



Cascades Leisure Centre, Gravesend

Framework Travel Plan

On behalf of

Gravesham Borough Council

Project Ref: 332410895/100 | Rev: AA | Date: November 2022

Registered Office: Buckingham Court Kingsmead Business Park, London Road, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP11 1JU
Office Address: Unit 10, Connect 38, 1 Dover Place, Ashford TN23 1FB
T: +44 (0)123 352 7250 E: PBA.Ashford@stantec.com

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	Name	Position	Signature	Date
Prepared by:	Gary Head	Director		24-11-2022
Reviewed by:	Gary Heard	Director		24-11-2022
Approved by:	Gary Heard	Director		24-11-2022
For and on behalf of Stantec UK Limited				

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Gravesham Borough Council

1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Stantec has been appointed on behalf of Gravesham Borough Council to provide transport support in relation to a planning application for a leisure centre redevelopment at Cascades Leisure Centre, Gravesend. A planning application is being submitted for :

“Demolition of the existing Cascades Leisure Centre and public house and redevelopment of the site to provide a new leisure centre with community pool, training pool, leisure water, café, soft play, ‘clip n climb’ facility, a six court sports hall, fitness suite, spin studio, 2 no. fitness studios and 2 no. squash courts.”

- 1.1.2 This Framework Travel Plan has been prepared by Stantec to accompany a planning application for the redevelopment of the Cascades Leisure Centre site in Gravesend. KCC highway officers have advised that they will require a planning condition for submission of a final Travel Plan (based upon this Framework Travel Plan) following permission being granted and prior to occupation.

1.2 Site Location

- 1.2.1 The site lies within Gravesham Borough Council's (GBC) administrative boundary and the local highway authority is Kent County Council (KCC). Immediately to the north of the site lies the village of Chalk and immediately to the west lies the Riverview Park neighbourhood. The location of the site is shown in the figure below.



1.2.2 The site is located south of the A226 corridor and north of the A2 corridor, immediately to the east of Thong Lane on the east side of Gravesend. Thong Lane connects these two highway corridors.

1.2.3 The site is approximately 4.5 hectares in size. The surrounding area includes a golf course, driving range, playing fields, and indoor sports facilities (Legends Sport).

1.3 Existing use

1.3.1 The site is currently occupied by the Cascades Leisure centre. It offers a range of leisure activities within a floor area of around 6,674m².

1.3.2 The leisure centre is open from 0600-2130 from Monday to Friday and 0800-1800 on Saturdays and Sundays. The gates are locked overnight between 0000-0545 on Monday to Friday and between 0000-0700 on Saturday and Sunday.

1.3.3 The entrance to the site is also used by the Gravesend Golf Centre (driving range) located immediately north of the leisure centre building. This facility is open between 0900-2200 on Monday to Friday and 0900-1930 on Saturday and Sunday. This facility will remain as existing.

1.3.4 The Legends Sports facility (sports bar and indoor courts and pitches) also share the entrance with Cascades. This facility is open between 1000-2300 on Monday to Friday and 0900-1500 on Saturday and 0900-1300 on Sunday. This facility will remain as existing.

1.3.5 On site there are car parks providing capacity for approximately 183 vehicles. There is no charge for parking on site. Vehicular access to the site is via separate in and out entry / exit junctions on Thong Lane. Within the site a one way road connects the in and out junctions and provides access to the car parks. There is also a bus stop located within the site.

1.4 Proposed use

1.4.1 A planning application is being submitted for the following:

"Demolition of the existing Cascades Leisure Centre and public house and redevelopment of the site to provide a new leisure centre with community pool, training pool, leisure water, café, soft play, 'clip n climb' facility, a six court sports hall, fitness suite, spin studio, 2 no. fitness studios and 2 no. squash courts."

1.4.2 Hence, it is proposed to remove the existing leisure centre and replace it with a new building. The new building will offer the same and / or similar facilities and opportunities as the existing leisure centre, but on a larger scale and to modern standards.

1.4.3 It is proposed that the new building will comprise a floor area of just over 7,000m². For the purposes of an assessment envelope a floor area of 7,500m² has been assumed within the Transport Assessment.

1.4.4 The masterplan for the site indicates a total parking provision of 232 spaces. There will be no charge for using the car park. In addition to the dedicated provision for the leisure centre, the existing 25 space car park at the site entry will also remain as existing and an overflow parking area will be made available to the east of this.

1.4.5 The existing entry and exit junctions on Thong Lane will be retained. The provision of a bus stop on site will be retained, albeit this will be reconfigured to fit within the masterplan.

1.5 Travel Plans

- 1.5.1 A Travel Plan is a management tool that sets out a range of initiatives which aim to encourage a modal shift away from the private car by raising awareness of, and promoting the use of, a range of transport modes.
- 1.5.2 Implemented correctly, a Travel Plan can produce significant benefits such as financial benefits, better access to local facilities and the opportunity for a healthier lifestyle, not only to the target audience, but also to the wider community by reducing the number of trips carried out by less-sustainable modes on the local highway network. Travel plans are living documents which need to be subject to regular monitoring and review.
- 1.5.3 Following planning permission, this document will need to be updated by the occupier to represent a bespoke full Travel Plan. The Travel Plan should be developed in line with this Framework.

1.6 Timescales and longevity

- 1.6.1 A Travel Plan Co-ordinator (TPC) is discussed further within this document and will be supported by the developer for a period of 5 years following occupation.
- 1.6.2 The appointed contact for the TPC role would need to be provided to the Local Planning Authority and Local Highway Authority prior to occupation of the proposed development.

1.7 This document

- 1.7.1 A scoping exercise has been undertaken with highway officers representing the local and strategic highway authorities (KCC and NH).
- 1.7.2 This document has been written with reference to the scoping exercise completed and is structured as follows:
 - Section 2 summarises the Policy context applicable to the site.
 - Section 3 describes the site accessibility by all modes as set out within the Transport Assessment.
 - Section 4 proposes the Objectives of the Framework Travel Plan to encourage non car based travel to and from the site.
 - Section 5 summarises the targets for the development for car based transport.
 - Section 6 summarises the role of the Travel Plan Coordinator and an outline of their duties.
 - Section 7 contains an action plan comprising a number of actions that could be implemented to encourage non car based trips to and from the site.
 - Section 8 sets out the monitoring and review processes.
 - Section 9 provides a summary and conclusion of the Travel Plan.

2 Policy context

- 2.1.1 This section provides an overview of the national and local transport policy relevant to the development proposals. The below guidance and policy form the basis of review for this Transport Assessment.

2.2 National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- 2.2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and most recently updated in July 2021 and is the current over-arching planning framework for Local Planning Authorities.
- 2.2.2 The NPPF highlights that sustainable development is made up of three elements that are mutually dependent on each other – economic, social and environmental. It further states that:
- “Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.”*
- 2.2.3 In terms of transport, the key theme of the NPPF is to promote sustainable modes of transport, with development sustainably located and notes that smarter use of technologies can reduce the need to travel. The NPPF does, however, recognise that different policies should be applied in different communities in order to achieve this balance and that opportunities to maximise sustainable modes of transport will vary between urban and rural areas.
- 2.2.4 Paragraph 110 lists a number of considerations for planning authorities to apply in their decision making when reviewing Transport reports. These include the need to consider that opportunities for sustainable transport have been taken up, if the access arrangements are safe and suitable and if there are cost effective improvements to the transport network that could be made.
- 2.2.5 Paragraph 111 of the NPPF states that:
- “Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.”*
- 2.2.6 Importantly, NPPF advises that development should only be refused on transport grounds if the residual cumulative impacts are likely to be “severe”. The definition of “severe” in this context is unique to the individual site under consideration. However, it may be helpful to consider that within the context of the Environmental Impact Assessment “severe” impacts are often described as those that would have a national or regional significance. In this respect it is clear that NPPF is seeking to strike a positive balance between potential local traffic impacts and local economic or social benefits.
- 2.2.7 It is reasonable to suggest that within many settings, the existing traffic conditions will be busy, with congestion at peak periods. However, NPPF is suggesting that planning authorities should not allow this to stifle valuable economic development. The test is whether any residual impacts could be considered “severe” in the context of NPPF, and it is clear from the assessment that follows that this is not the case.
- 2.2.8 Paragraph 112 of the NPPF requires opportunities for sustainable travel to be exploited and should therefore give priority to pedestrians and cyclists and be accessible by public transport facilities. Developments should also ‘create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts

between traffic, cyclists or pedestrians'. The masterplan responds to this through provision of walking and cycling infrastructure on site that connects to the external network.

- 2.2.9 The connectivity of this site with the existing walking network will facilitate movement by this mode. In addition, the site has a bus stop located within the site, as existing, providing excellent connectivity with local bus services.

- 2.2.10 Paragraph 113 states that:

"All developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed."

- 2.2.11 This planning application is supported by a Framework Travel Plan document as well as this Transport Assessment.

2.3 National Planning Practice Guidance, 2018

- 2.3.1 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) was published in July 2018 and sets out current guidance for different aspects to development. For the purposes of this document, the guidance within the NPPG 'Travel Plans, Transport Assessments and Statements' document is considered.

