
SUPPORTING PLANNING STATEMENT

Alterations to
the existing
restaurant,
“The
Woodlands”
Wrotham Road,
Gravesend

Planware Ltd
February 2026

Document Control Sheet

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Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
1. INTRODUCTION.....	5
2. SITE ANALYSIS	7
3. THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT	8
The Proposal	8
Residential Amenity	8
Noise.....	8
Odour.....	9
Litter.....	9
Site Ecology and Biodiversity	9
Landscaping	10
Accessibility	10
4. SUSTAINABILITY	11
ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY	11
National	11
SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY	11
Training.....	12
Football.....	13
Ronald McDonald House Charities	14
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY.....	14
Minimising Transport Impacts and Reducing Carbon Dioxide Emissions.....	15
Recycling Strategy and use of Recycled Materials.	15
5. CONCLUSION	17

Executive Summary

This statement has been prepared on behalf of McDonald's Restaurants Ltd, in support of an application for alterations to the existing restaurant adjacent to the Premier Inn, Wrotham Road, Gravesend. Alterations include minor demolition works, alterations to elevations, additional works to accommodate plant, new corral and bin store, single storey extension, minor external work to existing parking bays, creation of patio and other associated work. The restaurant will be open to the public between 06.30 to 22.30 hours, Monday to Sunday.

The application is supported by a full suite of drawings and supporting documents, which demonstrate that the proposal fully accords with the overarching sustainable objectives, in terms of economic, social and environmental and falls within the parameters of national and local policies.

1. Introduction

1.1. This statement has been prepared in support of an application submitted by McDonald's Restaurants Ltd for alterations to the existing restaurant adjacent to the Premier Inn Gravesend hotel. Full details of the proposed changes are set out on the accompanying drawings and set out further below and in Chapter 3.

1.2. The following documents are submitted with this planning application:

- Application form;
- Drawings:
 - 14009-AEW-2741-0001 - Location Plan
 - 14009-AEW-2741-0002 - Block Plan
 - 14009-AEW-2741-0003 - Existing Site Plan
 - 14009-AEW-2741-0004 – B Proposed Site Plan
 - 14009-AEW-2741-0005 - Proposed Building Elevations
 - 14009-AEW-2741-0006 - A Proposed Building and Roof Plans
 - 14009-AEW-2741-0007 - Proposed Surface Finishes Plan
 - 14009-AEW-2741-0155 - Existing Building and Roof Plans
 - 14009-AEW-2741-0160 - Existing Building Elevations
 - 14009-AEW-2741-0170 - Existing Site Demolition Works Plan
 - 14009-AEW-2741-0175 A - Existing Building and Roof Demolition Works Plan
 - 14009-AEW-2741-0180 A - Existing Building Demolition Works Elevations
 - 9811 M1001 - Ground Floor HVAC and Services Plan layout
 - 9811 M1002 - First Floor HVAC and Services Plan layout
 - 9811 M1003 - HVAC Section and Details layout
- The requisite application fee; £383.00
- 260226 McD Gravesend Odour Control Report
- 8274 Noise Impact Assessment McDonald's Woodlands
- BNG Assessment;
 - 2741 The Woodlands Gravesend BNG Feasibility Stage Report PEL V2 Feb26
 - Gravesend Statutory Metric with Recommendations PEL V1

- Gravesend Statutory Metric PEL V1
- Associated patio and boundary treatment specifications

- 1.3. The remainder of this statement is structured as follows:
- 1.4. In Section 2 we include a description of the existing restaurant and surround area.
- 1.5. In Section 3 we set out the proposal, which includes a review of the various supporting statements and the necessary mitigation included within the overall design.
- 1.6. In Section 4 we consider McDonald's approach to environmental sustainability including economic, social and environmental objectives, in line with national and local policy.
- 1.7. Conclusions have been set out in Section 5.

