



27th October 2025

Our reference: 664866

2nd Floor
Chancery Exchange
10 Fumival Street
London
EC4A 1AB
UK
Telephone: +44 (0)1442 437500
Fax: +44 (0)1442 437552
www.rskgroup.com

Chris Lee
Director
Praxis Sustainability Consulting on behalf of
LEJ Properties Limited
Canal Road, Higham
Rochester, Kent
ME3 7JA

NURALITE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE - ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) STATEMENT OF CONFORMITY

Dear Chris,

1. INTRODUCTION

LEJ Properties Limited (the "Applicant") is submitting to Gravesham Borough Council (GBC) a Minor Material Amendment (MMA) Section 73 application for the removal and amendment of planning conditions associated with the systematic redevelopment of the existing Nuralite site ("the Proposed Development") consented in December 2021 (planning ref. 20190290).

This application seeks to remove Conditions 4 and 6 (related to traffic management) and Condition 12 (related to archaeology), and to amend Condition 7 (related to traffic regulation). Full details of these proposed changes are provided in **Section 3** below.

This EIA Statement of Conformity report reviews the proposed condition changes and their implications for the submitted Environmental Statement in March 2019 (hereafter the "2019 ES"). The effects of the condition alterations have been reviewed in the context of changes to policy and guidance, baseline, residual effects, mitigation and cumulative effects as presented in the 2019 ES.

2. BACKGROUND

The Applicant submitted a planning application on 22nd March 2019 to GBC (ref. 20190290) seeking full planning permission for the systematic redevelopment of the existing Nuralite site for continued industrial use. Permission was granted on 23rd December 2021, subject to a number of conditions.



On 5th June 2023, the Applicant submitted an application for the Non-Material Amendment (ref. 20230605) to include plan number 23/171/14 B and amend Conditions 3 to 15 and Condition 23 accordingly. This was refused on 19th July 2023 on the grounds of application type.

A similar application was submitted on 18th August 2023 (ref. 20230885) for the inclusion of plan number 23/171/14 and amendment of the previously mentioned conditions. Permission was granted on 1st September 2023, again subject to conditions.

Following these permissions, several buildings on site were demolished due to imminent structural collapse and associated risks to human life and public health. This was carried out lawfully in liaison with GBC and in compliance with asbestos regulations. Additionally, a licence was secured for the safe removal and relocation of bats present on site.

This current Section 73 application (ref. 20250721) seeks to remove Conditions 4, 6, and 12, and amend Condition 7 following further discussions with GBC.

3. DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

Condition 4 - Passing Places (condition for removal)

Other than the works shown on [Drawing No.23/171/14 - Nuralite Retaining Wall) no development approved by this permission (including demolition and engineering operations) shall commence until full details of the construction of additional passing places (within the public highway) along Lower Rochester Road and Gore Green Road generally in accordance with RSK Drawing Ref. 661792-10-04B have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The passing places shall be completed in accordance with the approved details prior to any works commencing on site.

Condition 4 relates to implementing passing places along Lower Rochester Road and Gore Green Road. After reviewing the survey data, it was determined that 3 of the 23 proposed passing places were unnecessary due to their proximity to junctions. Of the remaining locations, 9 would require development on private land. Despite approaches to landowners and investment trusts, responses were either absent or negative, which made the implementation this condition unachievable.

Condition 7 - Traffic Regulation Order (condition for amendment)

Other than the works shown on [Drawing No.23/171/14 - Nuralite Retaining Wall) no development approved by this permission (including demolition and engineering operations) shall commence until a Traffic Regulation Order has been enacted to introduce a one-way routing strategy requiring HGV vehicles travelling westbound to use Lower Rochester Road and Gore Green Road for travelling eastbound during the construction of the development. For the avoidance of doubt this includes demolition works.

Following challenges in implementing the passing places requirement, agreement was reached with GBC and Kent County Council (Highways Authority) to amend Condition 7 by introducing a permanent

one-way routing system for all vehicles via a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO). This replaces the previous temporary condition, which applied only to HGVs during construction.

The proposed amendment to Condition 7 is:

“Other than the works shown on Drawing No.23/171/14 - Nuralite Retaining Wall, no development approved by this permission (including demolition and engineering operations) shall commence until a Traffic Regulation Order has been enacted to introduce a permanent one-way routing strategy requiring all vehicles travelling westbound to use Lower Rochester Road and Gore Green Road for eastbound travel, generally in accordance with SCP drawing SCP-230503-0106.”

Condition 6 - Traffic Controls (condition for removal)

Other than the works shown on [Drawing No.23/171/14 - Nuralite Retaining Wall) no development approved by this permission (including demolition and engineering operations) shall commence until full details of the traffic signal control (including location and the duration of signal controls) along Canal Road to enable one-way working are submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved details shall then be implemented prior to any works (other than the works shown on [Drawing No.23/171/14 - Nuralite Retaining Wall) commencing on site.

As a result of the above, Condition 6, which addressed temporary traffic signals along Canal Road, is no longer required as this will be managed through the standard street-works permit process. Therefore, we request the removal of Conditions 4 and 6 and the modification of Condition 7 for the above transport-related matters.

Condition 12 - Archaeology (condition for removal)

Other than the works shown on [Drawing No.23/171/14 - Nuralite Retaining Wall no phase of development approved by this permission (including demolition and engineering operations) shall commence until an asbestos survey of buildings to be demolished in that phase has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with Health and Safety Executive. The relevant phase of development shall thereafter be carried out in full accordance with the approved details.

Condition 12 requires an agreed programme of archaeological work prior to commencement. Following recent discussions with the county archaeologist, it was confirmed that this condition is no longer necessary. Due to asbestos contamination on the Site, a ‘no-dig’ approach has been adopted, whereby the Site will be capped, with only very limited excavation to place suitable cover at proposed levels and remove small areas of petrochemical pollution. This approach ensures asbestos is contained and any potential archaeological assets below ground remain preserved and undisturbed. Excavation for archaeological purposes would also pose significant health risks to operatives given the contamination. Given these constraints, Kent County Council Heritage confirmed in correspondence dated 30th July 2025 that Condition 12 can be removed.