- 2.3.2 The NPPG sets out the following with regards to Transport Assessments:

"Transport Assessments and Transport Statements primarily focus on evaluating the potential transport impacts of a development proposal... The Transport Assessment or Transport Statement may propose mitigation measures where these are necessary to avoid unacceptable or "severe" impacts... Transport Assessments and Statements can be used to establish whether the residual transport impacts of a proposed development are likely to be "severe" ..."

- 2.3.3 It is noted within the NPPG that Transport Assessments can positively contribute towards:

- *encouraging sustainable travel;*
- *lessening traffic generation and its detrimental impacts;*
- *reducing carbon emissions and climate impacts;*
- *creating accessible, connected, inclusive communities;*
- *improving health outcomes and quality of life;*
- *improving road safety; and*
- *reducing the need for new development to increase existing road capacity or provide new roads.*

- 2.3.4 The development proposals include measures to connect the site to the existing walking network and also to integrate the local bus services through provision of a stopping location within the site, as existing. This will encourage and facilitate the use of sustainable travel modes.

2.4 Local Transport Plan 4: Delivering Growth without Gridlock 2016–2031

- 2.4.1 Kent's fourth Local Transport Plan was adopted during August 2017 and sets out KCC's plans to meet its role of enabling:

“planned, sustainable growth and ensure the necessary infrastructure is in place, which will stimulate regeneration and encourage people and businesses to come to Kent. To be able to travel easily, safely and quickly to our destinations we need a transport network that can cater for current demand, enables economic growth, and supports a growing population.”

2.4.2 The LTP4 document sets out five overarching policies that are targeted at delivering specific outcomes as summarised below.

- Policy: Deliver resilient transport infrastructure and schemes that reduce congestion and improve journey time reliability to enable economic growth and appropriate development, meeting demand from a growing population.

Outcome 1: Economic growth and minimised congestion.

- Policy: Promote affordable, accessible and connected transport to enable access for all to jobs, education, health and other services.

Outcome 2: Affordable and accessible door-to-door journeys.

- Policy: Provide a safer road, footway and cycleway network to reduce the likelihood of casualties, and encourage other transport providers to improve safety on their networks.

Outcome 3: Safer travel

- Policy: Deliver schemes to reduce the environmental footprint of transport, and enhance the historic and natural environment.

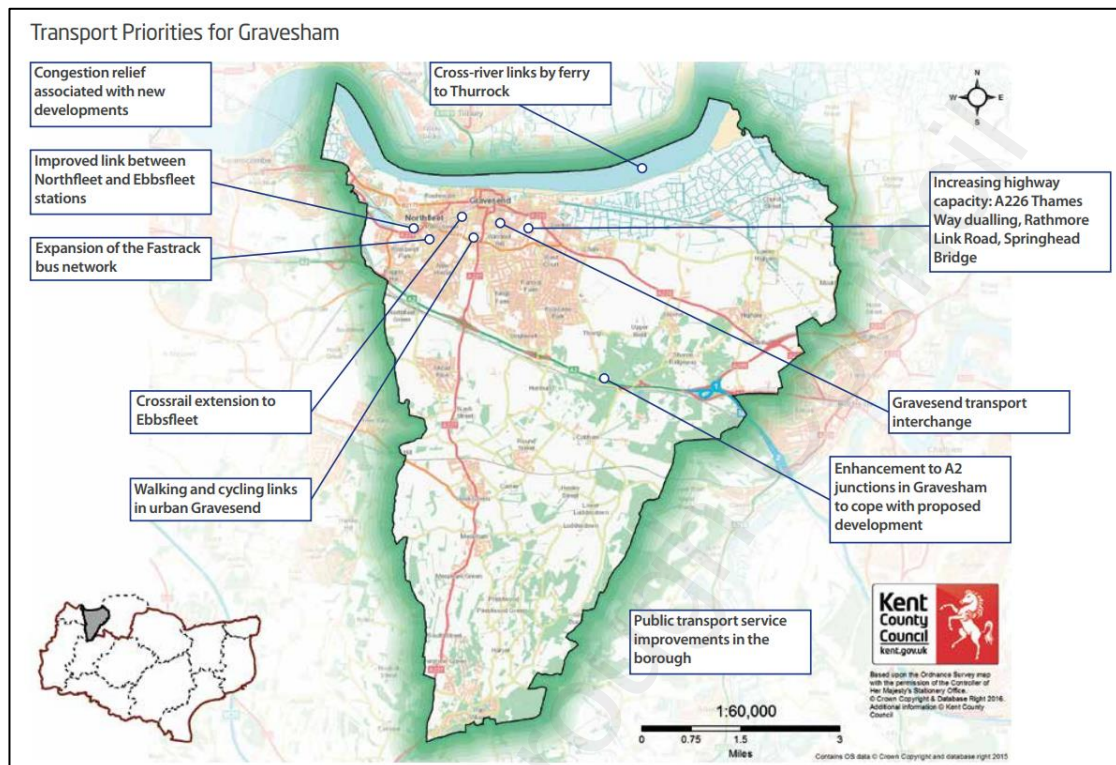
Outcome 4: Enhanced environment

- Policy: Provide and promote active travel choices for all members of the community to encourage good health and wellbeing, and implement measures to improve local air quality.

Outcome 5: Better health and wellbeing

2.4.3 Kent's transport priorities in LTP4 are described as being strategic, countywide or local. The strategic priorities are infrastructure projects that KCC may not directly deliver or operate and are likely to affect a number of districts. Some of these are national priorities. Countywide priorities include promotion of road safety, sustainable travel and maintenance and upgrade of transport assets.

2.4.4 The LTP4 document brings together local priorities from individual Local Plans and supporting Transport Strategies that set out the transport infrastructure requirements to support growth in each district / borough. With respect to Gravesham the LTP4 document identifies several key schemes which will be required to support growth as shown in the figure below.



2.5 KCCs Active Travel Strategy

- 2.5.1 Kent County Council's Active Travel Strategy was implemented in February 2017, and aims to increase the attractiveness of active travel, making it a realistic choice for short journeys within Kent. The strategy supports the national strategies and work alongside other plans and policies within Kent.
- 2.5.2 The three actions that are set out within the strategy are;
- Integrate active travel into planning
 - Provide and maintain appropriate routes for active travel
 - Support active travel in the community
- 2.5.3 The strategy aims to increase the integrated nature of travel, encouraging multimodal journeys. This would include walking or cycling to the bus stop or train station.
- 2.5.4 The proposed development is well located to take advantage of the existing sustainable transport network opportunities, and support these.

2.6 Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy

- 2.6.1 A Development Plan (or Local Plan) sets out the planning policies that guide development in Gravesham Borough. The Local Plan Core Strategy is the main document in the Gravesham Local Plan. Its role is to:
- *Set out a long-term vision for the future of Gravesham based on evidence of what's needed to support communities and also what makes Gravesham a distinctive and attractive place to live and work.*

- *Guide the amount, type, location and detailed design of future development and provide a consistent basis against which we can decide planning applications.*
- *Support other priorities such as our regeneration proposals, investment in infrastructure, our work to support local businesses and encourage job creation and our efforts to promote healthy communities.*

2.6.2 The Borough's Local Plan Core Strategy was adopted by the Council on 30 September 2014. Policy CS13 relates to sports facilities and states :

"Policy CS13: Green Space, Sport and Recreation

The Council will seek to make adequate provision for and to protect and enhance the quantity, quality and accessibility of green space, playing pitches and other sports facilities, in accordance with an adequate, up to date and relevant evidence base.

A set of consistent green space, playing pitch and sports provision standards will be established which will apply to all new development. Provision should be made on-site. However, where this is not possible because of the site size, location or other specified circumstances, alternative provision or the enhancement of existing facilities will be required off-site. In all cases, provision will include arrangements for the ongoing maintenance of the space."

2.6.3 Hence, the proposed development is consistent with the policy of enhancing the quantity and quality of sports facilities.

2.6.4 Policy CS11 relates to Transport and states :

"Policy CS11: Transport

New developments should mitigate their impact on the highway and public transport networks as required. As appropriate, transport assessments and travel plans should be provided and implemented to ensure the delivery of travel choice and sustainable opportunities for travel. Transport assessment work is required to be undertaken in accordance with national and local policy guidance, and to identify detailed highway and public transport network requirements and management arising from the development.

Sufficient parking in new development will be provided in accordance with adopted parking standards which will reflect the availability of alternative means of transport and accessibility to services and facilities.

The Council will support proposals which improve public transport provision and facilities in the Borough. In particular, it will:

- *seek to maintain and expand, where justified, segregation lanes for Fastrack and existing bus priority measures elsewhere;*
- *require Key Sites to include provision for buses;*
- *support the development of transport hubs at Gravesend Town Centre and Ebbsfleet (in Dartford Borough Council area) to provide high quality interchange facilities between bus, rail, walking and cycling; and*
- *Ensure an adequate supply of public car parking.*

The Council will seek improvements to walking and cycling facilities and networks in the Borough including provision in new development as appropriate. These should provide

improved access to Gravesend Town Centre and Ebbsfleet and to other services and facilities in the Borough. In particular, the Council will seek the provision of pedestrian and cycle links between Northfleet and Ebbsfleet stations and along the River Thames, as part of the proposed Thames Estuary Path.