2. Site Analysis

- 2.1 The existing site comprises a hotel and restaurant, operated by Premier Inn. The existing restaurant, formerly operated under the Beefeater brand and known as “The Woodlands” is to be rebranded and used as a McDonald’s restaurant.
- 2.2 The subject site is located to the west of A227 Wrotham Road, approximately 1km south of Gravesend Town Centre. The existing restaurant is located to the east (and rear) of the hotel, with access to the hotel and surrounding parking to the side of the restaurant. The southern boundary of the site is bounded by mature vegetation which separates the site from Woodlands Park.
- 2.3 Access to the site is retained from Wrotham Road which is shared between the restaurant and hotel.
- 2.4 The application site is shown in red on the accompanying drawings, with a shared access for vehicles and pedestrians retained as existing.
- 2.5 The existing restaurant generally comprises a half red brick half cream rendered building with a pitched roof of grey roof tiles. The building incorporates an entrance feature facing the hotel with a patio between. The site is surrounded by landscaping.

3. The Proposed Development

The Proposal

- 3.1 The proposed development comprises alterations to the existing restaurant generally comprising refurbishment of the external areas and provision of a new corral, new bin store, provision of roof plant, minor demolition and single storey side extension.
- 3.2 Internally the restaurant will be fully refurbished with a new customer area, space for staff and a new kitchen. Some replacement windows are proposed, as is a new access and other minor alterations to the building.
- 3.3 In addition to the proposed refurbishment, the car park and external area are to be resurfaced, with improved pedestrian walkways, and reconfiguration of part of the existing parking area.
- 3.4 As part of the patio refurbishment, cycle storage has been provided, as have new tables and chairs, low level lighting and new railings.
- 3.5 The new refuse corral is proposed to the southern elevation of the building. This will allow direct delivery of goods to the restaurant from the car park, allowing cages a level access to the storage area.

Residential Amenity

- 3.6 McDonald's recognises the potential impact of the proposed plant on local amenity. Included with the application are a noise report and odour assessment both assessing the environment and proposing suitable equipment for the location.

Noise

- 3.7 The noise report confirms that the proposed plant will be enclosed with a 1.8m acoustic screen, and partially screened to residential properties. The assessment considers the existing background noise levels and makes an assessment of the proposed levels against BS4142 concluding that the proposed replacement plant will have no adverse impact on the local environment.

Odour

- 3.8 The application has been supported by an Odour Control Assessment, which has analysed the proximity of the sensitive receptors and has recommended that appropriate grease and odour control be included within the plant specification. Full details are available in that report.

Litter

- 3.9 Litter is managed by the local council through the Environmental Protection Act 1990 which makes dropping litter an offence. The planning system cannot address unlawful acts, i.e., dropping litter or parking on yellow lines. McDonald's is committed to tackling litter in as many different ways as possible.
- 3.10 McDonald's has a proud history in helping local communities to tackle waste. It is company policy to conduct a minimum of three daily litter patrols in local communities, whereby employees pick up not only McDonald's branded packaging, but also any other litter that may have been discarded in a 150m vicinity of a restaurant. This may be expanded to suit local needs wherever possible.
- 3.11 Litter bins are provided outside all restaurants and packaging carries anti-littering symbols to encourage customers to dispose of litter responsibly. Anti-littering signage is displayed within restaurants and car parks, displaying clear instructions as to how to responsibly dispose of and recycle waste and restaurant teams participate in campaigns to support Keep Britain Tidy, Keep Wales Tidy, Keep Scotland Beautiful, Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful and Capital Clean-up.
- 3.12 In 2024, McDonald's partnered with Hubbub, an environmental change charity, to support their 'Neat Streets' campaign – an initiative aimed at increasing on-the-go recycling and reducing litter across the UK. McDonald's have provided funding to 5 councils across the UK and Hubbub provided tailored guidance to help each council implement the initiative in a way that suited their local needs.

