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Highways and Transportation

Kroner House

Eurogate Business Park
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TN24 8XU

Tel: 03000 418181

Date: 28 August 2024

Our Ref: AC

Application - GB/20240402

Location - Huggens College , College Road, Northfleet, Gravesend Kent

Proposal - Demolition of existing buildings and erection of retirement living apartments (Use Class C3), together with the extension of the existing chapel and the provision of associated communal facilities and external amenity space, lodge keepers and guest accommodation, back-of-house facilities, parking, bicycle/mobility scooter parking, and associated works including the creation of a secondary, emergency access from College Road.

Thank you for your consultation in relation to the above planning application. I have the following comments to make with respect to highway matters :-

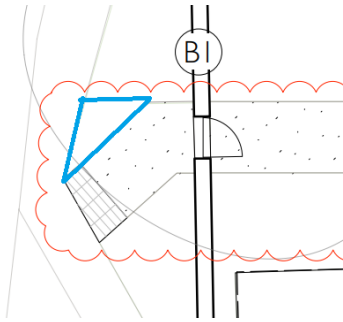
The comments below are in response to the Technical Note dated 02nd August 2024, titled 'Kent Highways Consultee Comments Additional Information Request'.

In response to a request to improve the pedestrian route on College Road, the Applicant has confirmed that *"the wall [is] the only surviving structure, along with the Chaplain's House, at the college which predates redevelopment of the site. Any relocation would result in the demolition of original features and materials which have been identified to be of heritage interest"*. This is noted and accepted. However, whilst it is agreed that the presence of the wall does limit the amount of work that could be undertaken to improve the access, a dropped kerb and tactile paving should be provided on the northern side of the access, which will have an intensification of use. This would not affect the wall and would support the existing dropped kerb on the southern side of the bellmouth. The lack of an associated dropped kerb at present will be confusing to blind or partially sighted people and will be a hindrance to those with mobility issues or with prams.

The Technical Note has not responded to the request for dropped kerbs at the entrance to Wallis Park. This is required in order to provide safe, suitable access to the Fastrack bus stops in the north.

The requested section of ped/cycle route between the entrance onto Stonebridge Road and the Green Corridors scheme, is shown on the Proposed Hard Landscaping Plan (P 06 Rev C). This is welcomed and acceptable at this stage. However, the route is not on the desireline for those travelling west and is likely to result in people creating a desireline across the grass verge. It is therefore requested that the path is widened where it meets the Green Corridors scheme (as shown by the blue triangle below). This slight amendment could be made at detailed design

stage if necessary. The route will need to tie into the Green corridors scheme (once completed) and will require a S278 Agreement to undertake these works.



The Applicant has confirmed the dimensions of the cycle store and that at least two mobility scooters or adapted bikes could be stored in each unit. This is acceptable. In relation to the comment regarding adapted bikes and that only one of the current residents requires a mobility scooter, for information only, please note that it is not just disabled users who may want an adapted bike. For example, people who may not be confident balancing on two wheels may be more comfortable riding a three wheel bike.

I am very pleased to see that the Applicant will provide an adapted bike (e.g. a three wheeled bike) on site for the residents to use, to encourage them to cycle. This should be included in the Full Travel Plan and advertised to the residents.

The 'Masterplan Ground Floor Level' (P 01 E) plan shows the short section of footway /cycleway leading to the ped/cycle gate onto Stonebridge Road has been widened to 2m, which, whilst is not the required 3m, is an improvement and is welcomed. However, a large proportion of the route through the landscaped area is less than 1.5m wide. Whilst this is on site and therefore not affecting the highway, as stated previously, it is recommended that this is increased to a minimum width to 2m. Not only will this help the pedestrian / cyclist conflict but would also provide a more comfortable route for two people to walk side by side.

With regard to the parking, the Applicant has confirmed that 14 of the existing residents have cars. This equates to approximately 0.5 vehicles per unit and further supports the proposed parking provision of 57 vehicle spaces.

The gates at the emergency access are shown to be set back 5m from the edge of the carriageway. This distance should be 5.5m from the back of the footway, although it is noted that this access is for a temporary construction period and then for emergency use only thereafter and as a result is unlikely to have a significant impact on the highway.

Where possible, the construction access should be changed to a crossover for the permanent emergency vehicle, ped and cycle access , as this would prioritise pedestrians on the footway on College Road.

Vehicle visibility splays of 1.75m x 43m and 2.4m x 26m (south) and 23m (north) have been provided on drawing 418.063079.00001-PD02 for the main site access. As the access is existing and given the nature of the road, the low traffic flows and the fact that it is subject to heavy on street parking which is likely to reduce speeds, this is acceptable. Vehicle visibility splays of 2m x 34m (north) and 2m x 33m (south) and pedestrian visibility splays of 2m x 2m have been provided on drawing 418.063079.00001-PD01 for the construction / emergency access. These are acceptable.

Swept path drawings have been provided showing a small skipper lorry, small tipper and fire appliance vehicle accessing the site via the construction / emergency vehicle access. Whilst these are acceptable, the two former vehicles are relatively small for a construction site and larger vehicles may need to be tracked within the Full Construction Management Plan or a restriction applied to prevent larger vehicles accessing the site.