Land required for the possible future extension of Crossrail and to protect the High Speed 1 (HS1) railway is safeguarded on the Policies Map and proposals that would prejudice these will be refused.

The Council will support proposals which improve the efficiency of freight transport and provide opportunities for alternatives to road transport where possible. The Council will safeguard wharves, as shown on the Policies Map, subject to the provisions of paragraph 5.1.36 of Policy CS07 (Economy, Employment and Skills).

The Council will support proposals which facilitate the use of the River Thames for passenger transport and enable cruise liners to visit the Borough.”

- 2.6.5 Hence, the theme of the policy is to encourage and facilitate access by sustainable travel modes. The proposed development will accord with this through connections with the existing walking network and provision of an on site bus stop, as existing.

2.7 Gravesham Local Plan First Review: Saved and Deleted Policies Version (September 2014)

- 2.7.1 Policy T1 (Impact of Development on the Highway Network) has been saved and considers traffic impact of development on the transport system and ensures all developments are adequately served by the highway network.
- 2.7.2 This Transport Assessment considers the connectivity of the site and its impact on the transport network.

2.8 Gravesham Local Plan Regulation 18 Stage 1 Consultation, Part 2: Development Management Policies Document, April 2018

- 2.8.1 This document is emerging policy and at early stages of production. Therefore, it carries limited weight in the determination of planning applications. Nevertheless, it is proper to consider the content of the emerging policy in relation to the proposed development.

- 2.8.2 Proposed Policy INF3: Understanding and Mitigating Transport Impacts states :

“6.2.29. Development proposals will be required to meet the transport needs generated in a sustainable manner having regard to the principles set out in policy INF 2. They should consider avoiding before mitigating any unacceptable impacts on the safety and operation of the highway, public transport and public rights of way networks or the river as necessary.

6.2.30. Applications should be supported by a proportionate evidence base detailing baseline and future transport conditions and the likely impact of the proposed development, both alone and in combination with other known proposals, as appropriate

6.2.31. Large or complex proposals or proposals with the potential to have unacceptable impacts in areas with existing transportation or associated air quality problems should be supported by a formal Transport Assessment, undertaken in accordance with national and local policy guidance and may also require the production of a Travel Plan, as part of any mitigation package.

6.2.32. Sufficient parking in new development will be provided in accordance with the Council's adopted parking standards which will reflect the availability of alternative means of

transport, accessibility to services and facilities, and the objective to secure a modal shift to more sustainable modes.

6.2.33. Proposals that have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in a severe residual cumulative impact on the road network following mitigation or do not contribute positively toward the achievement of the aims of policy INF 2 will not be permitted.”

2.8.3 The proposed development is supported by this Transport Assessment document that considers the effects of the development on the highway network and considers the appropriate parking supply.

2.8.4 Proposed Policy INF 5 Electric Vehicle Charging Points states :

“6.3.11. In order to reduce emissions and increase the use of plug-in vehicles, where viable the Council will require all new developments to provide charging infrastructure for electric vehicles. The table below sets out how such provision should be accommodated:

Type of Development	Provision of Parking Bays and Charging Points for ULEV
Houses ⁱ	Single charging point per house within garage, car port or driveway
Flats (<50 units) ^{ii+v}	Single parking bay and charging point marked out for use by electric vehicles only
Flats (>50 units) ^{ii+v}	10% of parking bays marked out for use by electric vehicles only with charging points
Other Development (<50 Bays) ^{ii+v}	Single parking bay and charging point marked out for use by electric vehicles only
Other Development (>50 Bays) ^{ii+ iii+v}	10% of parking bays marked out for use by electric vehicles only with charging points
Petrol / Service Stations ^{iv+v}	Single parking bay and charging point marked out for use by electric vehicles only
ⁱ dedicated 32A Type 2 charger as a minimum ⁱⁱ dedicated free standing 32A Type 2 weatherproof chargers as a minimum ⁱⁱⁱ if vehicular movements from proposed development generates 100 or more two-way vehicle movements per day, charger provision should be replaced by dedicated free standing rapid (43kw AC or 50 kw DC) Type 2 weather proof chargers as a minimum ^{iv} dedicated free standing rapid (43kw AC or 50 kw DC) Type 2 weather proof chargers as a minimum ^v provision as above, with installation of groundwork / passive wiring in order to enable further installation to match demand.	

6.3.12. Where charging facilities are shared (for example through the development of flats) any provision of infrastructure should also include arrangements for the future operation and maintenance of the facility.”

2.8.5 The proposed development will provide EV charging facilities and this will accord with local policy.

2.9 Parking Standards

2.9.1 The Gravesham Local Plan First Review: Saved and Deleted Policies Version (September 2014) document includes Policy P3.

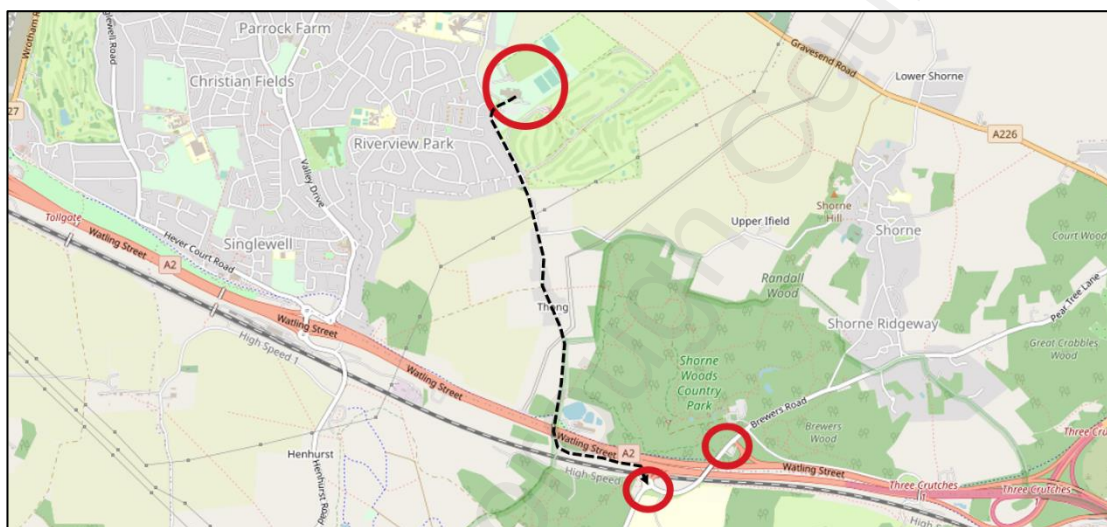
- 2.9.2 Policy P3 relates to Vehicle Parking Standards and states that vehicle parking should be provided in accordance with the Kent County Council Vehicle Parking Standards, unless justified as an exception.
- 2.9.3 Kent and Medway Structure Plan 2006 Mapping out the future: Supplementary Planning Guidance SPG 4 outlines Kent vehicle parking standards for non-residential developments.
- 2.9.4 Parking at the proposed development will provided in accordance with these standards and is considered in detail at section 8.

3 Transport network serving the site

3.1.1 The following section provides a summary of the existing transport network that provides access to the site.

3.2 Existing highway network - strategic

3.2.1 The proposed site is located approximately 1.8km to the north of the A2. The figure below illustrates the strategic highway network in relation to the site.



3.2.2 The A2 connects the port of Dover to London and provides local connections to Gravesend, Ebbsfleet and Dartford to the west and Medway to the east. The A2 has four lanes in each direction in this location and is subject to the national speed limit.

3.2.3 Access to the A2 from the site can be achieved via Thong Lane via a grade separated interchange at its southern extent.

3.2.4 Westbound on and off slips connect the A2 with a four arm roundabout comprising Thong Lane, Halfpence Lane and Brewers Road. Halfpence Lane and Brewers Road have 2 lane entries whilst the A2 and Thong Lane arms half a single lane entry.