4. STATEMENT OF CONFORMITY APPROACH

This Statement of EIA Conformity ("SoC") assesses the environmental implications of the proposals against the findings of the 2019 ES.

This review considers all topics addressed in the 2019 ES to determine whether its conclusions remain valid in the context of the current proposals.

The environmental effects of the proposals are limited and primarily relate to transport. It is therefore considered that other technical assessments presented in the 2019 ES (such as air quality, ecology and biodiversity, ground conditions and contamination, landscape and visual impact and noise and vibration) will not be affected. Due to the lapse in time since the original assessments, these topics have been given a high-level review, as presented in **Section 8**.

Transport is the only topic with potential for change compared to the 2019 ES, and has therefore been considered in greater detail within this SoC, in **Section 9**.

To confirm whether the original findings remain valid, each technical assessment has been reviewed against any changes in:

- Legislation, policy and guidance;
- Baseline conditions and receptors;
- Potential for change to the residual effects;
- Requirements for additional mitigation; and
- Introduction of any new existing and / or approved projects.

5. REVIEW OF COMMITTED DEVELOPMENTS

The following additional existing and/or approved developments have come forward since the assessments were undertaken for the 2019 ES. Consideration has been given to cumulative effects for schemes located within an approximate 2.5 km radius from the boundary of the Site and include:

- Committed developments (sites with planning permission not started or under construction);
- Current applications (yet to be determined); and
- Schemes that are subject to an EIA Scoping Request.

Each technical topics cumulative assessments have been reviewed to also consider the new existing and/or approved developments, these are outlined in **Table 5.1** below and considered in the review of each relevant technical topic.

Table 5.1: Existing and/or approved developments

Planning Reference(s), and Location	Description	Status	Distance
Kent County Council KCC/GR/0048/2025 Apex Business Park, Unit 4a, Queens Farm Road, Shorne, Gravesend, Kent DA12 3HU	Section 73 application to vary Condition 2 and 21 of planning permission GR/15/1192 to allow alterations to the site layout.	Validated 25/09/2025 Under consultation	30 m south
No Significant Cumulative Effects As this proposal requests an alteration to a site layout that is already in operation with no changes to the operations themselves, it is considered to have no significant cumulative effect.			
Gravesham Borough Council 20230668 20231313 Eastcourt Marshes Electricity Substation Mark Lane Gravesend Kent DA12 2HR	Request for a Screening Opinion in accordance with The Town and Country Planning Act (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 in respect of the one new shaft headhouse and one new cable sealing end compound. Proposed construction of a new cable tunnel beneath the River Thames between Gravesend and Tilbury to provide additional transmission capacity. Above-ground infrastructure in the form of a new Cable Sealing End compound and a new head house building along with associated electricity infrastructure, access, parking, boundary treatment and two overhead gantry structures for future overhead lines. Temporary compound for the duration of the project to provide parking, staff welfare facilities, delivery vehicle parking, and equipment and machinery storage, including boundary treatment and lighting.	EIA required Approved 04/03/2025	1.6 km west
Gravesham Borough Council 20240199 20250596 20250763 Land At Dalefield Way Gravesend Kent DA12 2FL	Erection of a new three storey office building, for use Class E and installation of solar panels to roof. Erection of a single storey storage building with integral roof lights, for use Class B8 and associated parking and landscaping. Use of the land for open storage of construction related equipment and operations related to Dalefield Way Industrial Park (B8 use) with associated installation of hardstanding/surface treatment.	Approved 30/08/2024 Validated 02/07/2025 Pending consideration	2.25 km west

Planning Reference(s), and Location	Description	Status	Distance
	Change of use of the land for open storage (B8 use) primarily for equipment and operations related to Dalefield Way Industrial Park (B8 use) with associated installation of hardstanding/surface treatment, security fencing/gates, access, a soft landscaping mound, and erection of temporary office cabins.	Validated 04/08/2025 Pending consideration	
Gravesham Borough Council 20250258 Dering Industrial Park Dering Way Gravesend Kent	Application for variation of Condition 2 attached to planning permission reference number 20160114 for change of use of land to Use Class B8 Storage and Distribution together with formation of new access road; to allow for changes to the scale and siting of the approved B8 use class Plots (A, B, C, D and E) informed by the current layouts of occupied Plots A and B, Re-siting the approved shared central roadway via the existing security gate adjacent to Plot B, the central roadway would now be shared solely by Plots B, C, D and E with Plot A retaining independent gated access from the approved access road, as built and some changes to the siting of installations within each plot (e.g. septic tank, refuse points, noticeboards) to better suit the proposed layout and some changes to the siting of slot drains and storm water attenuation sites to better suit the proposed layout.	Validated 19/03/2025 Pending consideration	2.9 km west
No Significant Cumulative Effects As this application is for a site over 2.5 km away which will utilise a different network as such it is considered to have no significant cumulative effect.			

6. CONSTRUCTION

The 2019 ES outlined an indicative construction programme scheduled to start in 2019 and finish in 2022. This programme is now outdated due to the lapse in time. The revised indicative programme is expected to commence in 2026 and conclude in 2029. As part of this SoC, each technical assessment includes a review of the environmental implications of this change to the proposed construction programme.

7. POLICY UPDATES

National

Since the submission of the 2019 ES, an updated version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)¹ was published in December 2024. Although the updated NPPF was published following the submission of the 2019 ES, it is considered that the changes incorporated into the NPPF do not materially affect the assessments undertaken as part of the 2019 ES. Where notable differences are relevant to specific topics, these are addressed within the respective topic assessments.

Local

GBC is currently progressing an Emerging Local Plan, which is at the Partial Review stage and has not yet been adopted. As this review remains incomplete and therefore carries limited weight in decision-making, the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)² continues to form the established and adopted development plan for the area. Accordingly, the Core Strategy continues to remain as the primary local policy context against which the proposals and associated assessments should be considered.

8. HIGH-LEVEL ASSESSMENT OF ES TOPICS

Table 8.1 below provides a high-level assessment of the topics scoped into the 2019 ES including; air quality, ecology and biodiversity, ground conditions and contamination, landscape and visual impact and noise and vibration. Traffic and transport has been assessed in greater detail in **Section 9**.

