

[REDACTED]

12.11.2024

Dear Sirs,

[REDACTED] an informal community stakeholder organisation, has actively gathered public opinion on the proposed development at Gold Street and strongly supports the concerns the National Landscape team raised. We note also that the Millington judgment did not pertain to a development proposed under the GPDO and was located outside of a designated National Landscape, which now has enhanced protections.

Our extensive public surveys reveal significant community concern regarding the harms posed by this development. Many residents view the proposed project as akin to industrial food and beverage production rather than traditional agricultural activity. Over 700 community members participated in our surveys on “landscape,” “public rights of way,” and “traffic,” providing the best available detailed evidence of local perspectives [REDACTED]

An expert assessment by [REDACTED] further supports these concerns. He identifies that using criteria adopted by [REDACTED] the winegrowing industry’s membership organisation) the development is classed as ‘very large’ [REDACTED]. He further says that the application “greatly understates the eventual size and scope of the operation, and there is no agricultural imperative that it must be sited where it’s proposed.” [REDACTED] the author of the [Wine GB Annual Harvest Report](#), estimates that the site could ‘easily’ produce over 150,000 bottles per year ‘or more’—more than double the applicant’s stated 60,000—with a potential increase to over 200,000 bottles in the coming decade. His view is that without a complete planning application that provides detailed calculations on operational impacts, traffic, and wastewater treatment plans, the planning system cannot fully understand the project’s accurate scale.

Public concerns regarding operational impacts, including traffic, are exceptionally high, as access to the site is limited to a single narrow country lane. In our recent survey, 96% of respondents “strongly agree” and 2% “agree” that desktop assessments by the Kent Downs National Landscape team and KCC Highways—which lack traffic studies and site visits—are “seriously flawed.” Therefore reliance by Kent Downs National Landscape and KCC Highways on using a GPDO criterion to screen applications for detailed scrutiny has proven to be a serious loophole as this is neither a direct or reliable indicator of harm.

In summary, there is a substantial body of evidence that corroborates the National Landscape team’s concerns this proposal is major development that poses an industrial-scale impact incompatible with a designated setting.

[REDACTED]