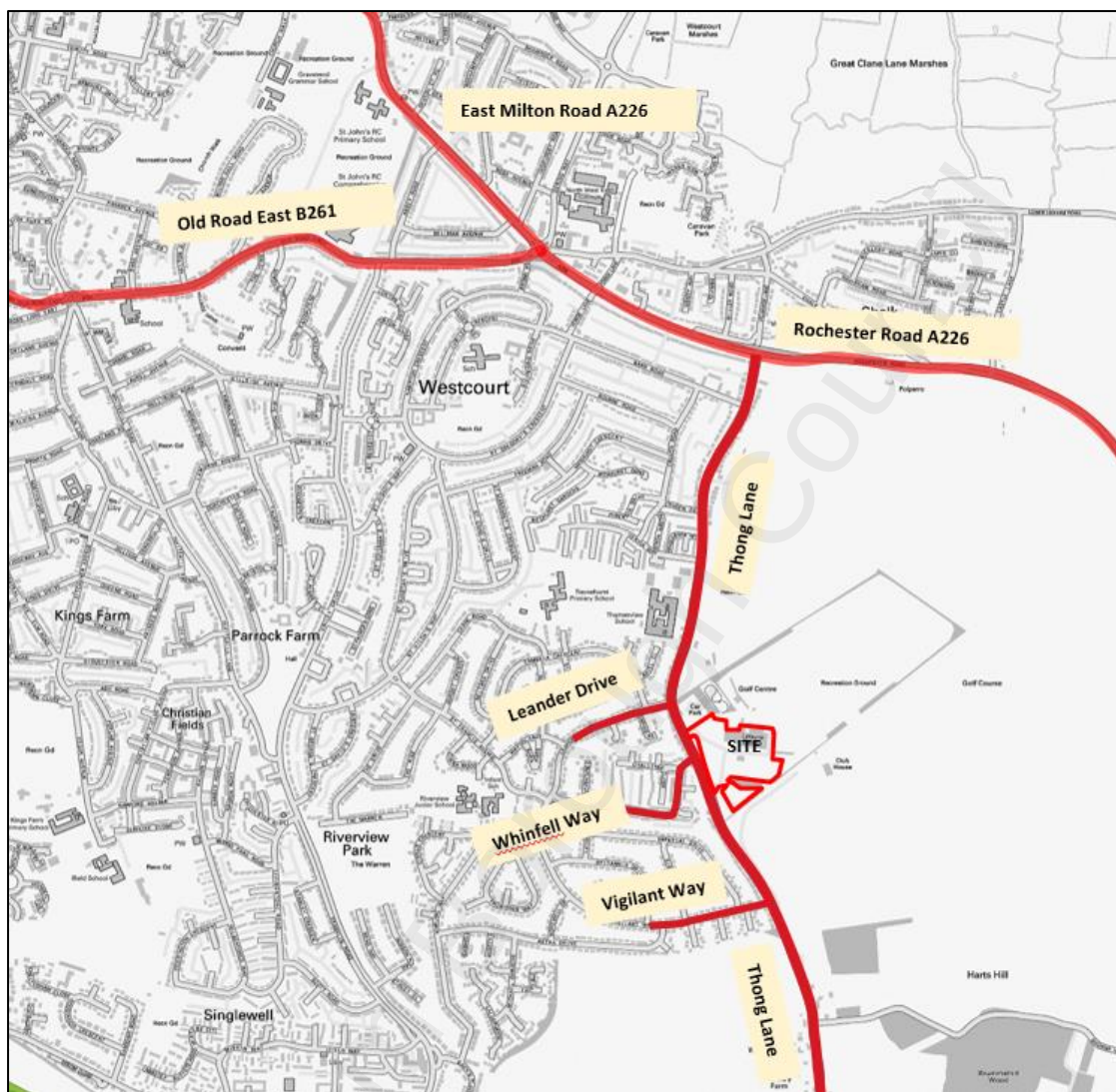
3.2.5 The eastbound on and off slips connect with Brewers Road as a simple priority junction.

3.2.6 The Lower Thames Crossing scheme continues to be developed but the route and funding is not yet confirmed and a planning application is yet to be submitted. Should this scheme be built it is expected to pass to the east of the leisure centre site and connect to the A2 to the south.

3.2.7 For the purposes of this Transport Assessment it has not been considered as a committed scheme. KCC have also expressed the view that the proposed development would be too small to have any impact on the LTC proposals.

3.3 Existing highway network - local

3.3.1 Vehicles leaving the site would either turn right or left onto Thong Lane at the priority give way exit at Cascades Leisure Centre. Thong Lane then heads north to the A226 Rochester Road or south to the A2. The figure below illustrates the local highway network.



- 3.3.2 The intersection to the north connecting Thong Lane with the A226 Rochester Road is a priority give way junction with a central reserve right turn bay. The A226 has a 40mph speed restriction in the vicinity of the junction with Thong Lane and includes a series of street lighting. A segregated cycle lane is provided on the south side of the carriageway and an on road cycle lane on the north side.



View looking east on A226 towards junction with Thong Lane



View looking east on A226 towards junction with Thong Lane



View looking west on A226 towards junction with Thong Lane

- 3.3.3 Thong Lane has footways on both sides running north from the site entry to the A226 Rochester Road corridor. Thong Lane provides on street parking and lighting. A scheme of traffic calming has been introduced on Thong Lane comprising give way pinch points, carriageway narrowings and speed cushions / humps. Thong Lane has a 30mph speed restriction along its extent until it passes the built extent at its southern end.



View looking south on Thong Lane from junction with A226



View looking north on Thong Lane towards junction with A226

- 3.3.4 Heading south on Thong Lane the footways, traffic calming and street lighting continue. The junction with Leander Drive lies just north of the entry to the site. This junction is set out as a mini roundabout with Thong Lane forming the north and south arms and Leander Drive the west arm.



View looking north on Thong Lane towards junction with Leander Drive

- 3.3.5 The site entry junction is a one way inbound access. It allows vehicular entry and a separate side entrance for pedestrians.

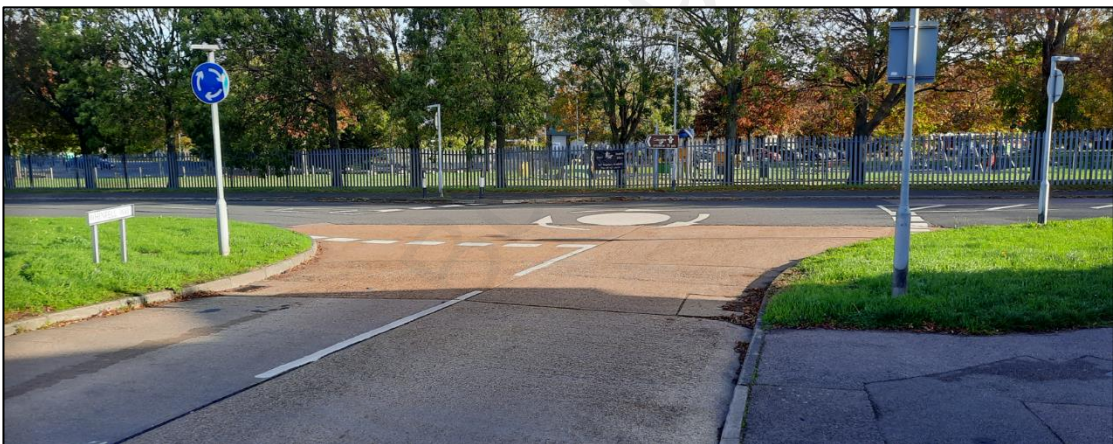


View looking towards Cascades Leisure Centre entrance



View looking south on Thong Lane towards Cascades Leisure Centre entrance

- 3.3.6 Opposite the site lies the residential area of Riverview Park. The junction of Thong Lane with Whinfell Way is set out as a mini roundabout. This provides a route towards Valley Drive and other residential areas within south and south east Gravesend.



View looking east towards Thong Lane from Whinfell Way

- 3.3.7 Continuing south on Thong Lane is the exit from the Cascades Leisure Centre. This is set out as a priority give way junction with separate lanes for left turning and right turning vehicles.



View looking at exit from Cascades Leisure Centre



View looking south on Thong Lane towards exit from Cascades Leisure Centre

- 3.3.8 Continuing south on Thong Lane the footway is provided on the west side of the carriageway and street lighting is also provided.
- 3.3.9 The junction of Thong Lane with Vigilant Way is a simple priority junction.



View looking south on Thong Lane at junction with Vigilant Way

- 3.3.10 Further to the south, beyond the built frontage, there is no footway provided and the speed limit changes to 60mph. Thong Lane becomes more rural in nature and narrow in places as it approaches the A2 overpass.
- 3.3.11 South of the A2, Thong Lane becomes Darnley Lodge Lane and forms a four arm roundabout junction with Halfpence Lane, the A2 eastbound on and off slips and Brewers Road. Brewers Road continues north across the A2 and provides access to the A2 westbound on and off slips.

3.4 Walking and cycling

- 3.4.1 Pedestrian access to the site is directly from Thong Lane alongside the vehicular entry and exit locations as shown on the photos below. Cycling access would use the vehicular entry and exit points.

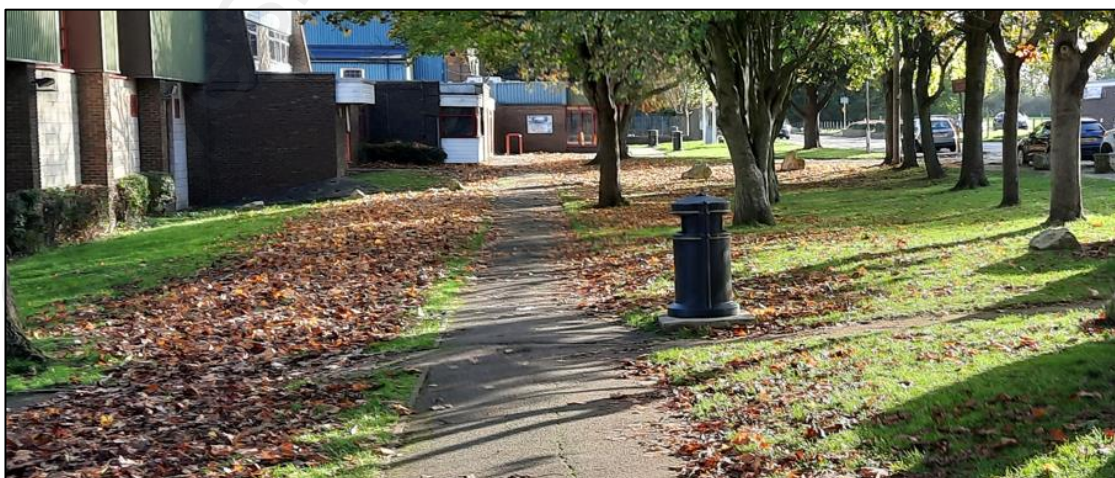


View looking towards the vehicular entry of the site showing the pedestrian access to the right



View looking towards the vehicular exit of the site showing the pedestrian access to the left

- 3.4.2 Within the site pedestrian routes are provided to the main building and car parks through a network of footways as illustrated below.