¹ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, (2024); National Planning Policy Framework.

² <https://www.gravesham.gov.uk/local-plan-policy/local-plan>

Table 8.1: High-level assessment of ES topics

Topic	Legislation, policy, and guidance	Baseline conditions and receptors	Residual effects	Additional mitigation	Committed developments																																	
Air quality	The Environment Regulations 2020³: - Updated PM_{2.5} limit value to 20 µg/m³ from 25 µg/m³ <i>This updated limit has been accounted for in the baseline assessment.</i> PM_{2.5} Targets: Interim Planning Guidance⁴: - Annual mean PM_{2.5} target: 10 µg/m³ by 2040. WHO Air Quality Guidelines (2021)⁵: - PM_{2.5} annual mean: reduced from 10 µg/m³ (2005) to 5 µg/m³. - NO₂ annual mean: reduced from 40 µg/m³ to 10 µg/m³.	The 2019 ES assessed baseline air quality at diffusion tube site GR69 (monitoring NO₂). An updated baseline has been provided below alongside the data that informed the previous assessment. <table><tr><th>Site Ref</th><th>Site Name</th><th>Site Type</th><th>Approximate Distance from Proposed Scheme (km)</th><th colspan="3">Annual Average NO₂ (µg/m³)</th></tr><tr><th colspan="4">Diffusion Tube Site</th><th>2014</th><th>2015</th><th>2016</th></tr><tr><td>GR69</td><td>Golf Driving Range</td><td>Urban Background</td><td>3.5</td><td>19.3</td><td>17.4</td><td>20.3</td></tr></table> <table><tr><th></th><th>2022</th><th>2023</th><th>2024</th></tr><tr><td>GR69</td><td>17.82</td><td>15.93</td><td>13.33</td></tr><tr><td>AQO</td><td colspan="3">40 µg/m³</td></tr></table> The above results indicate that air quality has improved over time with the concentrations of NO₂ being the lowest in 2024. Background concentrations of NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} have been obtained from the UK Air Quality Archive for the 1 km x 1 km grid square centred on OS co-ordinates 570273 , 173844 corresponding to the location of the development. Annual mean background NO₂, PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} concentrations for 2025 are shown below.	Site Ref	Site Name	Site Type	Approximate Distance from Proposed Scheme (km)	Annual Average NO ₂ (µg/m ³)			Diffusion Tube Site				2014	2015	2016	GR69	Golf Driving Range	Urban Background	3.5	19.3	17.4	20.3		2022	2023	2024	GR69	17.82	15.93	13.33	AQO	40 µg/m ³			<u>Construction</u> As the construction traffic forecasts in the original ES remain accurate and applicable to the updated programme (as discussed in Section 9) no residual air quality effects are anticipated. <u>Operational</u> Given ongoing improvements in background air quality, traffic conditions consistent with previous assessments (see Section 9), and the absence of air quality	No new mitigation is required or proposed as part of the proposals; this remains as presented in the 2019 ES.	Since the traffic data from the 2019 ES already accounted for cumulative schemes likely to come forward in the wider area, there are no implications for the cumulative air quality assessment.
	Site Ref	Site Name	Site Type	Approximate Distance from Proposed Scheme (km)	Annual Average NO ₂ (µg/m ³)																																	
Diffusion Tube Site				2014	2015	2016																																
GR69	Golf Driving Range	Urban Background	3.5	19.3	17.4	20.3																																
	2022	2023	2024																																			
GR69	17.82	15.93	13.33																																			
AQO	40 µg/m ³																																					

³ The Environment (Miscellaneous Amendments) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020, <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2020/1313/made>

⁴ Defra, 2024. PM_{2.5} Targets: Interim Planning Guidance, <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/pm25targets/planning>

⁵ World Health Organisation, 2021. What are the WHO Air quality guidelines? <https://www.who.int/news-room/feature-stories/detail/what-are-the-who-air-quality-guidelines>

	<i>National policy limits supersede international guidance</i> Planning Practice Guidance: Air Quality⁶: • No material change Guidance of the Assessment of dust from demolition and construction V2.2⁷: • Revised thresholds for dust emission magnitude <i>Appropriate Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) measures have been agreed with GBC</i> Local Air Quality Management: Technical Guidance (TG22)⁸: • Reflects new statutory PM_{2.5} targets	<table><tr><th>Pollutant</th><th>Concentration (µg/m³)</th><th>AQO (µg/m3)</th></tr><tr><td>NO₂</td><td>10.92</td><td>40.0</td></tr><tr><td>PM₁₀</td><td>10.70</td><td>40.0</td></tr><tr><td>PM_{2.5}</td><td>6.18</td><td>20.0</td></tr></table> A review of background air pollutant concentrations for NO₂ and particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}), based on Defra mapping and Kent NO₂ monitoring data, confirms that both long and short-term Air Quality Objectives (AQOs) are being met at roadside locations near the development. Notably, concentrations of NO₂, PM₁₀, and PM_{2.5} are all well below the relevant thresholds. PM_{2.5} levels are also significantly beneath the proposed new limit values (12 µg/m³ by 2028 and 10 µg/m³ by 2040) indicating a strong baseline of good air quality in the area.	Pollutant	Concentration (µg/m ³)	AQO (µg/m3)	NO ₂	10.92	40.0	PM ₁₀	10.70	40.0	PM _{2.5}	6.18	20.0	impacts from the proposals, no residual effects are anticipated.		
Pollutant	Concentration (µg/m ³)	AQO (µg/m3)															
NO ₂	10.92	40.0															
PM ₁₀	10.70	40.0															
PM _{2.5}	6.18	20.0															
Ecology and biodiversity	The Environment Act 2021 ⁹ introduced statutory biodiversity net gain (BNG) requirements, requiring a minimum 10% net gain secured for at least 30 years	An updated Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) letter (Greenspace Ecological Solutions, report ref: J25-000204, dated 8 th September 2025) has been submitted alongside this application to confirm whether any significant changes to the Site’s habitat	<u>Construction</u> As the construction traffic forecasts in the original ES remain accurate and applicable to the	Given the similarity of habitat present onsite, the potential for protected and notable species to occur within the Site	Given the distance of the identified cumulative schemes, no additional cumulative effects												