Site Ecology and Biodiversity

- 3.13 McDonald's have proposed a new footpath from the western car parking area to the patio to the east. This and only this triggers the BNG requirement for the site. As a responsible operator McDonald's have provided a BNG feasibility stage PEL report, a matrix and recommendations. It is concluded that a 10% net gain can be achieved onsite by the provision of two small native

trees and planting of a native hedgerow. Given the limited nature we trust this matter can be addressed expeditiously.

Landscaping

- 3.14 The landscaping of the scheme remains as existing with maintenance work required to all existing areas. A tarmacadam extension to the existing rear footpath to connect to the northern side path will be provided, together with paving of the front of the restaurant to enhance the entrance to the building and provide an area for patio seating.

Accessibility

- 3.15 Public access into the building shall be open during hours of restaurant dine in trade, with the principle entrance being in the form of automated sliding doors. This provides a convenient access for all pedestrians. Safety sensors will be fitted to ensure that the door does not close against pedestrian traffic.
- 3.16 An additional entrance will be provided to the rear to enable a dedicated route and area for couriers to operate.
- 3.17 The dining area is designed to best meet the aims and objectives of the Equality Act by providing a varied level of service to suit the widest possible range of needs. A variety of seating is provided with high and low tables and a mix of fixed and loose seats. Floor and wall materials have been chosen not only to reflect McDonald's brand but to provide good levels of contrast between surfaces for users with visual impairment. Circulation routes are provided throughout the seating area to promote access for all, including wheelchair users.

4. Sustainability

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework 2024 seeks to deliver sustainable development through the overarching objectives - economic, social and environmental.
- 4.2 The following commentary sets out how McDonald's proposals align and contribute to these key strands of sustainability, both nationally and locally.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

National

- 4.3 McDonald's employs around 180,000 people across the UK, with a mix of all ages and life stages.
- 4.4 People are at the heart of the business and, as a responsible and proud employer, McDonald's are committed to investing in them. To ensure the needs of all staff are met, and so attract and retain the best talent, the range of employment options has been expanded, with the Guaranteed Minimum Hours Contracts (GMHC) rolled out to all UK restaurants.
- In the workplace, flexibility, opportunity, equality and development are promoted.
 - Over 85% of McDonald's employees have said that they love the flexibility their job offers them.
 - 90% of Business Managers started as Crew Members.
 - 33% of the Executive team started their career in one of their restaurants
 - Each year McDonald's invest £43million in training to develop their people

SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

- 4.5 McDonald's is committed to be a valued and responsible member of communities in which it operates. Alongside strong staff training programmes and environmental initiatives McDonald's also supports Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) and encourages young people to lead more active lives.

McDonald's has a track record of enabling and encouraging young people to participate in sports, including a long tradition of supporting community football and Olympic sponsorship.

Training

- 4.6 McDonald's commitment to employee education incorporates both internal training programmes and externally recognised qualifications. The McDonald's training philosophy centres on career long learning – "from the crew room to the boardroom". McDonald's is recognised as a "heavy lifter" by the Work Foundation as it recruits on the qualities not the qualifications of applicants.
- 4.7 Crew members receive on-going training of which regular assessment forms a part. The ratings from these assessments are then discussed at each employee's Performance Review. McDonald's invest more than £62 million in training in 2023 and those employed at the proposed restaurant would be given the chance to undertake structured training including the opportunity to gain nationally recognised qualifications in hospitality, literacy and numeracy.
- 4.8 McDonald's has an ambitious apprenticeship scheme, which started in 2006 and the latest figures from 2023 show that almost 20,000 employees have gained the necessary skills to progress their career during that period. In 2023 they created £2million worth of opportunities for their employees using the Apprenticeship Levy.
- 4.9 McDonald's offer an award-winning Chartered Business Management degree from Manchester Metropolitan University (England) and Glasgow Caledonian University (Scotland) for existing managers and school-leavers. The course allows McDonald's employees to combine working in a restaurant with time spent at university learning theory and gaining a wider business perspective. The entire degree is paid for by McDonald's and students are rewarded with a competitive salary, while they work in the restaurant too. Currently there are over 160 managers on their way to completing a degree apprenticeship, with over 50 graduates and new starts each year.