View looking at footways within the site



View looking at footways within the site

- 3.4.3 Thong Lane is abutted by the built urban / suburban area of east Gravesend on its west side and open areas on its east side. Hence, the significant majority of the leisure centre catchment would be expected to be to the west.
- 3.4.4 The local area to the west of the site has a good level of pedestrian connectivity with footways present on both sides of the majority of highway routes and street lighting. The footways on Thong Lane are generally provided to a width of around 2m or more and are street lit.



View looking south on Thong Lane showing footways on both sides

- 3.4.5 To the west of Thong Lane there are various routes connecting the site to residential areas using Leander Drive, Whinfell Way and Vigilant Way. These routes provide footways and street lighting.

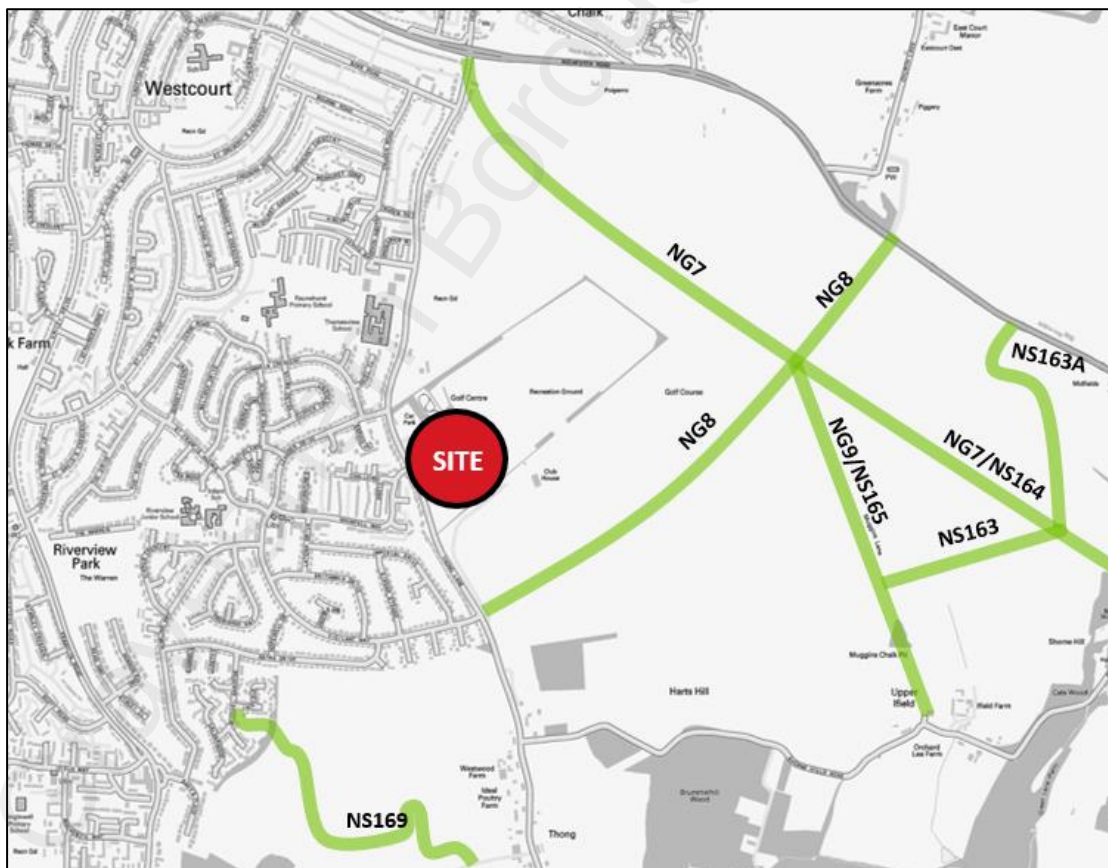


View looking west on Leander Drive



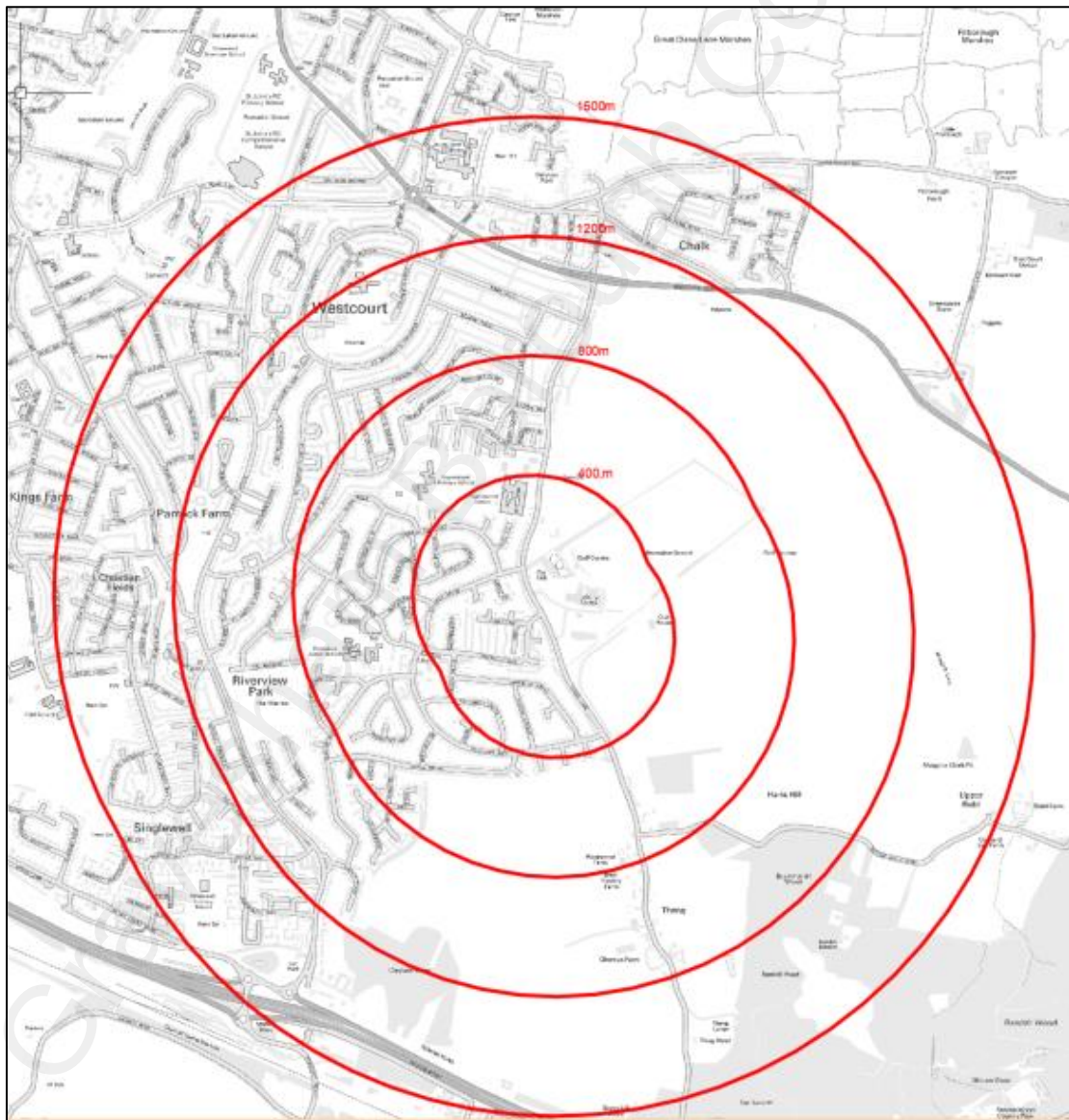
View looking west on Vigilant Way

- 3.4.6 Hence, the site is well connected to the existing local pedestrian network and residential areas of east Gravesend.
- 3.4.7 In addition, there are a number of Public Rights of Way (PROWs) surrounding the site and these are illustrated on the figure below. These routes tend to connect the site surrounds to the open areas to the east.



- 3.4.8 A number of footpaths including NG8 / NG7 / NG9 / NS165 converge to the east of the site.
- 3.4.9 Route NG8 runs from Thong Lane, heading north east to the A226 Gravesend Road and passes through Southern Valley Golf club from the south west entrance.