⁶ Planning practice guidance: Air Quality (2024), Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

⁷ IAQM Guidance on Assessment of Dust from Demolition and Construction (V2.2, 2024)

⁸ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Local Air Quality Management Technical Guidance (TG22, 2022)

⁹ Environment Act 2021, <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/contents>

	through approved Biodiversity Gain Plans. This application is exempt from mandatory BNG requirements as it is a minor material amendment to an already permitted development.	structure have occurred since the previous assessments. Due to the risk of asbestos exposure, the updated survey was undertaken using a high-definition aerial drone, with images captured on 1st August 2025. Habitats recorded onsite include: • Heathland and Shrub: Mixed scrub • Individual Trees: Urban Trees • Urban: Ruderal/Ephemeral • Lakes: Ponds (non-priority habitat) • Lakes: Standing Open Water and Canals • Urban: Bare Ground • Urban: Developed Land, Sealed Surface • Woodland: Broadleaved Mixed Deciduous Woodland The letter confirms that habitat types within the Site remain broadly consistent with previous records, with some minor changes: • Scrub has increased in area, encroaching on grassland and ephemeral/short perennial vegetation. • Individual trees remain similar, although some scattered trees within the industrial estate have been removed. • A thin strip of ephemeral vegetation in the western section now forms a bare ground path due to regular human activity. • Two areas of scattered scrub and ephemeral vegetation west of the industrial estate have been redeveloped as sealed surfaces. • Small areas of amenity grassland and scattered trees in the eastern industrial estate have been replaced by sealed surfaces.	updated programme (as discussed in Section 9) no residual ecology and biodiversity effects are anticipated. <u>Operational</u> As the proposals do not affect ecological receptors, no residual effects on ecology or biodiversity are anticipated.	is broadly similar to the 2018/2019 assessments. Therefore, the recommendations within previous assessments are considered valid, and no changes to the mitigation strategies set out are required. No new mitigation is required or proposed as part of the proposals; this remains as presented in the 2019 ES.	beyond those assessed in the 2019 ES are anticipated.
--	---	---	---	--	--

		- The former man-made concrete reservoir in the east has been removed and replaced by sealed surface. - Scattered trees west of the broadleaved woodland now form a continuous canopy, merging with the woodland. - Previously recorded tall ruderal vegetation in the south now forms part of the woodland. Six buildings have been demolished since the previous survey; one previously assessed as having high bat roost potential and five with moderate suitability. These demolitions were undertaken under a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence from Natural England (Licence No. 2021-52249-EPS-MIT). Overall, habitats within the Site remain broadly similar to those recorded in the 2019 ES, with changes largely reflecting natural vegetation succession over time.			
Ground conditions and contamination	There have been no changes to legislation, policy and guidance relating to ground conditions and contamination in the intervening time period.	A Remediation Options Appraisal and Method Statement has been submitted alongside this planning application. The report observes the following baseline changes to the Site: <u>Made Ground and Contamination</u> The Site remains underlain by variable thickness made ground containing asbestos and demolition rubble, consistent with previous investigations. However, recent sampling in July 2025 shows significantly lower asbestos concentrations in canal silt than previously anticipated (only 1 of 10 samples detected asbestos) compared to earlier assumptions in the 2019 ES.	<u>Construction</u> The revised construction programme does not affect ground conditions or contamination; therefore, no residual effects are anticipated. <u>Operational</u> As the proposals do not impact the ground, no residual	While the nature and extent of contamination remain broadly consistent with previous findings, updated mitigation measures have been recommended to address site-specific risks, as detailed in the Remediation Options Appraisal and Method Statement (RSK, report ref: 253249-	Given the distance of the identified cumulative schemes, no additional cumulative effects beyond those assessed in the 2019 ES are anticipated.

		Hydrocarbon contamination remains limited to localised hotspots, similar to previous findings. <u>Canal and Pond Areas</u> The disused canal was previously assumed to have widespread asbestos contamination. The 2025 data indicates minimal asbestos presence, suggesting a baseline improvement in this area. Ponds in the west still contain asbestos fragments and fibres, but concentrations are quantified and appear lower than worst-case assumptions in earlier reports. <u>Groundwater</u> Groundwater conditions remain broadly consistent with previous assessments with no new significant contamination trends were reported. Continued monitoring is recommended, but no major baseline deterioration is noted. <u>Site Condition</u> The Site remains mixed with the industrial estate in the east and scrubland and ponds in the west, but vegetation succession and overgrowth have occurred since 2019.	effects on ground conditions or contamination are anticipated.	R01(01), dated 2nd October 2025) prepared to satisfy Condition 13 of the original permission. These include: • Containment-cover systems across the Site. • Limited excavation for hydrocarbon hotspots and structural works. • Reuse of canal silt and excavated soils as infill. • Enhanced dust suppression during soil handling. • Daily air quality monitoring for asbestos fibres during soil movement. • Quarterly groundwater monitoring before and during construction. • Formal emergency procedures for unforeseen contamination.	
--	--	---	---	---	--

Landscape and visual impact	The latest NPPF removes the explicit reference to “beauty” in decision-making, placing greater emphasis on creating well-designed places and functional design. This change does not materially alter the conclusions of the assessment presented in the 2019 ES.	No changes have occurred to the landscape assessed in the 2019 ES, and no new statutory designations, such as National Parks or National Landscapes, have been introduced since that time. As such the baseline conditions in the intervening period are not considered to have changed and can still be considered representative and valid.	<u>Construction</u> The revised construction programme does not affect the landscape; therefore, no residual effects are anticipated. <u>Operational</u> As the proposals do not impact the landscape, no residual effects on landscape and visual impact are anticipated.	No new mitigation is required or proposed as part of the proposals; this remains as presented in the 2019 ES.	As the identified cumulative schemes are located near Gravesend and involve land already in similar or adjacent use, the wider landscape is not expected to change beyond what was cumulatively assessed in the 2019 ES. Therefore, there are no implications for the cumulative landscape and visual impact assessment.
Noise and vibration	National Planning Practice Guidance, 2019 ¹⁰ : No material change Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) ¹¹ :	The baseline for the 2019 ES was determined from the conditions at and around the Site between Friday 14 th and Tuesday 18 th December 2018. These results are still considered to be a conservative representation of noise levels in the area as no new sources or receptors have been introduced within the vicinity of the Site. As	<u>Construction</u> As the construction traffic forecasts in the 2019 ES remain accurate and applicable to the	No new mitigation is required or proposed as part of the proposals; this remains as presented in the 2019 ES.	Since the traffic data from the 2019 ES already accounted for cumulative schemes likely to