Football

- 4.10 McDonald's Fun Football programme runs in partnership with the Irish FA, Scottish FA and Football Association of Wales and a national network of football coaching providers in England and becomes the largest grassroots participation programme in the UK.
- 4.11 McDonald's Fun Football aims to give every child, from every background, gender and ability, the opportunity to enjoy football for free. Fun Football sessions give every child aged 5-11 a fun introduction to football. Everybody is welcome, no matter their ability. McDonald's has committed to providing 10 million hours of fun football to children by 2026.
- 4.12 During 2023, Fun Football delivered free football coaching to more than 384,000 children, with activity increasingly offered in those areas of greatest need. According to analysis by Children in Need, 80% of sessions take place in the UK's most deprived communities to date.
- 4.13 In 2024, McDonald's Fun Football launched a first-of-its-kind grassroots football coaching development and education programme in partnership with BBC Children in Need, British Blind Sport, Kick It Out and England Futsal. The free programme will provide over 800 community coaches with the skills to deliver grassroots disability football sessions to thousands of children across the UK - increasing access to pan-disability and visual impairment coaching by 500% in 2024 alone
- 4.14 McDonald's Club Twinning was launched in 2008 and there are now over 900 restaurants twinned with local clubs, providing coaching and business support as well as providing thousands of players with donated kit and equipment.
- 4.15 The ongoing commitment to grassroots football will help ensure that McDonald's can continue having a role in encouraging young people to have a lifelong love of sport and an active lifestyle. To-date, McDonald's involvement has included:
- Training over 30,000 new qualified grassroots coaches
 - Delivering over 5 million hours of free Fun Football to over 500,000 children
 - Supporting over 10,000 grassroots clubs via the UKFA's club and league accreditation programmes
 - Providing over 250,000 new football kits to kids teams across the UK
 - Recognising over 5,000 local football volunteers, clubs, and projects to date via our nationwide Grassroots Football Awards programme

Ronald McDonald House Charities

- 4.16 Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) is an independently registered charity, which helps support families while their children are in hospital. They operate 14 Houses from NHS hospitals across the UK and give families a warm and comfortable place to rest, eat and relax, just moments away from their child's hospital ward. In 2024, the charity will celebrate its 35th birthday. During this milestone year, it is expected that they will welcome their 100,000th family into a Ronald McDonald House.
- 4.17 RMHC has been McDonald's charity of choice since the Charity was founded in the UK in 1989. Since then, McDonald's and its Franchisees have raised over £100million for the Charity.
- 4.18 As well as donating part of their profits, McDonald's and its Franchisees also hold annual fundraising days, provide free office space, business resources and advertising.
- 4.19 McDonald's provides the opportunity for RMHC to place their collection boxes in restaurants across the UK. In 2022, these boxes provided RMHC UK with over £1.7 million donated by McDonald's customers. In 2019, the option of donating to RMHC via our in-store self-order kiosks was introduced. This raised over £3.5 million in 2022. In 2021, McDonald's introduced the capability to donate to RMHC via the MyMcDonald's App, which generated donations of just over £60,000 in 2022.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- 4.20 The scale of the business means McDonald's have an opportunity to have a positive impact on some of the biggest challenges facing the world today. The threat of climate change is one such challenge and McDonald's are proud of the investment they have made to reduce their carbon footprint in the UK.
- 4.21 McDonald's was the first restaurant chain to set science-based greenhouse gas reduction targets at a global level. Working with all franchisees, their aim is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions related to all restaurants and offices by 36% by 2030. Additionally, McDonald's are committed to a 31% reduction in emissions intensity (per metric tonne of food and packaging) across the supply chain by 2030.
- 4.22 To meet these targets, McDonald's buy 100% renewable electricity and have invested in long term partnership agreements to develop the renewable energy infrastructure in the UK.
- 4.23 The absence of on-site fossil fuel use, together with McDonald's electricity procurement agreements, eliminates the production of greenhouse gases from on-site operations. In

recognition of global warming potential (GWP) associated with refrigeration gases, McDonald's have moved to the latest reduced GWP air conditioning refrigerants ahead of any legislation in this regard.