- 3.4.10 Routes NG7 / NS164 connect Thong Lane north of the site with Crown Lane in Shorne to the south east.
- 3.4.11 The Institution of Highways and Transport (IHT) guidance document 'Planning for Walking' (April 2015) states that 80% of journeys shorter than 1.6km are made wholly on foot with 26% for journeys that are 1.6km to 3.2km long also being undertaken on foot.
- 3.4.12 The same document suggests that routes should connect at local and district levels and form a thorough network. Leisure centres and other key amenities (schools and shops for example) should be connected with good walking routes.
- 3.4.13 The figure below shows 400m, 800m, 1200m and 1600m distances from the site entrance. This equates to approximately 5, 10, 15 and 20 minute walking distances to the site.



- 3.4.14 It is notable from the figure above that a significant number of residential homes are within the 20 minute walk isochrone. This would allow a proportion of local residents to walk to the leisure centre.

- 3.4.15 With respect to cycling there are no designated or segregated cycle routes within the immediate site vicinity. On this basis cyclists share the carriageway with general traffic. The traffic calming on Thong Lane encourages lower traffic speeds that would be compatible with a cycling route.
- 3.4.16 To the north there is a cycle route on the A226. This comprises a segregated cycle facility on the south side of the A226 and an on street cycle lane on the north side of the carriageway. The segregated facility heads north west on the A226 towards the town centre.
- 3.4.17 The closest national cycle route is located around 1.8km to the south, National Route 177 that runs parallel to the A2. National Route 177 runs south from Northfleet in Kent, via Rochester, Maidstone and Ashford, to join with National Route 2 on the South coast. Around 3.8km to the north west lies National Route 1 which runs from Dover to Scotland.



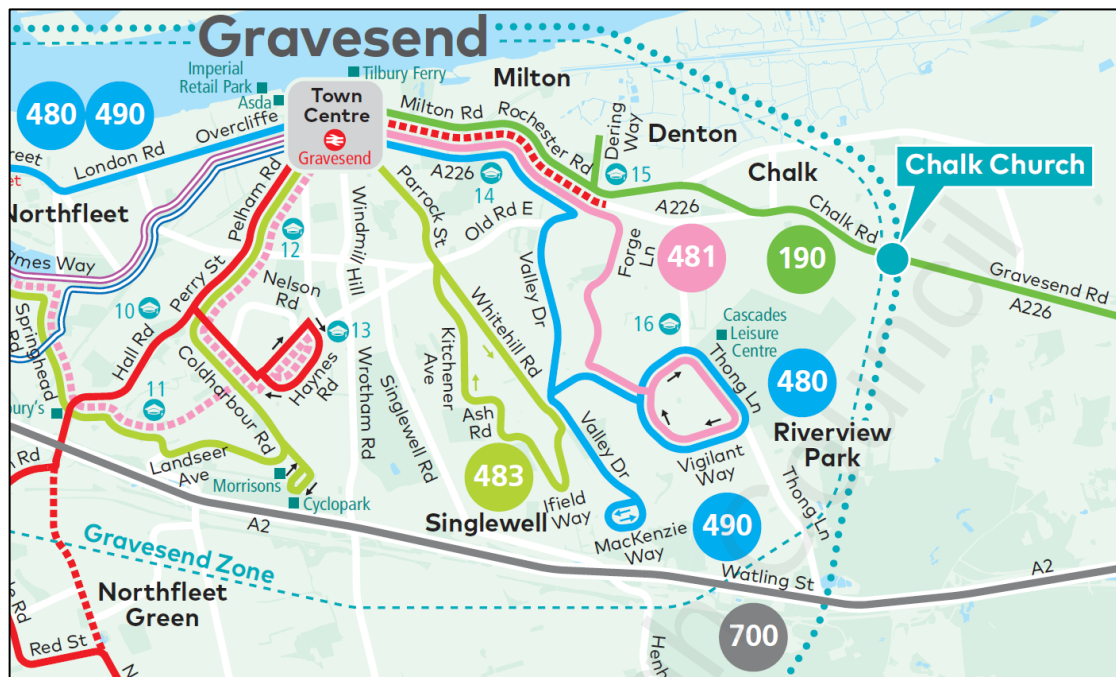
- 3.4.18 Local visitors to the leisure centre would be able to cycle to the site using the local road network within the residential areas to the west of the site.

3.5 Bus

- 3.5.1 Cascades Leisure Centre provides a bus stop within the site and this facility will be retained within the new masterplan. Local bus services are operated by a number of operators, including Arriva, and an extract from the route map is shown below.
- 3.5.2 Within the site the 480 and 481 bus services provide direct access to the leisure centre. The table below provides a summary of the service offered.

Bus Number	Origin	Destination	Frequency
480	Dartford	River View Park	Every 20 minutes 5:42- 18:19
481	Bluewater	River View Park	Every hour 9:30 – 22:30

- 3.5.3 It is noted that the bus service offers frequent services to Gravesend town centre and beyond.



Bus layby within the site

- 3.5.4 Within the site the 480 and 481 bus services provide direct access to the leisure centre. The table below provides a summary of the service offered.

Bus Number	Origin	Destination	Frequency
480	Dartford	River View Park	Every 20 minutes 5:42- 18:19
481	Bluewater	River View Park	Every hour 9:30 – 22:30

- 3.5.5 It is noted that the bus service offers frequent services to Gravesend town centre and beyond to Northfleet and Dartford.
- 3.5.6 External to the site, additional bus stops are provided at the site vehicular entry on Thong Lane and also Leander Drive, around 200m from the site entrance. These stops provide access to the 735 intercity bus (Redwing Coaches) and 111 service (1st bus stop Ltd).



View looking south on Thong Lane at site entrance showing bus stop



Bus stop on Leander Drive

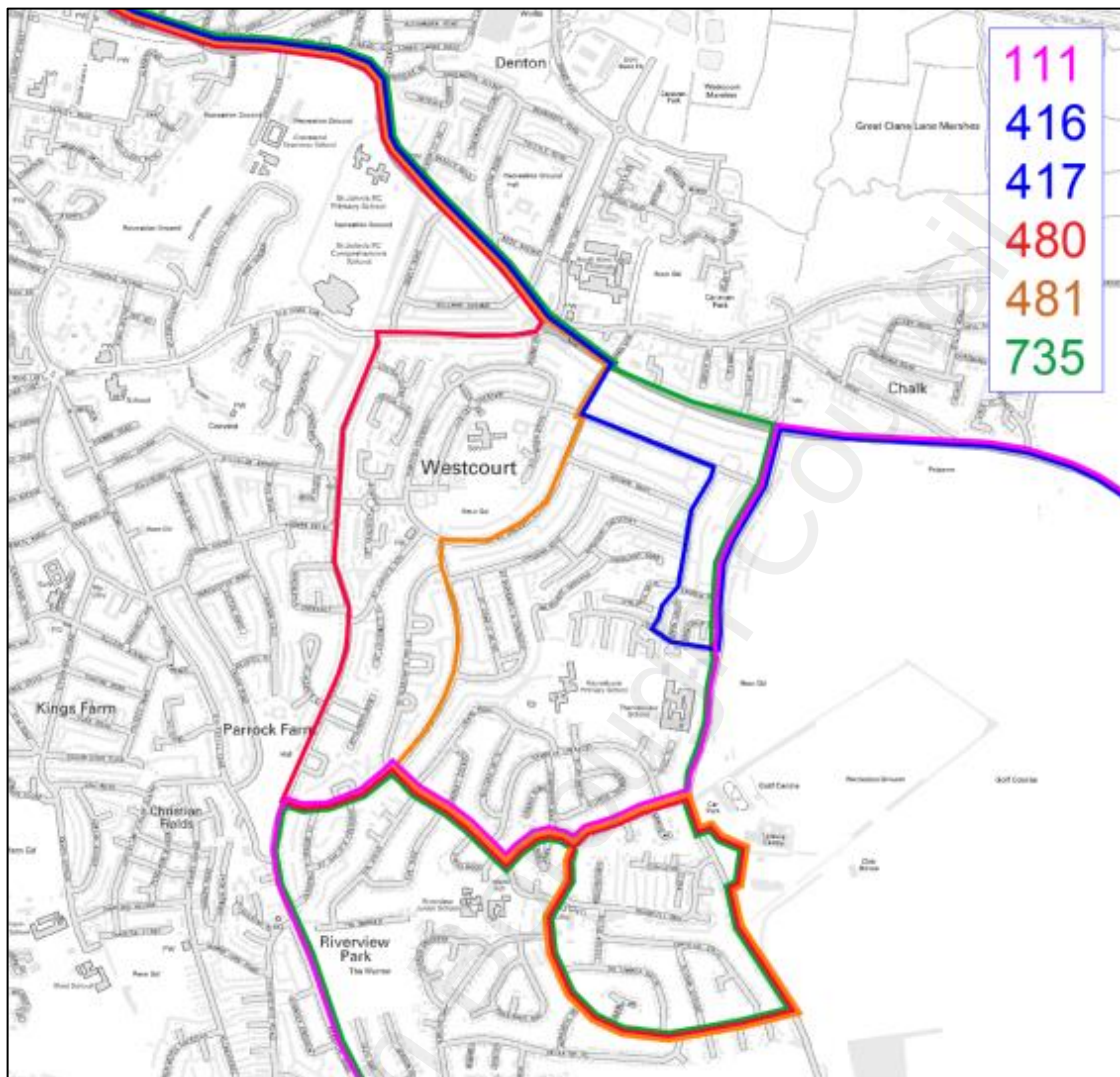


Bus stop on Vigilant Way

- 3.5.7 Additional bus stops are provided on Cervia Way around 600m north of the site entrance on Vigilant Way to the south and these provide access to services 416 and 417 (Redroute buses). The table below provides a summary of the service offered.

