

THE LONDON RESORT

The London Resort Development Consent Order

BC080001

Environmental Statement Volume 2: Appendices

Appendix 11.5 – Statutory consultee responses to the PEIR

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Planning Act 2008

The Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009

Regulation 5(2)(a)

The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017

Regulation 12(1)

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The London Resort

Appendix 11.5 Statutory Consultee Responses to the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (Relevant to Landscape and Visual Chapter 11)

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Consultee	Paragraph	PEIR Consultation response	Response/ Action Taken
Natural England	7.2	Natural England notes that discussions have been held with the District and County council's in Kent and Essex to agree the viewpoints for the landscape and visual impact assessment. Given that the AONB falls within the zone of theoretical visibility, we would recommend that further engagement with Natural England and the Kent Downs AONB Unit is undertaken to discuss and agree the viewpoints to undertake the landscape and visual impact assessment in respect of the protected landscape. The assessment will need to consider summer and winter impacts during both the day and night.	Microsoft Teams meeting held with Natural England and Kent Downs AONB Unit on 22/09/2020. Viewpoints consulted and 2 additional views added from Kent Downs AONB. Night Views agreed to be taken from photoviewpoints located within AONB. Summer and Winter Views discussed. Agreed that Applicant has taken majority in Winter to reflect worst case scenario but also understood that additional requested views by consultees may be taken in late summer/early autumn due to project time constraints.
	7.3	Section 11.41 of the PEIR Chapter 11 – Landscape suggests that for the impact assessment the local landscape character assessments will be used rather than the National Character Assessments (NCAs). It may be appropriate to refer to the relevant NCAs across the development boundary as these provide helpful guidance on positive measures that can be implemented to restore or enhance the character area within the Statements of Environmental Opportunity. The project is committed to delivering biodiversity net gain but environmental net gain would be a more holistic approach to sustainable development.	The NCAs are referred to within the Landscape and Visual Baseline (Appendix 11.1; document reference 6.2.11.1)).
	7.4	As mentioned in our response to the 2020 EIA Scoping Opinion, the environmental impact assessment should include a full assessment of the potential impacts of the development on local landscape character using landscape assessment methodologies. We encourage the use of Landscape Character Assessment (LCA), based on the good practice guidelines produced jointly by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Assessment in 2013. LCA provides a sound basis for guiding, informing and understanding the ability of any location to accommodate change and to make positive proposals for conserving, enhancing or regenerating character, as detailed proposals are developed.	An assessment on landscape character is provided within Appendices 11.2 and 11.3 (document references 6.2.11.2 and 6.2.11.3).
	7.5	Natural England supports the publication 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment', produced by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Assessment and Management in 2013 (3rd edition). The methodology set out is almost universally used for landscape and visual impact assessment.	Noted
	8.2	Given the development proposed, the environmental impact assessment should fully consider the potential direct and indirect impacts to the England Coast Path. Natural England notes from the 'Landscape and Ecology Initiatives Plan' submitted alongside the PEIR (drawing number edp5988_d090 dated 24 July 2020) that the route of the England Coast Path is not shown. Natural England recommends that full details of any amendments to the England Coast Path that may be proposed are provided within the environmental statement. Any variation of the England Coast Path will need to be mindful of the supporting legislation and whether there are powers available to undertake this within the DCO process. We would be happy to work with London Resort to advise further on these matters. It may also be appropriate for the London Resort to seek legal advice as to whether there are powers within the DCO process for a variation or whether this will be required separately under the Marine and Coastal Act (2009).	The England Coast Path has been added to the relevant plans, along with a proposed diverted route closer to the resort boundary to avoid increased footfall in the ecologically sensitive area of Broadness Salt Marsh at the northern end of Swanscombe Peninsula.
	10.4	As part of an overall enhancement package, Natural England recommends that options for reconnecting habitats through the creation of new semi-natural habitat, linking in with local priorities this part of the Thames estuary. Similarly, we would encourage the applicant to work closely with other major projects on both sides of the Thames to deliver a coherent, landscape scale mitigation and enhancement strategy.	A number and variety of landscape and ecological enhancements are proposed as part of the proposals as described in Chapter 12 and Appendix 11.7 (document reference 6.2.11.7).
Kent Downs AONB	n/a	SD8 - Proposals which negatively impact on the distinctive landform, landscape character, special characteristics and qualities, the setting and views to and from the AONB will be opposed unless they can be satisfactorily mitigated.	Effects upon the Kent Downs AONB are considered through the viewpoint assessment in Appendix 11.2 (document reference 6.2.11.2) and 11.3 (document reference 6.2.11.3) and summarised in the ES.