Minimising Transport Impacts and Reducing Carbon Dioxide Emissions

- 4.24 Used cooking oil (UCO) from restaurants is recycled into biodiesel using local collectors. The biodiesel is then used as fuel by McDonald's vehicles. In 2023 this included 3.12 million litres of UCO collected from restaurants and converted to 2.6 million litres of biodiesel, which amounts to 40% of the fuel used to power the logistics fleet. McDonald's have reduced the carbon emissions associated with their logistics fleet by 16,250 tonnes each year, equivalent to removing 19,900 cars off the road each year

Recycling Strategy and use of Recycled Materials.

- 4.25 Within the supply chain, McDonald's vision is one where all food and packaging is sourced sustainably. They have undertaken a number of measures in recent years to try to promote better environmental standards through the whole supply chain.
- McDonald's is committed to using recycled materials wherever possible, throughout the business and have stepped up their commitment to recycling further, setting global goals, including 100% of McDonald's guest packaging will come from renewable, recycled or certified sources and 100% of guest packaging will be recycled in McDonald's restaurants, by the end of 2024.
- 4.26 The business has taken a number of steps to continue to lead when it comes to sustainable packaging and further address the issue of reducing plastic across the supply chain:
- The removal of plastic lids from McFlurry will see 385 tonnes of plastic removed from the supply chain each year.
 - The introduction of fibre based salad boxes will also see 105 tonnes of plastic removed annually, and the new salad boxes can be recycled with any other paper.
 - McDonald's are a member of the National Cup Recycling Scheme which brings together major retailers waste management companies and UK paper mills with the shared aim of growing the infrastructure needed to increase the number of paper cups being collected and recycled across the UK.

- McFlurry cups can be recycled along with other paper cups in one of the many recycling points that has been established across the country through the collaboration of retailers including Pret a Manger, Costa and McDonald's restaurants.
 - Packaging recycling: 22k tonnes of outer packaging cardboard is recycled from restaurants every year - zero waste to landfill.
 - Only 8% of the packaging used for McDonald's products is made from plastic, with the majority already being made from fully certified fibre.
- 4.27 McDonald's reuses delivery packaging wherever possible, in accordance with food safety laws. Over 80% of kitchen waste is recycled, which equates to 40% of total waste. Staff separate corrugated cardboard, used cooking oil, food waste, clean plastic paper and tin from all back of house areas for recycling.
- 4.28 All restaurants aim to recycle 100% of their corrugated cardboard, which in itself accounts for 15% of a restaurant's average total waste. In addition, the delivery trays and crates are returned to suppliers for reuse.
- 4.29 Delivery vehicles carry recyclable materials on return trips, backhauling over 80% of all cardboard.
- 4.30 McDonald's UK has a long-term goal to send zero waste to landfill by reducing operational waste, recycling as much as possible, and diverting the remainder to a more sustainable solution.
- 4.31 To further minimise waste, McDonald's has joined the Valpak distributor take back scheme, which ensures that redundant equipment is recycled with accredited companies.
- 4.32 Customer recycling stations are installed in all new restaurants, to allow customers to separate paper cups, plastic bottles and cups, and decant liquids. The cups will be sent to a specialist paper cup recycler and the plastic will be recycled along with the plastic from the kitchens. With good levels of separation, McDonald's new waste procedures could generate a recycling rate of up to 65%, exceeding the European target.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 This statement has been prepared on behalf of McDonald's Restaurants Ltd in support of a planning application for minor alterations to the existing vacant Gravesend restaurant, adjacent to the Premier Inn, Gravesend.
- 5.2 The proposed development generally comprises alterations to the existing restaurant, with minor alterations to the building, surfacing and new HVAC plant. Alterations to the patio layout and a new footpath are also included.
- 5.3 In light of the above, we trust officers are able to support the application.