Bus Number	Origin	Destination	Frequency
111	Shorne	Gravesend	3 times a day (school times)
416	Meopham	Gravesend	Every 1 hour 25 from 9:30-16:35
417	Cliffe	Gravesend	Every 4 hour 25 from 9:19 – 13:44
735	Gravesend	River View Park	Every 1 hour 20 16:55-18:15

- 3.5.8 The figure below shows the bus routes.



3.5.9 In summary, there is good access to / from the site using existing bus services.

3.6 Rail

3.6.1 The closest rail station to the leisure centre is Gravesend. This rail station is approximately 4.5 kilometres from the site. The rail station is accessible by bus using the 480 / 481 services.

3.6.2 Gravesend rail station services are operated by Southeastern and Thameslink trains and include high speed services to London St Pancras International.

3.6.3 The table below highlights the local rail links and frequency of these services which stop at Gravesend.

Service Destination/Origin	Monday – Friday Frequency	Saturday Frequency	Sunday Frequency	Typical Journey Time
Dartford	Every 30 minutes	2 every 30 minutes	2 every 30 minutes	16 minutes
Stone Crossing	Every 30 minutes	2 every 30 minutes	2 every 30 minutes	11 minutes

Greenhithe	Every 30 minutes	2 every 30 minutes	2 every 30 minutes	10 minutes
Swanscombe	Every 30 minutes	2 every 30 minutes	2 every 30 minutes	6 minutes
Northfleet	Every 30 minutes	2 every 30 minutes	2 every 30 minutes	4 minutes
Higham	Every 30 minutes	Every 30 minutes	Every 30 minutes	8 minutes
Strood	Every 30 minutes	Every 30 minutes	Every 30 minutes	12 minutes

3.7 Summary

- 3.7.1 In summary, it is demonstrated that the site can be accessed by a number of modes, including walking from the local surrounds, bus services that penetrate the site, or stop close by, and rail through connection with the bus services. This will facilitate journeys by sustainable modes and reduces the need for private vehicle journeys.

4 Travel Plan objectives

4.1.1 The objectives of this Framework Travel Plan are consistent with the objectives encapsulated within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) to encourage sustainable travel and as set out below.

- Reduce the number of car trips to, from and within the site by promoting a range of sustainable alternatives and encouraging the use of these and hence reducing greenhouse gas emissions due to travel.
- Reduce the need to travel, partly through use of smart technologies.
- Encourage the use of walking and cycling modes through provision of appropriate facilities.
- Maintain vehicle movements to and from the site within the limits set out in the Transport Assessment and seek to reduce these levels over the period of the Framework Travel Plan.
- Reduce the impact of the development on the local highway network over time by setting challenging, yet realistic targets.
- Monitor and review the Framework Travel Plan targets and initiatives to be agreed with KCC.
- Increase the awareness of employees on site and visitors to the site in respect of travel choices and the individual and community benefits of sustainable travel choices.
- Provide site users with information to make an informed choice of their travel options.
- Influence the travel perceptions and travel behaviour of all site users.

4.1.2 These objectives have been used to inform the derivation of a suite of actions which will contribute to achieving the overall aim of the Framework Travel Plan.

5 Trip generation and targets

- 5.1.1 It is recognised that in order for the Framework Travel Plan to be effective it must have measurable outcomes which can be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.
- 5.1.2 The targets set out within this section are challenging, yet realistic targets that seek to reduce the number of vehicular trips and promote the more sustainable modes of travel.
- 5.1.3 Annual targets have been provided covering a five year period. The targets have been based on the SMART principles, as described below;
- **Specific** - A specific overall reduction in car based trips has been defined which will be achieved through the development of realistic Travel Plan measures.
 - **Measurable** - The number of private vehicle based trips will be monitored against the targets on a regular basis. Further initiatives and measures will be investigated and pursued should the development fail to meet these targets.
 - **Achievable** - Travel Plan measures will be implemented and their effectiveness monitored in order to ensure they are achievable.
 - **Realistic** – Realistic targets have been based upon a reduction of the proportion of car based trips.
 - **Time-bound** - The targets will be reviewed annually in order to clarify whether they are being achieved.
- 5.1.4 The two-way traffic generation for the proposed development has been set in accordance with the levels identified in the Transport Assessment that accompanies the planning application for the development.

5.2 Target trip generation – Year 1

- 5.2.1 Vehicular trip generation for the proposed development has been extracted from the Transport Assessment and is summarised below. These represent the Year 1 targets.

	AM Peak			PM Peak		
	In	Out	2 way	In	Out	2 way
Trip generation	30	27	57	141	114	255

5.3 Target trip generation – Developer supported final year

- 5.3.1 It is proposed that the proposed development will seek to reduce traffic generation from the development by 10% over the developer supported period of the Travel Plan when compared to the Transport Assessment. This will represent the trip rate targets at five years following occupation.
- 5.3.2 Vehicular trip generation targets for the proposed development at Final Year will hence be as summarised below.

	AM Peak			PM Peak		
	In	Out	2 way	In	Out	2 way
Trip generation	27	24	52	127	103	229

- 5.3.3 Hence, trip generation targets for the intervening periods can be calculated through interpolation between year 1 and year 5.
- 5.3.4 Targets could be set for other transport modes such as walking, cycling and public transport for example. However, an increase in these travel modes could be implied by recording a reduction in car travel (assuming number of trips remains similar).
- 5.3.5 In addition, it would not be appropriate to apply measures to increase walking and cycling and public transport use if targets are not being met, but car travel targets are being met. Measures are set out within this Travel Plan to encourage use of walking, cycling and public transport modes in any event.

6 Travel Plan Coordinator

- 6.1.1 It is recognised that in order to ensure the Framework Travel Plan is effective, it requires the implementation of a Travel Plan Coordinator (TPC) with the necessary expertise to develop, implement and monitor the Framework Travel Plan.
- 6.1.2 It is anticipated that the appointment of a TPC will be undertaken by the developer(s) of the site. The developer will therefore appoint a TPC to manage the Framework Travel Plan and to actively pursue initiatives and ensure the plan is regularly monitored and reviewed during the lifetime of the plan.
- 6.1.3 The TPC post will be appointed prior to occupation on site and will be supported by the developer for a 5 year period.
- 6.1.4 The role of the TPC could belong to an employee on site, an external consultant, or be part of the management team and will form an important element of that person's role. Although it is not envisaged that the position would be a full-time post, nevertheless the TPC must be available to all site users to answer queries and offer support on the basis of a reasonable response time.
- 6.1.5 The TPC should be empowered to a degree in order to be able to enforce decisions, but should also have regular access to senior members of the site management in order to ensure decisions can be made at the appropriate level.
- 6.1.6 The TPC will act as a focal point for liaison on Framework Travel Plan issues between the developer, site users, local transport operators as appropriate and the Local Planning Authority. The TPC will have an over-arching responsibility to:
- To be the initial point of contact for site users and the Local Authority with regard to travel issues.
 - Liaise with relevant public transport providers in order to seek discounts and keep up to date with offers and changes to services.
 - Seek to ensure bus stops are well maintained by working with the Local Authority and through regular monitoring and maintenance
 - Facilitating the implementation of Framework Travel Plan initiatives.
 - Be the first point of contact for site users wishing to find out more about Framework Travel Plan initiatives.
 - Operate or hold responsibility for initiatives. For instance, ensuring that public transport information is kept updated.
 - Organise new initiatives. For example, promote national initiatives such as 'Walk to Work Week'.
 - Motivate others to adopt sustainable travel habits.
 - Be available to provide advice on sustainable travel planning on a personal level in order to promote the Framework Travel Plan and to aid those who need help or information on sustainable travel.

- Keep abreast of policy and technology that could promote or facilitate the Framework Travel Plan.
 - Attend periodic forums the Local Authority might organise to discuss best practice and make decisions about the Framework Travel Plan.
 - Undertake or oversee the monitoring and review of the Framework Travel Plan including the provision of the Annual Travel Reports.
- 6.1.7 It is not envisaged that the TPC may fulfil directly all of the responsibilities of the role. For example, they may choose to engage specialist consultancy advice as part of the monitoring and review process (to undertake traffic survey data collection for example).
- 6.1.8 The developer will inform the Local Planning Authority once a TPC has been employed and will provide them with the relevant contact information.

7 Action Plan

- 7.1.1 This Travel Plan is a Framework for a bespoke full Travel Plan to be developed more fully following the grant of planning permission. This chapter sets out a package of measures that may be included and implemented by the developer to influence the travel behaviour of the site employees and visitors.

7.2 Travel Awareness Campaigns

- 7.2.1 It is important to ensure that relevant travel information is available to those considering sustainable travel to enable them to make an informed decision as to their mode of transport. This could be through raising awareness of national and local travel awareness campaigns such as:

- National Green Travel Days (e.g. Walk to Work Week);
- Local walking and cycling events and initiatives; and
- Health or environmental related initiatives that link to travel.