¹⁰ Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, National Planning Policy, December 2024

¹¹ Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB), National Highways, March 2020, <https://nationalhighways.co.uk/suppliers/design-standards-and-specifications/design-manual-for-roads-and-bridges-dmr/b/>

	- Requires direct alignment with EIA methodology British Standard 4142¹²; - No material change	such the baseline conditions in the intervening period are not considered to have changed and can still be considered representative and valid.	updated programme (as discussed in Section 9) no residual noise effects are anticipated. <u>Operational</u> Given that traffic conditions remain consistent with previous assessments (see Section 9) and the proposals do not affect noise or vibration, no residual effects are anticipated.		come forward in the wider area, there are no implications for the cumulative noise and vibration assessment.
--	--	---	---	--	--

¹² BS 4142: 2014+A1:2019 Methods For Rating and Assessing Industrial and Commercial Sound

9. TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT

Legislation, policy, and guidance

Since the submission of the 2019 ES, an updated version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)¹³ was published in December 2024. Although the updated NPPF was published following the submission of the 2019 ES, it is considered that the changes incorporated into the NPPF do not materially affect the transport assessment undertaken as part of the 2019 ES.

Similarly, the national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) on Travel Plans, Transport Assessments and Statements¹⁴, first published in 2014, was updated in February 2024. As above, it is not considered that the updated PPG materially affects the assessment undertaken as part of the 2019 ES.

The Local Transport Plan 5: Striking the Balance, published in December 2024, replaces the previous Kent County Council Local Transport Plan and sets out updated strategies to improve transport across the County from 2024 to 2037. Additionally, the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan has been updated to cover the period 2024 – 2039, replacing the previous 2013 – 2030 plan. These updates do not materially change the assessment previously undertaken.

It is noted that GBC is working on an Emerging Local Plan, currently at the Partial Review stage and not yet finalised. Therefore, the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) remains the established local plan.

The IEMA (now ISEP) Guidelines on Environmental Assessment of Traffic and Movement were updated in July 2023; however, the thresholds for assessment remain unchanged, meaning the updated guidance does not influence the assessment.

There have been no other changes to legislation, policy, or guidance relating to transport during the intervening period.

Baseline conditions and receptors

Since the submission of the 2019 ES, there have been no material changes to the transport baseline conditions within the Study Area that would affect the assessment undertaken as part of the 2019 ES. As such, the data sources from which the baseline was established are still considered valid and representative.

Residual effects

The 23 passing places required along Gorse Green Road and Lower Rochester Road under Condition 4 could not be implemented as they relied on development of private land, and attempts to secure

¹³ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, (2024); National Planning Policy Framework.

¹⁴ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2024); Planning Policy Guidance.

permissions were unsuccessful. Therefore, agreement was reached with GBC and the Highways Authority (Kent County Council) to modify the temporary condition (Condition 7) for a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) introducing a one-way routing system and make this arrangement permanent. Consequently, Condition 6, which related to traffic signal requirements along Canal Road, is no longer required as this will be managed through the standard street-works permit process given the standard nature of temporary signal installation. This results in the request to remove Conditions 4 and 6, and modify Condition 7.

Construction

The 2019 ES indicated a construction programme starting in 2019 and completing in 2022. The revised indicative programme is now expected to commence in 2026 and conclude in 2029. Given the rural character of the area and the absence of significant development since 2019, the construction traffic forecasts in the 2019 ES remain accurate and applicable to the updated programme. The assessment of impacts considers the proportional increase in traffic against the baseline. As baseline traffic volumes are expected to increase over time, the percentage change will reduce marginally as the programme is delayed and therefore represents a robust assessment.

Operational

The one-way route along Gore Green Road and Lower Rochester Road for all traffic will impact the assessed traffic flows, as the ES considered that only HGVs would be routed one way along these roads with light vehicles being able to travel two-way.

The ES indicated that baseline daily flows along Gore Green Road were around 20% higher than those along Lower Rochester Road. However, once construction or operational traffic was assigned to the road network, these roads were reasonably equal in daily total vehicle volumes. The effect of the one way routing for all vehicles on future traffic volumes is expected to be negligible given that the changes would typically result in similar westbound and eastbound volumes. Importantly, introducing a permanent one-way system will improve safety by reducing the risk of head-on collisions on narrow rural roads, minimising driver confusion, and creating a more predictable traffic pattern. This arrangement also allows for better visibility at bends and junctions, which is particularly beneficial for HGVs and larger vehicles navigating constrained routes.

Additional mitigation

No new mitigation is required or proposed as part of this Section 73 application, although conversations with the Highways Authority (Kent County Council) are currently ongoing to agree the exact detail of the changes.

Committed developments

As TEMPro v7.2 software was used in the assessment to estimate traffic growth factors, any committed developments likely to come forward in the wider area has been accounted for within the 2019 ES. As

noted above, any additional increase due to the delayed programme would only lead to a marginal reduction in the percentage change and is therefore already considered to be robust.

10. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The proposed removal of Conditions 4, 6, and 12 and amendment of Condition 7 does not introduce any new or significant environmental effects beyond those assessed in the 2019 ES. Updated reviews confirm that changes in policy, baseline conditions, and cumulative developments do not materially alter the original findings. Transport remains the only topic requiring detailed consideration, and the permanent one-way routing strategy is expected to have negligible impact on the effects presented as part of the 2019 ES. No additional mitigation is required as a results of the proposals, and the conclusions of the 2019 ES remain valid.

