

**Reference number:** 15/506021/FULL

**One of the objectors** has written to confirm his objections. He makes the following (summarised) points:

- a) This site was formerly a genuine rural wildlife habitat but this has been harmed. Connectivity between Great Crested Newt (GCN) breeding ponds to the east and west of this site is important. However, the wildlife corridor proposed to help this cannot be fit onto the site with the current layout.
- b) A GCN corridor needs to be properly implemented and managed through condition.
- c) External lighting needs to be carefully controlled through condition to minimise harm to bats.
- d) The application fails to provide an adequate and attractive route for public rights of way across the site with narrow paths and over-bearing fencing. The previous development on the adjacent site was also deficient in this regard. This should be remedied through condition.
- e) The number of dwellings should be reduced in the interests of ecology, surface water drainage, mitigation of railway noise and the character of the area.

**The agents** have referred the issue of the use of the railway by freight trains (and the consequent possible effects of noise affecting residential amenity) to their acoustic expert. In summary the expert concludes that the use of the line by freight trains is infrequent and in decline such that the conclusions of the noise report should not be significantly affected.

**OFFICER COMMENTS:**

The GCN corridor is marked on the latest landscape and ecology plans and is specifically dimensioned at 5m. The agents have confirmed that the corridor is achievable as shown on those plans and will be implemented. However, I note that there appears to be an error in terms of the scale bar on the Proposed Site Plan and the latest corridor proposals appear to be not reflected on the proposed layout plans aimed at showing the proposals for the diversion of the public rights of way. I consider this inconsistency needs to be rectified before the decision is issued and therefore I recommend that I be given delegated powers to approve the application subject to the receipt of accurately scaled amended layout plans that reflect the layout shown on the landscape and ecology plans (which are entirely correct).

A condition on ecology is already recommended in my original report and that covers the issue of the management of the corridor.

The KCC West Kent PROW Manager has examined the proposals at every stage of this application and has no objection. The issue of the adequacy/attractiveness of the footpaths and the issues over the number of dwellings and matters of layout/design have already been addressed and found to be acceptable: an amendment to the recommendation on the issue of landscaping has been put forward in my earlier urgent update.

**Recommendation:**

A) I be given delegated powers to approve the application subject to the receipt of accurately scaled amended layout plans that reflect the layout shown on the landscape and ecology plans subject to the conditions in my original report with the following additional condition:

Notwithstanding the notation on the submitted drawings, with regard to the southern western boundary treatment to Plot 9, the landscaping scheme to be submitted shall show the proposed hedging outside (ie to the south west) of the proposed close boarded fencing;

Reason: In order to provide a properly landscaped setting for the development as viewed from the public right of way.