

South East Faversham development proposal 23/505533/EIHYB

Additional Submission from Faversham Town Council Active Travel Committee

Introduction

In July 2025 the Committee submitted a paper ref 6607557 to the Swale Planning Portal supporting the Town Council's current objection to the South East Faversham development proposal 23/505533/EIHYB.

The basis of this was that the active and sustainable travel proposals would not deliver the Duchy of Cornwall's stated objectives of minimising car use arising from the development. In particular, there were no serious plans to minimise car use for journeys to Faversham by addressing the severance issues for pedestrians and cyclists caused by the railway lines or to provide an improved bus service for the area.

Our view of the importance of this issue is supported by the submission made by Highways England which states that action is needed to support a modal shift away from car travel if the UK is to achieve net zero carbon status by 2050, the NPPF which advises that appropriate opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport should be taken up and the SBC Local Plan Regulation 18 Review which identifies that developments should provide convenient, safe routes and facilities for pedestrians and cyclists and enhanced public transport services and facilities. It is also supported by a large number of submissions from the public, which point out that the development as currently proposed will contribute to significant increases in traffic congestion.

This further submission follows on from a meeting we were offered by the Duchy of Cornwall in November, at which we were updated on current plans for active travel and public transport between the Duchy site and Faversham Town Centre.

Following this meeting the Committee remains concerned that the current proposals will not minimise car use from the development and that more still needs to be done to encourage future residents to make journeys by walking, wheeling, cycling and bus. If the SBC Planning Committee is minded to approve the application it asks that conditions are placed on the developer in relation to the issues below, which were identified in our submission in July.

Pedestrian bridge linking the development to the recreation ground and to the new East-West walking route:

The developer's proposed feasibility study for improving the bridge is limited in scope and falls short of the Faversham LCWIP's objective of making it a truly accessible

crossing for those walking, wheeling or cycling. The developer should be required to produce a detailed specification and design for a new or remodelled bridge which meets the requirements of the LCWIP. Negotiations should take place with relevant land owners, particularly Network Rail, to gain their support and ensure that the specification and design is feasible. A business plan should also be developed identifying the most realistic way for a new bridge to be funded and the elements needed in a long term implementation plan.

Improved Bus Services

We understand the developer to be proposing to subsidise an hourly bus service for six days a week while the development is being built out. The Committee believes an hourly bus service will be inadequate in persuading residents and visitors to switch to using public transport when they make journeys to and from the development to the town centre. Research suggests that for good uptake a service should be designed for no worse than every 20 minutes, and ideally every 10–15 minutes.

The developer should be required to subsidise a more frequent bus service going round the development and returning to the town, over an extended number of years. It should also agree targets with the Planning Authority for the volume of journeys being made by bus and the Planning Authority should explore a system of penalty payments if targets are not met.