	n/a	SD11 - Where it is decided that development will take place that will have a negative impact on the landscape character, characteristics and qualities of the Kent Downs AONB or its setting, mitigation measures appropriate to the national importance of the Kent Downs landscape will be identified, pursued, implemented and maintained. The removal or mitigation of identified landscape detractors will be pursued.	Effects upon the Kent Downs AONB are considered through the viewpoint assessment in Appendix 11.2 (document reference 6.2.11.2) and 11.3 (document reference 6.2.11.3) and summarised in the ES.
Dartford Borough Council	n/a	As requested in the scoping response an additional long distance view should also be considered from the higher ground to the south, from the North Downs. Many of the viewpoints in the PEIR are from low points within valleys, there are no viewpoints from the highest points on the Downs directly adjacent to the project site. The site is prominent from the Bean junction area and St Clements Way and as a major road junction and access to Bluewater shopping centre this view is seen by millions every year.	Photoviewpoint EDP 63 added at the suggested location.
	n/a	Since there are proposals for development directly to the east and north of Swanscombe, (e.g. infrastructure buildings) the Council consider the visual impacts of these proposals on the residents and occupants adjacent to these areas should be considered but this does not appear to have been taken into account.	The photoviewpoint assessment contained within Appendix 11.2 (document reference 6.2.11.2) and 11.3 (document reference 6.2.11.3) considers views from residential areas.
	n/a	Receptors in the area also include the high numbers of people who drive through the area or visit Bluewater or travel through the area on the train. Consideration should therefore be given to the impacts on these views and the perception of the Borough to visitors and people travelling through it.	The ES considers people driving in the area on the A2 and other local roads as well as people travelling by train on the HS1 and North Kent Lines.
	n/a	The issue of lighting on the Peninsula at night is something that still needs to be considered in terms of visual impact and any proposals for mitigation.	A lighting strategy has been developed. There are a number of night views included within the LVIA, illustrating the baseline context, whilst the assessment provides a narrative of the likely change.
	n/a	The current parameter plans provide a great deal of flexibility on what the actual scale of development is and it is important for any assessment to give a clearer idea of what is actually involved and what it might look like. Is it a solid building or a ride that appears more lightweight and as identified above the nature of the uses is very flexible. The Council considers it is difficult to make a realistic assessment without this information.	When read alongside the illustrative masterplan, the maximum height of the parameters can be more readily understood.
	n/a	Parameter plans imply structure heights of up to 100m AOD. Most of the site in Kent is close to 0 AOD, but there is no detail of existing levels to understand these impacts. The cliffs and chalk spines could provide some screening but it appears from the maximum AODs set out that this is unlikely.	The ZTV takes into account surface data and the proposed parameters and AVRs from selected viewpoints illustrate what is likely to be seen from particular locations.
	n/a	The Council is not convinced therefore by the initial judgements made in the PEIR with regard to limited landscape impacts and consider that more detail should be provided with regard to the proposal and the impacts.	Further detail is provided in the DAS (document reference 7.1) and Landscape Strategy, Appendix 11.7 (document reference 6.2.11.7).
Gravesham Borough Council	52	The London Resort is major proposal and will contain buildings of a significant height and scale, as witnessed by the parameter plans (summarised in para 11.70). These provide a great deal of flexibility on what the actual scale of development is and it is important for any assessment to give a clearer idea of what is actually involved and what it might look like. Audiences include those using the development (inside it), those approaching it on transport links, and the wider residents and those passing by as opposed to travelling to the site. It will also introduce a significant amount of lighting into the area with visual effects compared with current levels.	Wireline Photomontages have been produced for agreed views, and will include a wireline for the proposed parameters, as well as an illustrative 3D to illustrate anticipated massing and how they will fit within the parameters across the Swanscombe Peninsula.
	53	Paragraph 11.18 makes reference to 2km and 6 km distance bands but both distances need to be considered in context and account taken of the actual zone of visual influence. From Swanscombe Peninsula there are views up and down the river toward Cliffe in the seaward direction and the Queen Elizabeth Bridge (and beyond) up stream. It is important therefore that the analysis is not unduly constrained by arbitrary distance limits since long distance views are potentially significant as well and flat landscapes have a tendency to be undervalued.	The study area was increased to 8km through consultation with Natural England and Kent Downs AONB Unit. Additional views have been added from near Queen Elizabeth Bridge to the west and along Saxon Shore Way to the east near Cliffe.
	54	It should also be noted that there is a difference to the main development (Gate1, Gate 2, central core, etc.) which will be read as a unit from any distance and the outlying structures on the tip of the peninsula or elsewhere which will potentially be much more prominent as a result of their relative isolation. This particularly applies to work 14c (with AOD height of 27m) – described as an energy centre, with a variety of possible locations within the development area.	Noted