Potential Action 1: The TPC will regularly advertise national and local Travel Awareness Campaigns to site users

7.3 Green Travel Notice Boards

- 7.3.1 Sustainable Travel Information should be easily accessible to visitors and employees and should be updated regularly in order to present factual information and new ideas.
- 7.3.2 Green Travel Notice Boards (GTNB) displaying relevant travel information can be a particularly persuasive tool for tipping the balance in favour of more sustainable travel, providing it is kept up to date and is in a prominent location.
- 7.3.3 Other mediums through which information could be shared are posters / leaflets, on social networking sites, and / or through community newsletters. Examples of material that could be provided at the GTNB are as follows:
- Travel awareness days e.g. Walk to Work Week and National Liftshare Week;
 - Local walking and cycling routes;
 - Information on locations of and distances to key local facilities such as the train station and bus stops in a bid to increase walking and cycling for shorter journeys and to reduce the amount of time spent on the local highway network;
 - Local bus stops and public transport routes;
 - Timetables and costs for local public transport services;
 - Promotion of (and links to) a car share website; and
 - Information on the health benefits of walking and cycling.

Potential Action 2: The TPC will introduce a GTNB to the site which will contain relevant and up to date information and will be located within a prominent location. It will be provided at occupation of the Site to ensure it is available immediately.

7.4 Travel Information Pack

- 7.4.1 Research has shown that the best time to influence peoples travel behaviour is from the outset, before unsustainable travel patterns have had a chance to develop. Therefore, it is important that new and existing employees (and potentially leisure centre membership holders) are well informed of the travel choices available to them.
- 7.4.2 A Travel Information Pack (TIP) is a package of sustainable travel information that informs employees and visitors of all the travel options available to them in order for them to make an informed choice over their travel patterns. TIPs aim to encourage people to try out, or at least consider the different modes of transport available to them. A TIP should contain the following information:
- Information about the Travel Plan itself and the reasons for its development;
 - Local walking and cycling routes;
 - Maps highlighting local facilities and the distance and travelling time by mode to each facility;
 - Public transport maps and timetables;
 - Information on and links to a Car Share website;
 - Health benefits related to sustainable travel;
 - Details for Personal Travel Planning (PTP) sessions.
 - Details of car share websites and how car sharing works.

 Potential Action 3: The TPC will develop a TIP which will be distributed to each employee and membership holder

7.5 Walking and Cycling

- 7.5.1 Walking and cycling are the most sustainable and beneficial modes of transport in terms of health and cost, yet the benefits of these modes can often be overlooked when faced with the time benefits of the private car.
- 7.5.2 Maps highlighting the distances (and time taken) to walk or cycle to local facilities and from local residential areas can be a good way to make people aware that the site is more accessible than perhaps perceived to be. By making people aware of the short distances, there is more chance of people opting to walk or cycle rather than automatically travelling by private car. This information should be made available from the outset before employees and visitors start the habit of traveling to the site by car.

Potential Action 4: The developer will ensure connectivity to the external network for walking and cycling trips to and from the site and appropriate walking and cycling routes within the Site.

Potential Action 5: The TPC will promote the benefits of walking and cycling in terms of health and cost. This may be through the GTNB.

Potential Action 6: The TPC will provide employees and membership holders with walking and cycling maps for the local area to encourage the use of these modes as part of the TIP. The maps will highlight the distance (and time taken) to walk and cycle from the local surrounds and transport hubs. This will be included in the TIP and posted on the GTNB.

Potential Action 7: Provide cycle parking spaces to standard.

7.6 Public Transport

7.6.1 It is important that site users are made aware of the public transport services available to them from the outset and are regularly informed of any changes or updates to each service. The latter is particularly important because if people are not informed of changes it could result in negative attitudes towards public transport services.

7.6.2 The TPC should be familiar with the existing services to assist employees and visitors in their use. The TPC should regularly check public transport services and inform if any changes have been made. Details should be made available at the Travel Information Point and potentially through emails to site users who sign up to this service.

Potential Action 8: The developer will promote the local bus services serving the site which offer an attractive, frequent and reliable bus service. Quality bus stops within the site will also be re-provided.

Potential Action 9: The TPC will provide employees and visitors with up to date and relevant public transport information such as bus routes and timetables and bus stop locations.

Potential Action 10: The TPC will liaise with relevant public transport providers in order to seek discounts and keep up to date with offers and changes to services.

Potential Action 11: Promote the use of public transport at the Travel Information Point and in the Travel Information Packs.

Potential Action 12: The TPC will seek to ensure bus stops are regularly maintained by working with the Local Authority and through regular monitoring.

Potential Action 13: Provide cycle parking spaces to standard.

7.7 Car Share

7.7.1 Car sharing can often be an appealing option to those who do not have access to their own vehicle, to those that are willing to share their vehicle with others or where public transport facilities are limited or not available.

- 7.7.2 Car sharing is the process by which two or more people share a car to any destination such as to work or to an event etc. Many people already informally car share with relatives or friends. However, a formal car share system can maximise the benefits of car sharing and can significantly reduce the number of vehicles on the local highway network.
- 7.7.3 The benefits of car sharing to individuals can be significant and include cost savings and reduced commuter stress levels (by both not having to drive during rush hour traffic and the reduced levels of congestion overall). Car sharing can be particularly beneficial to those who require a car but cannot afford to keep up with the cost that running one entails.
- 7.7.4 It is therefore important to ensure that the option is available to those who may consider this as an alternative to the private car.

Potential Action 14: The TIP will promote a suitable existing car share website at the Travel Information Point and via the Travel Information Packs

Potential Action 15: – the TIP will provide information on how car sharing works, who can take part, a list of how obstacles (such as the need to drop children off at school or safety concerns) can be overcome and advertise the benefits that can be gained through car sharing.

7.8 Private Car

- 7.8.1 It is important to accept that the private car remains a significant mode of travel. At the same time there is a need to recognise the problems associated with this mode and therefore, initiatives should be used to mitigate against the impact the private car will have on the local highway network.
- 7.8.2 If employees and visitors are not informed of the personal and social negative impacts that result from private car use, then they are more likely to opt to use the private car instead of trying out other more sustainable modes. It is therefore proposed that each employee and membership holder is made aware of these issues so that those who can travel by another mode can make the decision based on informed facts.

Potential Action 16: Provide parking on-site consistent with the local authority parking standards guidance.

Potential Action 17: The TPC will inform site users of the negative impacts of car based travel (in terms of health, cost and the environment) and will promote alongside this the benefits of sustainable travel.

Potential Action 18: The TPC will strive to persuade drivers to make an occasional change to other more sustainable modes by promoting the benefits of walking, cycling and public transport.

Potential Action 19: The TPC will promote green initiative schemes such as “walk to work” days

7.9 Electric car charging points

- 7.9.1 There is a continuing emergence of electric car technology and an increasing momentum with respect to electric car sales. This will be responded to by the development with the provision of electric car charging points.

Potential Action 20: Provide electric car charging points within the development at an appropriate standard to be agreed with local authority officers.

Gravesend Borough Council

8 Monitor and Review

- 8.1.1 The Travel Plan will be monitored in order to assess the effectiveness of the measures in achieving the targets.
- 8.1.2 The first monitoring period (or 'baseline') should take place within three months of occupation. Thereafter monitoring should take place annually for a 5 year period..
- 8.1.3 It may be the case that monitoring surveys are undertaken using the TRICS Standard Assessment Methodology. This method ensures comparable, standardised and robust survey results, although other types of surveys which may be appropriate are as follows:
- a. online or paper questionnaires recording such things as 'main mode of travel', 'reason for choice of travel mode', and 'attitudinal information about measures which are likely to encourage a switch to sustainable alternatives', and
 - b. on-site vehicle counts at the Site's access points.
- 8.1.4 Monitoring costs will be met by the developer.
- 8.1.5 Once the surveys have been completed, the results will be compared against the Framework Travel Plan targets to see whether they have been achieved or not.
- 8.1.6 The TPC will submit an annual monitoring report to the Council for review, in order to inform them of the Travel Plans progress, whether or not the targets are being met and if not, possible reasons why.
- 8.1.7 Monitoring reports may include the following :
- Recap objectives and targets
 - Monitoring method
 - Results summary
 - Self assessment of progress with implementation
 - Commentary on measures implemented
 - Future actions
 - Sign off and next review date

9 Summary

- 9.1.1 Stantec have been appointed to prepare a Framework Travel Plan in support of a planning application for a leisure centre development at Cascades leisure centre.
- 9.1.2 The aim of this Framework Travel Plan is to reduce the number of car trips to and from the proposed development by promoting a range of sustainable alternatives, encouraging the use of these modes.
- 9.1.3 A review of the existing and proposed site accessibility has been undertaken and concluded that a good provision of walking and public transport services currently serve the site.
- 9.1.4 Challenging mode share targets have been presented which aim to reduce car based travel by 10% over a developer supported period following occupation of the site.
- 9.1.5 An action plan has been presented which aims to reduce car based travel to and from the site.