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Mr R Mellor
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(BY EMAIL)

24 February 2017

Dear Mr Mellor

RE: Maidstone Borough Local Plan Examination – response to further claims made by Kent County Council (KCC) (ED132)

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on KCC's letter dated 16 February.

It is noted that KCC has not provided the information requested at (a) in your letter dated 3 February.

Mott MacDonald was commissioned to undertake a study into potential bus priority measures on the A274 Sutton Road/A229 Loose Road and develop early stage preliminary designs. The level of detail in the drawings was intended to demonstrate the technical feasibility of the proposed measures, which they do, without purporting to be a detailed design that could be implemented without further design work.

The technical work was led by a member of staff with over 20 years' experience of bus priority scheme design, who was seconded part-time into Transport for London as a bus priority technical specialist in 2015 and 2016.

The designs were developed bearing in mind the boundary of the highway maintainable at the public expense. Prompted by KCC's assertions, a further check has been carried out against KCC's records of the Highway boundary and Mott MacDonald has confirmed that the proposals are entirely within that boundary. Relevant extracts of the boundary as it relates to the study area are enclosed with this letter.

Maidstone Borough Council

With regard to KCC's comments in respect of footway width and pedestrian safety, TRA 028/028A already identifies where the footway would require widening into the adjacent verge. Mott MacDonald has reviewed KCC's comments and has again confirmed that all residual footway widths would meet the 1.8m minimum width for a footway alongside the most major road listed within KCC's "Kent Design Guide" (specifically the "Designing for Movement" chapter, with reference to the table on page 9 for a Local Distributor Road¹). There are, in a number of cases, options for minimising the impact on the footway width further.

In respect of the improvements at the Willington Street/Wallis Avenue junctions with the A274 Sutton Road, it is understood that KCC is developing revised designs for this scheme for implementation later this year. Given the wider transport strategy for this part of Maidstone, set out in the Local Plan and ITS, the Council will be expecting the final designs to incorporate the bus priority measures which form part of the resolutions/permissions for the H1 (7), H1 (9) and H1 (10) sites, and support delivery of the wider scheme.

Finally, we maintain our position, as set out in our letter dated 30 January, that KCC officers were not willing to engage with our consultants Mott MacDonald on the development of TRA 028/028A. Our consultants can provide a note of a telephone conversation which confirms this at your request.

Yours sincerely

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¹ http://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/12096/design-guide-movement.pdf