Conclusion

Having considered the development proposals and the effect on the highway network, I now raise no objection on behalf of the local highway authority, subject to the following Conditions being secured:

Conditions

- A total of 57 vehicle parking spaces including 18 disabled bays and five visitor bays to be provided upon occupation of their associated unit.
- Electric vehicle charging facilities to be provided in line with the Building Regulations and available for use upon occupation of the units.
- A minimum of 50 cycle and five mobility scooter / adapted bike covered parking spaces to be provided prior to occupation of their associated unit.
- A shared footway / cycle connection to be provided between the ped/cycle entrance on Stonebridge Road and the Green Corridors scheme, as shown on P 06 Rev C, prior to first occupation of the site.
- A new vehicular access to be provided onto College Road prior to construction, as shown on drawing 418.063079.00001-PD01, to be used during construction and thereafter as a permanent emergency vehicle, ped and cycle access only, and retained in perpetuity. Permanent access to be crossover instead of bellmouth where possible.
- Dropped kerbs and tactile paving to be provided at the bellmouth access to Wallis Park, in order to provide a suitable pedestrian route to the Fastrack bus stops in the Northfleet West site, prior to first occupation. If the Fastrack service is not operational upon first occupation, this can be implemented prior to the operation of the Fastrack service through Northfleet West.
- Dropped kerbs and tactile paving to be provided on the northern side of the existing bellmouth into the site from College Road, prior to first occupation of the site.
- Gates at the emergency access onto College Road to be set back a minimum of 5m from the carriageway, although ideally 5.5m from the back of the footway. Gates to open away from, the highway. The first 5m of the access should be of a bound material.
- Vehicle and pedestrian visibility splays as shown on plans 418.063079.00001-PD02 and 418.063079.00001-PD01, to be implemented upon first occupation and permanently maintained. Splays to be kept clear of obstructions over 600mm in height (measured from footway level).
- Submission and approval of a Full Travel Plan prior to occupation of the site, and implementation of the Plan upon first occupation. The Plan should include reference to the provision of the adapted bike.
- Submission and approval of a Full Construction Management Plan, prior to commencement of any development on the site, to include the following:
 - (a) Routing of construction and delivery vehicles to / from the site
 - (b) Parking and turning areas for construction & delivery vehicles and site personnel
 - (c) Timing of deliveries (avoiding network peak hours where possible)
 - (d) Trip generation
 - (e) Details of wheel washing facilities and measures to prevent the discharge of surface water onto the highway
 - (f) Details of any temporary traffic management / signage
 - (g) Construction programme
 - (h) Site operating hours
 - (i) Details of how local residents can contact the site manager / raise issues.

(j) Photographic evidence of any existing damage to the footway and carriageway along College Road between the High Street and Wallis Park. Any damage to the highway reported to / observed by KCC during construction which can be reasonably attributed to construction activities (e.g. cracked footways or paving) will need to be repaired by the Applicant.

It is important to note that Local Planning Authority (LPA) permission does not convey any approval to carry out works on or affecting the public highway.

Any changes to or affecting the public highway in Kent require the formal agreement of the Highway Authority, Kent County Council (KCC), and it should not be assumed that this will be given because LPA planning permission has been granted.

For this reason, anyone considering works which may affect the public highway, including any highway-owned street furniture or landscape assets such as grass, shrubs and trees, is advised to engage with KCC Highways and Transportation at an early stage in the design process.

Across the county there are pieces of land next to private homes and gardens and near the highway that do not look like roads or pavements but are actually part of the public highway.

Some of this highway land is owned by Kent County Council whilst some is owned by third party owners. Irrespective of the ownership, this land may have 'highway rights' over the topsoil.

Works on private land may also affect the public highway. These include works to cellars, to retaining walls which support the highway or land above the highway, and to balconies, signs or other structures which project over the highway. Such works also require the approval of the Highway Authority.

Kent County Council has now introduced a pre-application advice service in addition to a full formal technical approval process for new or altered highway assets, with the aim of improving future maintainability. Further details are available on our website below:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/highways-permissions-and-technical-guidance>.

This process applies to all development works affecting the public highway other than applications for vehicle crossings, which are covered by a separate approval process. Further details on this are available on our website below:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/apply-for-a-dropped-kerb/dropped-kerb-contractor-information>

Once planning approval for any development has been granted by the LPA, it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that before development commences, all necessary highway approvals and consents have been obtained, and that the limits of the highway boundary have been clearly established, since failure to do so may result in enforcement action being taken by the Highway Authority.

The applicant must also ensure that the details shown on the approved plans agree in every aspect with those approved under the relevant legislation and common law. It is therefore important for the applicant to contact KCC Highways and Transportation to progress this aspect of the works prior to commencement on site.

Further guidance for applicants, including information about how to clarify the highway boundary and links to application forms for vehicular crossings and other highway matters, may be found on Kent County Council's website:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/highway-permits-and-licences/highways-permissions-and-technical-guidance>. Alternatively, KCC Highways and Transportation may be contacted by telephone: 03000 418181.

Yours Faithfully

Director of Highways & Transportation

*This is a statutory technical response on behalf of KCC as Highway Authority. If you wish to make representations in relation to highways matters associated with the planning application under consideration, please make these directly to the Planning Authority.