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of RSK Environment Limited,



James Sanders

Director

Appendix A – Schedule of environmental commitments

APPENDIX A - SCHEDULE OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS

Topic	Project Stage	Mitigation	Responsibility
Air Quality	Pre-construction	The contractor will agree the scope of a Dust Management Plan (DMP) with the local authority prior to construction works commencing. The DMP will include specific measures for controlling dust and general pollution from site construction operations, and include details of any monitoring scheme. The specific mitigation will depend on the construction techniques and programme, however, typical recommended mitigation may include: • Appropriate site planning • Management of construction plan and traffic emissions • Management of site activities	Contractor
	Operation	Good practice mitigation measures recommended include good design principles and measures used to minimise vehicular trips and encourage more sustainable mode of travel.	Operator / Estate management company
Ecology and Biodiversity	Construction	Statutory Designated Sites Best guidance pollution prevention measures will be implemented as standard as part of the works to avoid water quality impacts to the canal and surrounding area. Noise monitoring accompanied with bird disturbance monitoring will be undertaken prior to works commencing and then only a monthly basis for three months within the winter period of the first year of construction to ensure that birds are not being affected. If signs of disturbance are recorded then noise barriers may be implemented.	Contractor
		Amphibians In order to protect common toad (a Section 41 species likely to be using the fringes of the lakes to breed) during construction, phased vegetation clearance will take place in the active season (March to August inclusive) in line with the reptile mitigation (Section 6.7.34) below.	

		Clearance will be directional, working towards the canal where an on-site receptor area will be created (as shown in Appendix F5) to prevent harm to herpetofauna during the construction phase. Works to the eastern lake will be undertaken outside of the amphibian breeding season to assure no harm will come to any amphibians that may be breeding within the lake. An Ecological Clerk of Works will supervise vegetation removal, and any amphibians that are found will be relocated to the designated receptor area, south of the canal.	
		Bats - Buildings As common pipistrelle roosts are present within the two buildings, a European Protected Species Mitigation Licence (EPSML) will be required from Natural England in order to undertake demolition works of Buildings 13 and 21, 22, 53. Building demolition will be carried out during the shoulder months (October/September) to avoid demolishing the buildings when the bats are likely to be roosting within them. Bat boxes will also be installed on the new buildings to ensure there is no loss in roosting opportunities post construction. Nine 1FF Schwegler Bat Box Built-in Wood Rear Panels will be installed on the proposed industrial buildings within the site. Eight on the northern gable of proposed Buildings B-G and K-L and one on the southern gable of proposed building G. The bat boxes will be installed at least 4m above the ground, in a sunny but sheltered locations, usually south or south-west facing. No night working will be undertaken and a sensitive lighting scheme will be designed and followed during the construction works, particularly around Buildings 13 and 21, 22, 53. The details of this lighting scheme will be incorporated into a CEMP. The EPSML will provide further details about how to proceed with the proposed works without having an impact on the bats roosting within Buildings 13 and 21, 22, 53.	
		Bats - Trees In order to avoid key time periods when young bats are being weaned and the hibernation period tree removal will be undertaken in either spring (mid-March to the end of April) or autumn (September to late October).	

	The six trees identified as providing low or moderate bat roosting potential will be removed following best practice guidelines (Collins 2016) and soft felling techniques. The limbs and trunk of the tree will be lowered either together or in separate compartments, gently to the ground. The trees will then be left for 24 hours, to allow any bats that may still be present to escape. In the unlikely event that a bat is discovered within a tree during this process, all works will stop immediately, and a licenced bat ecologist will be contacted to reassess the situation. As most of the vegetation is due to be removed from site, to allow the effective removal of all asbestos containing material, seven pole mounted bat boxes (or tree mounted boxes where possible) will be installed along the northern boundary of the site where the disused Thames and Medway canal is located as this strip of habitat will be retained as part of proposed works. Six Eco Rocket Bat Boxes and one Pole Mounted Maternity bat box will be installed within this area of habitat with the entrance facing the canal (allowing for a clear flight path. The Eco Rocket Bat Box is available in two designs: with a crevice chamber or with a cavity chamber, therefore three boxes of each design will be installed to provide roosts for Leisler's bat, soprano pipistrelle, and brown long-eared bats which were considered likely to be roosting within the trees on site. The poles will be installed 1m underground however if this unfeasible, due to the presence of asbestos on site, the poles could be secured in a concrete base. The HEMP will take into account roosting bats. 10 bat boxes will be installed within this new woodland once it has established, to provide additional roosting opportunities. 10 bat boxes will include the following: four Improved Crevice Bat Boxes suitable for common and soprano pipistrelles, four Improved Cavity Bat Boxes suitable for brown long-eared, Nathusius' pipistrelle, Leisler and noctule bats, and two Schwegler 1FS Large Colony Box suitable for maternity roosts of noctule and brown long-eared bats. This variety of bat boxes will provide roosting opportunities for Leisler, brownlong eared, and soprano pipistrelle bats which were considered likely to be roosting within the trees on site. It will also enhance the site to provide roosting opportunities for other species, such as noctule, which were recorded using the site for foraging. Following the installation of the bat boxes within the new woodland, a five year bat monitoring program will be undertaken of these boxes.	
--	---	--

		Bats – Foraging and Commuting Bats In order to protect foraging and commuting bats no night working will be undertaken and a sensitive lighting scheme will be designed and followed during the construction works, particularly around the areas of suitable foraging and commuting habitat. The details of this lighting scheme will be incorporated into a CEMP. Close board fencing will be installed along the boundaries of the industrial estate, to prevent disturbance to the connecting habitat from lighting whilst vegetation becomes established. A long-term planting scheme will be undertaken within the site to ensure foraging and commuting habitat is replaced in the long-term. This will be detailed in the HEMP which will involve replacing and expanding the broadleaved woodland habitat and incorporating linear features such as hedgerows to provide connectivity through the site and the suitable habitat to the north.	
		Birds The site is located adjacent to an RSPB reserve and comprised of habitats which typically support species such as nightingale, cuckoo and black redstart. The wildlife area has been designed to provide additional habitat for these species such as dense scrub and will be implemented and managed through the HEMP. In-line with mitigation for amphibians and reptiles, works to vegetation will be undertaken during the active breeding season for birds (March to September inclusive). Vegetation removal should take place under the supervision of an ECoW to assure there is no impact to any active nests (including nests being built). If any active nests are identified, they will be monitored by the ECoW until all chicks have successfully fledged prior to the removal of the supporting habitat.	
		Hedgehogs In order to protect hedgehogs (a Section 41 species) during the building demolition phase, any refugia opportunities (such as rubbles or equipment piles) within the industrial estate will be dismantled by hand. Reducing the opportunities for hedgehogs to shelter amongst the buildings will encourage hedgehogs to use the vegetated areas. This should be undertaken in either early	

