

Swale Borough Council
Local Plan Part 1 Examination
Addendum

Matter 3 MUX1: South West Sittingbourne

Statement in response to the SOCG submitted in respect of Traffic Assessment for the above site.

Having reviewed the documents submitted, the first observation I would make is that the SOCG is based upon a report and accompanying drawings and observations prepared on behalf of the site promoter/developer.

As with the original submission and inclusion of this site the SOCG has not involved any consultation with local residents/constituents who are the individuals who will be left to live with the legacy of this proposed development. It is therefore a one sided statement which does not include “common ground” as it has not facilitated any counter viewpoints. A “Statement of Common Ground” is therefore a complete misnomer. The parties to the statement are either proposing the development, namely the developer or Swale Borough Council, or are content to accede to the details without significantly questioning it, namely HE and KCCH.

The proposed traffic arrangements involve increasing the number of vehicles to the immediate development by about 1,500 and then attracting a further totally incalculable number of vehicles from south Sittingbourne through the development being a mainly residential estate.

The proposed “mitigation” then amounts to imposing traffic lights to existing unrestricted junctions, such as Wises Lane/A2 and the Key Street roundabout, which can only cause additional congestion.

The proposed use of Chestnut Street and the new roundabout will join the A249 at a point where at peak times traffic already queues. The new roundabout will therefore be blocked precluding traffic from the new estate road and from Chestnut Street from accessing the A249. Any traffic from the Newington direction of the A2 will also be required to use this Chestnut Street access and this regularly includes heavy goods vehicles for which the northern section of Chestnut Street is not suited.

The proposed new roundabout will severely restrict access to the Tudor Rose public house car park and will remove existing on street parking space which will have a severe negative impact upon the trade to the Tudor Rose.

Providing a slip road from the southern end of Maidstone Road onto the London bound

slip road to the M2 has the potential to attract vehicles travelling south on the A249 from Sheppey, Iwade and Grovehurst to try and avoid the hold ups on the A249 by leaving at the Bobbing junction, crossing the Key Street roundabout and continuing along Chestnut Street past the potentially blocked roundabout to then join another queue trying to access the M2 but unable to do so because of the sheer volume of traffic trying to utilise this route.

This is intended to take place in advance of the proposed M2/J5 improvements which have yet to be designed and consulted upon and also while any eventual road improvement works are undertaken. The extent of traffic chaos will be unbearable as the delays at peak times are already significant.

The end result will be for additional numbers of vehicles resorting to “rat running” along totally unsuitable country lanes to find a quicker access to the main roads. The best “Highway planning” available can never account for the behaviour of individual motorists who only have their own interests at heart and those that have signed up to the SOCG will not have to live with the consequences.