	55	Parameter plans imply structure heights of up to 100m AOD. Most of the site in Kent is in the order of 2-3m AOD, so some potentially very large and bulky buildings are being injected into a landscape that is relatively flat. Even some of the structures within former quarries appear to protrude above the sides of these. That said there are some larger structures in the vicinity such as 400kV electricity pylon (open structure 196m high), Seacon and Britannia Refined Metals in Northfleet.	Noted
	56	The legacy of chalk quarrying means that there are significant white cliffs, which makes the local landscape quite distinctive, and also that some key infrastructure sits on chalk spines (e.g. A226 Galley Hill Road, North Kent Railway line). Historically there has been large scale development in close proximity to residential properties (e.g. now demolished Northfleet Cement Works) so this gives opportunities (as found with the tunnels beneath Northfleet) but also constraints from the lack of accessibility due to height differences.	Noted
	57	From parts of Northfleet there will potentially be significant views into the development. Residences on the slope up to Northfleet High Street are potentially directly affected. Views from further afield are also relevant, e.g. from properties on Springhead where there are views down the valley and out to the peninsula. Consideration should be given this, though complicated by ongoing development, to adding a viewpoint from there to the list. Viewpoint 50, from the Tilbury Ferry, needs to be appropriately located for the impacts on Gravesend riverside (or alternatively an extra point added).	A number of additional views have been added along the Thames itself and a view provided from Gravesend Promenade.
	58	Para 11.73 suggest that NKL line travellers are receptors. The line is on embankment and a bridge over HS1 between Swanscombe and Northfleet stations so they will have significant views over the site, especially on trains stopping at both stations which move slowly due to the short distance involved between them. HS1 travellers will see much less as they are descending into, or emerging from, the Thames Tunnel	Travellers on trains have been included in the assessment.
	59	In Ebbsfleet there was always an intention to have large scale buildings which is implicit in the outline consent, along with access roads. The dual carriageway does introduce a larger linear feature than would otherwise have been expected which is a major road, not an urban street, and also impacts on open areas (SSSI, etc.).	Noted
	60	Taking all this into account, the results presented in table 11.6 implying only the Botany Marshes LCA is subject to a moderate significant effect in landscape terms is not plausible.	The assessment contained within Appendix 11.2 (document reference 6.2.11.2) and 11.3 (document reference 6.2.11.3) provides a more up to date assessment.
Kent County Council	table	The Landscape Strategy, including planting proposals, should take account of heritage assets. The landscape character assessment should take account of historic landscape character which does not seem to be included at the moment. The site is referred to as brownfield or having previous industrial use, but the industrial heritage character needs to be assessed further.	The historic landscape dimension is included in the assessment. The Heritage Chapter (Chapter 14) (document reference 6.1.14) provides a more comprehensive assessment of heritage features and assets.