		spring (March and April) or late autumn (October and November) to avoid the periods when hedgehogs are either hibernating or have young. Any hedgehogs found during the phased vegetation clearance, will be safely relocated to the receptor habitat surrounding the canal. Two hedgehog houses will be located within this area to provide additional refugia during the winter months. Upon completion of the development the fence will be dropped to allow for hedgehogs to re-enter the site. Close board fencing will have hedgehog links at the base to allow for hedgehogs to safely pass through the development. Two additional hedgehog houses will be located on the fringes of the new industrial estate to mitigate for the loss of shelter.	
		Invertebrates In order to protect invertebrates an ecological supervision will be undertaken during vegetation clearance to ensure that any log piles and areas of suitable habitat are checked for species such as stag beetle. Alternative areas of habitat will be created in the on-site receptor area and any animals found moved there. Hibernacula created in the wildlife area will offer suitable habitat for invertebrate species in the longer term.	
		Otters Ecological supervision will be provided during the clearance of site to ensure that no otters are impacted. A toolbox talk on this species will be provided to the site team to inform them of their potential presence in the area.	
		Reptiles Based on the estimated population of common lizard and slow worm present, a management strategy should be incorporated into a CEMP to manage impacts to reptile species. This should incorporate the requirement for: • Construction workers to be informed that there is a potential for slow-worm, common lizard and grass snake to be on site.	

	• Approximately 20m of vegetation running southwards from the canal will be cut to approximately 10cm above ground, left for 48 hours and then reduced to ground level under the supervision of an ECoW. • Once the absence of reptiles within the buffer has been confirmed by a suitably qualified ecologist, reptile fencing will be installed on sleeper wood (no excavation possible at this stage) around the canal buffer. • This will allow for the construction of the canal bank cap and associated habitat creation, including hibernacula. • Once the habitat within the canal buffer has established and is considered suitable to temporarily support the site's reptile population, artificial reptile refugia will be installed across the site at least 20 days prior to full vegetation clearance. Refugia to be installed at a density of at least 10 per hectare. • Artificial reptile refugia should be installed across the site at least 20 days prior to vegetation clearance. Refugia to be installed at a density of at least 10 per hectare. • Prior to vegetation clearance a minimum of 15 checks of the refugia should be undertaken, where any reptiles identified will be captured and relocated to the unimpacted area of suitable habitat surrounding the canal. • In the event that a larger population of reptiles is recorded over the ten visits than identified in the baseline, additional visits will be required to assure best effort is undertaken to relocate reptiles from the site. • Vegetation clearance in areas with the potential for reptiles to be conducted under a method statement during the active season (March to September inclusive) and under the supervision of an ECoW. • Vegetation should be cut in a northerly direction, working from the southern boundary towards the canal. Vegetation should be initially cut to 10cm above ground and the areas immediately surrounding the artificial refugia should be avoided. • The ECoW will supervise the works and relocate any reptiles identified following clearance or sheltering under the refugia, to the habitat surrounding the canal.	
--	---	--

		• Following a 24 hour period the vegetation can be cut and maintained at ground level. • Once all reptiles have been relocated to the receptor area the capping process for the remainder of the site can begin. • Excavations should be either covered at night or provision allowed for reptiles to escape and not become trapped. • No machinery or equipment should be stored on the area of scrub/grassland immediately surrounding the canal. • Following the capping process across the site and the establishment of the wildlife area habitat as suitable for reptiles, the reptile fencing can be removed. Based on the survey results and the Proposed Scheme, the loss of suitable habitat for reptiles will be short term, with the long term proposal of the wildlife area likely to have a significant positive effect on the on-site reptile population. Enhancement recommendations for reptiles will be included in a HEMP, which will detail the creation of mosaic scrub / wildflower meadow habitat and the construction and location of hibernacula.	
		Water Vole A European Protected Species Licence will be required to move water voles should they be present within the area of works. This will involve the removal of any animals from the area of works, potentially keeping them in an off-site facility until they can be returned to the canal. The works to remove water voles from the site will be timed to avoid the winter period when water voles are in their burrows and also the breeding season so as not to affect young and as such would commence in September. Upon completion of the works to the canal, pre-seeded coir rolls will be planted along the edge to enable the quick establishment of vegetation and provide habitat for water voles. All of this work will be undertaken under supervision by a licenced ecologist.	
	Pre-construction	A Habitat and Ecology Management Plan (HEMP) has been produced for the Scheme and will provide a 10 year management plan for site. The HEMP includes the following mitigation:	Developer

		• Conservation area to be created, which will include woodland, scrub / wildflower meadow mosaic, ponds and marginal planting. The conservation area will be designed to include habitats suitable for amphibians (ponds and terrestrial habitat), bats (bat boxes and suitable foraging / commuting corridors), nesting birds (bird boxes), hedgehogs (hedgehog houses) and reptiles. • Vegetation clearance works will be undertaken under the supervision of an Ecological Clerk of Works and will follow a phased approach. It will not be undertaken between March and August inclusive to prevent harm to amphibians, reptiles and nesting birds. • If any active nests are identified during vegetation clearance works, they will be monitored by the ECoW until all chicks have successfully fledged prior to the removal of the supporting habitat. • A receptor site will be created by the canal which will be suitable for reptile / amphibian translocation during vegetation clearance works. • A reptile management strategy will be included in a CEMP, which will detail the requirements of the receptor site including fencing and refugia requirements, timings and extent of vegetation removal and the translocating exercise. • Tree removal will be undertaken in spring (mid-March to the end of April) or autumn (September to late October) to avoid affecting hibernating or weaning bats and will follow a soft felling technique. • Any works to the eastern lake will be undertaken outside of the amphibian breeding season. • European Protected Species Mitigation Licence will be sought for works affecting the existing bat roosts. • Works will be programmed to avoid demolition of buildings with bat roost potential, and no night working will be undertaken. • A sensitive lighting scheme will be included in a CEMP to ensure disturbance to bats is minimised during construction. • Operational lighting will be installed in accordance with 'Guidance Note 8 Bats and Artificial Lighting' (Bat Conservation Trust 2018) to minimise the impact on bats.	
--	--	--	--

