the west side of unit E, with off-line balancing ponds introduced. The easterly watercourse will remain on its existing alignment, with an irregularly shaped balancing pond introduced off-line.
- 2.6 The balancing ponds as shown on the Parameter Plan are in each case the maximum required extent.

5.A Position of utilities and ancillary service buildings

Rev.A – Security Control building identified

- 2.7 Parameter Plan (5) shows the position of the KIG security control building which in tandem with the entrance gatehouses control entry for all visiting lorries, the new electricity sub-station and the lorry driver facilities unit, all within the entry zone.
- 2.8 Establishing the security control facilities in an effective position is significant in terms of maintaining control of the use of the site and hence the environmental effects of that use. Similarly, the location of the sub-station minimises disruption and intrusion in respect of maintenance and inspection trips. The driver facilities unit is important in avoiding any adverse external effects to the local area from drivers potentially having to seek out rest and refreshment off-site.

6.B Landscape armature

Rev.B – Area of buildings reduced accordingly area of landscape has been increased on this plan.

- 2.9 The parameter plan (6) identifies the areas of the site that will be set aside for the comprehensive landscape framework that has been designed integrally with the development. This includes retained woodland areas, in particular Common Wood, The Belt and Chrismill Shaw. It also incorporates the greenspace corridor through the western part of the development, giving expression to the concept put forward indicatively in the Maidstone Borough LDF Core Strategy Preferred Options. The landscape area represents 42% of the overall development site.

7.A Existing and proposed rail layout and intermodal area

Rev.A – Levels added on section for clarity of information

- 2.10 This parameter plan demonstrates that switches will be provided enabling both eastbound and westbound trains to leave the Ashford to Maidstone East railway line northwards into the KIG rail network. This will comprise parallel reception sidings allowing 775m trains to pull-off, manoeuvre and depart. Sidings would directly serve units 1 and 2, penetrating the buildings themselves. In addition, new sidings would connect into the south side of the intermodal freight handling area.
- 2.11. The intermodal area will comprise hard standing at a level of 56 m AOD. The gantry cranes to handle freight containers will be to a maximum height of 25 m above the surface.

8.A Access to A20, proposed internal roads and bridges

Rev.A – Road layout altered in centre of site with omission of one unit, plus laybys added at both entrance points on site.

- 2.12 The two access points shown on the Parameter Plan are fixed aspects of the scheme and part of the application. They would be traffic signal controlled and linked in operation with each other. The easterly one, nearer the motorway junction, is for lorry traffic and will be laid out so as to prevent direct right turns onto the A20 in the Maidstone direction. The westerly access is for visiting cars.
- 2.13 Within the site, the link roads as shown on the Parameter Plan would have a width of 7.3m, with a footway of 1.2m width on one side and a 1.3m cycleway on the other. The accesses and main internal road layout would be designed and constructed to adoptable standards. For the purposes of Environmental Assessment, it is proposed that the horizontal alignment of the internal access roads could vary by 2m on either side relative to that shown on the Parameter Plan.
- 2.14 In terms of vertical alignment, the internal link roads would vary from around 55m AOD at the junctions with the A20, rising to a maximum of 65m in the central part of the site south of unit D, before sloping downward to pass beneath Crismill Road. The route rises again to cross the railway at around 62 m AOD. It then gradually falls westwards, bridging over Water Lane and terminating at around 55m AOD at units 1 and 2.
- 2.15 As also shown on the parameter plan, the principal new bridges within the site are over the railway line just west of the existing Crismill Road bridge and under Crismill Road and over Water Lane.

9.A Development zones, with maximum building floorspace by type of use

Rev.A – Overall building areas reduced, accordingly development zone areas on this plan have also been revised.

2.16 The Development Zones shown on Parameter Plan (9) reflect the likely phasing of the development, following the initial steps of establishing the A20 access points, internal construction road connections and the new bridge over the railway. Development within each zone will overlap in some cases. The maximum proposed floorspace by land use within each Development Zone is summarised on the Parameter Plan, whilst the detail for each proposed building is set out below.

Zone 1

Freight inter-modal area and KIG rail infrastructure (6.54ha hard-surfaced), with no significant buildings.

Zone 2

Rail-served warehousing/industrial: -

Unit A	7,023 sq m gross
Unit B	22,762 sq m gross
Unit C	26,825 sq m gross
Unit D	23,477 sq m gross
Sub total	80,087 sq m gross
Class B1 and related space	11,371 sq m gross
Overall total	91,458 sq m gross

Zone 3

Rail-served warehousing/industrial:-

Unit E	67,646 sq m gross
Overall total	67,646 sq m gross

Zone 4

Rail-linked warehousing:-

Unit 1	102,025 sq m gross
Unit 2	39,463 sq m gross
Overall total	141,488 sq m gross

Zones 1 to 4 overall

Warehousing	289,221 sq m gross
Other B1, B2 & B8, incl. B1 office	11,371 sq m gross
Grand total	300,592 sq m gross

(**Note:** These figures do not include floor space for a gatehouse building, lorry driver facilities, or sub-station, which are nevertheless part of the development applied for)

10.B Maximum extent and levels of development platforms and buildings with maximum heights

Rev.B - Overall building areas reduced, accordingly development platforms areas have also been revised.

