

Date: 19th March 2025
Ref: Highsted Park Planning Inquiry

Christina Downes BSc DipTP MRTPI
Planning Inspector



Kent
Wildlife Trust

RE: Highsted Park Planning Inquiry | APP/V2255/V/24/3355314 Land West of Teynham London Road and APP/V2255/V/24/3355313 Land South and East of Sittingbourne

Dear Mrs Downes,

I am writing on behalf of Kent Wildlife Trust to formally raise concerns regarding the misrepresentation of our organisation within the planning inquiry for the Highsted Park development. It has come to our attention that the applicant (Quinn Estates Kent Ltd, GH Dean & Co Ltd, Atwood Farms Ltd, Atwood Trustees and AG Kent Holding BV) has referenced Kent Wildlife Trust as a stakeholder in their proposals, despite the fact that we have had no engagement with them at any stage of this process beyond submitting formal consultation responses objecting to both applications.

Specifically, we have been mentioned in **CD 37.1.2 Proof of Evidence of Mr. B. Sutherland – Master Planning (Design), Section 4.3.8, Slide 47**, which states that the scheme includes “*initial engagement with stakeholders, such as Natural England, Kent Wildlife Trust, the Woodland Trust, and the Kent Downs AONB unit.*” In addition, during the applicant’s presentation (11/03/2025), they verbally asserted that they were “*working with Kent Wildlife Trust to create an educated landscape*” and referenced our involvement in habitat enhancement initiatives, including the creation of ponds and species-rich grasslands.

We wish to emphasise that these claims are entirely false. Kent Wildlife Trust has had no discussions, collaborations, or agreements with the applicant in relation to either of these developments. At no point have we provided input, endorsement, or support for their plans. The only involvement Kent Wildlife Trust has had regarding these applications are in submitting formal consultation responses in 2021, 2023, and 2024, strongly objecting to both applications on ecological grounds. It is therefore wholly inaccurate and misleading for the applicant to suggest that we have been involved in shaping or supporting their proposals.

Furthermore, we note with concern that Cromers Wood Nature Reserve, which is owned and managed by Kent Wildlife Trust, has been included in some of the applicant’s drawings as part of an effort to make their scheme appear ‘greener’, despite being outside of the redline boundary. We want to be clear that our nature reserve is entirely separate from this development, and the applicant has neither sought nor obtained permission to incorporate it into their illustrative materials or as any form of mitigation/enhancement measures as part of the development.

We are deeply concerned that this misrepresentation could mislead decision-makers, stakeholders, and the public into believing that we have contributed to or approved of the ecological proposals put forward by the applicant. The applicant’s incorrect statements regarding our involvement could be used to imply that their proposals align with, or have been endorsed by, Kent Wildlife Trust, which is not the case.

Given the seriousness of this misrepresentation, we respectfully request that the Planning Inspector:

1. **Formally acknowledge that Kent Wildlife Trust has not engaged with the applicant on either proposal** and that any statements to the contrary are inaccurate.
2. **Ensure that this misrepresentation is not given any weight in decision-making** and that the inquiry records reflect our actual position, which is the refusal of both developments.

3. **Recognise that the inclusion of Cromers Wood Nature Reserve in the applicant's materials is misleading** and should not be presented as part of the mitigation or green infrastructure for either development. Its inclusion does not imply any association with Kent Wildlife Trust.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and would be happy to provide further clarification or copies of our consultation responses if required. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you need any additional information.

Yours sincerely,

Emma Waller

Planning and Policy Officer

Kent Wildlife Trust

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