		• Close board fencing will be installed along the boundaries of the industrial estate to prevent disturbance to the connecting habitat from lighting whist vegetation becomes established. This will include hedgehog links at the base to allow hedgehogs to pass through the development. • Any rubble / equipment piles will be dismantled by hand either in early spring (March and April) or late autumn (October and November) to avoid harming hedgehogs. • Any hedgehogs found during vegetation clearance works will be relocated to the designated receptor area surrounding the canal which will include two hedgehog houses.	
	Operational	Routine management of on-site vegetation and landscaped / ecological enhancements will be protected through a long term management plan.	Operator / Estate management company
	Detailed design	Bats Operational lighting design will be installed in accordance with the lighting guide 'Guidance Note 8 Bats and Artificial Lighting' (Bat Conservation Trust 2018). This will include the avoidance of external lighting where possible, to have lights on timers/motion sensors and all lighting to be capped downwards at a 45 degree angle. This will result in disturbance from light being kept away from suitable habitat for bats.	Developer / Contractor
Ground Conditions and Contamination	Pre-construction	A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) shall be drafted to ensure the effective management of construction processes. In particular to minimise the risk of mobilising contaminants such as asbestos during works.	Contractor
Landscape and Visual Impact	Detailed Design	A Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) will be produced to ensure effective establishment and future management of all of the grassed or planted areas on the site.	Developer / Contractor
	Construction	2.4m high timber fencing will be erected between the gable ends of the new industrial buildings to provide short term screening. An illustrative landscape plan has been drawn up which include the following mitigation which forms an integral part of the proposed development:	Contractor

		• Where possible existing vegetation, including perimeter vegetation and a semimature oak tree on the southern boundary, will be retained in areas where existing levels do not need to change and where contamination levels permit. Confirmation on the extent of possible vegetation retention will not be confirmed until works start on site. • New planting to be implemented around the site perimeter to replace lost vegetation, which will include dense native tree, shrub and hedgerow planting. • Broad strips of native species planting, including hedges and trees and grassed areas, will be planted within the industrial area to provide landscape structure and habitat continuity. • Woodland edge planting to be added along the canal on the slope up to the site to provide screening and enclosure. This will be limited in some areas to create favourable conditions for water voles and aquatic life within the in the canal, with open grassland along the southern bank of the canal to prevent overshadowing. • Pre-seeded coir mats will be used where possible to create green banks and cover any engineering works. • A Habitat Creation Plan has been drawn up for the landfill area, with the aim of securing locally significant nature conservation benefits.	
Noise and Vibration	Pre-construction / Construction	An Noise and Vibration Management Plan will be produced prior to commencement on site, which will include general good practice and mitigation methods to be implemented on site to limit adverse noise and vibration effects during construction. Mitigation measures will include: • Adhering to site operating hours; • Notifying residents of any changes to the site operating hours; • Prohibiting the arrival of haulage vehicles between 19:00 – 07:00; • Keeping construction equipment well maintained, and ensuring construction methods and programmes are designed to minimise noise and vibration at sensitive receptors; • Sensitively placing mobile equipment and giving consideration to the optimum direction required to reduce the level of noise emissions at sensitive receptors; • Keeping internal haul roads well maintained and avoiding steep gradients;	Contractor

		• Ensuring that silencers or soundproof enclosures are utilised on construction equipment where possible, and that these are properly maintained • Monitoring access road conditions for imperfections that can lead to traffic induced vibration. Designing and using site hoardings and screens to provide acoustic screening of noise emitting equipment where practicable.	
		An Environment Management Plan will be produced prior to commencement on site, which will include general good practice and mitigation methods to be implemented on site to limit adverse noise and vibration effects during construction. Mitigation measures will include: • Adhering to site operating hours; • Notifying residents of any changes to the site operating hours; • Prohibiting the arrival of haulage vehicles between 19:00 – 07:00; • Keeping construction equipment well maintained, and ensuring construction methods and programmes are designed to minimise noise and vibration at sensitive receptors; • Sensitively placing mobile equipment and giving consideration to the optimum direction required to reduce the level of noise emissions at sensitive receptors; • Keeping internal haul roads well maintained and avoiding steep gradients; • Ensuring that silencers or soundproof enclosures are utilised on construction equipment where possible, and that these are properly maintained • Monitoring access road conditions for imperfections that can lead to traffic induced vibration. Designing and using site hoardings and screens to provide acoustic screening of noise emitting equipment where practicable.	
	Construction	Once further details are known about the construction programme (i.e. phasing of works and length of exposure to noise and vibration) a noise insulation scheme assessment may be required to determine whether further mitigation may be required along Canal Road. This would be addressed at the Section 61 stage of the construction programme.	

		Any plant should be appropriately assessed prior to installation in order to meet the criteria contained in BS 4142: 2014 and the requirements of Gravesham Borough Council.	
	Operation	Consideration of a noise insulation scheme may be required to avoid significant effects on properties along Canal Road during the operation of the site. This would be subject to a reassessment of traffic data during the final design stage.	
Traffic and Transport	Pre-construction / construction	To mitigate any adverse environmental effects resulting from construction vehicles movements associated with the proposed development, a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) be produced prior to commencement of works on site. The TMP will identify how traffic will be managed for the duration of the works, define and secure prescribed routes for HGV access, and confirm the hours of operation of the site. A detailed strategy to improve the HGV route will be produced prior to commencement of the development. This will be implemented as part of the phase 1 works and will ensure that passing places are formalised along the route to / from the development.	Contractor
	Construction	The layout of the junction between Canal Road, Lower Rochester Road and Chequers Street will be changed to a mini roundabout to mitigate the traffic impact at the key junction with the development site.	
	Operation	Agreement will be sought from the Local Highway Authority to allow operational HGV traffic to use Lower Rochester Road.	