- 2.17 A series of development platforms will be created by earth-moving, stepping with the grain of the existing landscape, to accommodate the buildings and inter-modal area. The position, extent and levels AOD of the development platforms within each development zone are shown on Parameter Plan (10).
- 2.18 The scheme will be implemented with the minimum use of significant retaining walls between the separate development platforms. The scheme will employ as far as possible embankments and where necessary lightly engineered solutions using mesh-blocks. Retaining walls will, however, be necessary at several locations as shown on the Master Plan.

- 2.19 Parameter Plan (10) also shows the proposed position of the buildings on the development platforms arranged across the site. For the purposes of Environmental Assessment, it is to be assumed that the positions of the buildings within the development plots may vary laterally by up to 2m in any direction. In addition, the Parameter Plan gives details of the limited flexibility in the overall heights of the proposed buildings to be assumed for Environmental Assessment purposes. This flexibility varies depending on the position and visual sensitiveness of each building.
- 2.20 The highest point of development would be in plot D, where the top of the warehouse building would be around 80m AOD. By comparison, the largest warehouse buildings on the site at the western end would be around 69 m AOD to the top of the roof.
- 2.21 The intermodal area will not contain any significant buildings. The lattice crane structures will be 81m AOD at their highest point. There will be container stacking on the hard surfacing, of continually changing height and lateral extent. The maximum height of stacking at any one time will be 14.5 m above surface level.

b) Other Aspects of the Development

Renewable energy

- 2.23 The KIG scheme aims to meet the objectives of the emerging Maidstone Borough Council Core Strategy Policy CS13, in reducing predicted CO₂ emissions by at least 15%, over and above building regulations requirements.
- 2.24 This will be achieved principally by the use of bio-mass boilers for heating. The associated plant would be installed within the individual buildings. Externally, the physical effects would be limited to a short emissions stack extending 1.5m above eaves height, which would be similar to the overall roof height.

Sustainable building construction

- 2.25 The exact details of the proposed buildings would be for determination subsequently, once the nature of the occupants and their specific operational requirements are known. The applicants, however, undertake that the buildings as finally constructed would achieve a BREEAM rating of at least Very Good.

Vehicle Parking

- 2.26 Because of the unusual nature of the use of the very large distribution warehouses that predominate in the KIG development, the normal Kent County Council Parking Standards substantially over-estimate actual requirements. Adequate car parking will be provided on the basis of the specific nature of the development, the likely number of employees, the shift working patterns and making allowance for an appropriate proportion (30%) who are likely to make work journeys other than by car. The car parking numbers are set out in the Transport Assessment and Travel Plan..
- 2.27 Any necessary lorry parking would be on the hard standing adjacent to the warehouse buildings.
- 2.28 With regard to the smaller Class B1 type uses at the eastern end of the site, car parking provision will be to Kent County Council standards. Accordingly, around 380 spaces in total will be provided, distributed pro rata to the floorspace of the individual buildings.

Retained Buildings

- 2.29 There is one listed building within the site boundary at Barty Farm, which is a barn that will be retained, as will the Oast house and byre, as buildings within the setting of the listed building.

3 CONSTRUCTION PROCESS

- 3.1 A draft Construction Method Statement (CMS) is attached to this Development Specification to provide full details of the construction process and development phasing and the aspects of the process likely to have significant environmental effects, together with how these will be minimised by appropriate construction planning. This CMS will be submitted to the Local Planning authority for approval prior to development, reflecting the scheme changes.
- 3.2 In summary, it is estimated that the overall scheme will take some 7 years to construct, from starting on-site after the completion of the planning stages.
- 3.3 The broad sequence of over-lapping phases of the development is set out below and reference should be made to the attached illustrative layout for plot references:-
- Initial ecological and preparatory works;
 - Creation of accesses onto A20, internal construction routes and new bridge over railway;
 - Formation of intermodal rail transfer area and new railway sidings, with cut material transferred to south of railway, to provide fill for plots A-C and E;
 - Creation of development platforms A-D at eastern end of site and then plots E;
 - Creation of rail connected plots 1 and 2, with some cut and fill;
 - Whilst it is considered most likely that the creation of plots 1-2 will follow on from E, it is feasible for the sequence to be reversed. To do so would not give rise to any significant difference in environmental effects.
- 3.4 The Construction Method Statement (CMS) appended to chapter 2 of the ES remains unamended. The scheme changes do not significantly affect the approach to construction and when the CMS is submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval, prior to commencement of development, it will be amended to refer specifically to the amended scheme where necessary.

4 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The application to which this Development Specification relates is in outline. To inform the ES and provide it with the necessary certainty and robustness, the Development Specification defines the maximum extent or degree of the relevant physical aspects of the scheme which may give rise to significant environmental effects.
- 4.2 In order that the scope and content of the ES and provision for any necessary mitigation can be appropriately defined, the applicant will be prepared to accept suitable planning conditions or obligations securing compliance with the key parameters.