

planning
transport
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Draft Travel Plan for Howletts and Port Lympne Estates Ltd
The French House, Aldington Road, Lympne, Kent

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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

- 1.1.1 This Draft Travel Plan (TP) has been produced by DHA on behalf of Howletts and Port Lympne Estates Ltd in relation to the renovation and fitting out of 'The French House' and surrounding land located within the Port Lympne Wildlife Reserve and accessed from Aldington Road, Lympne in Kent.
- 1.1.2 The proposed development comprises the following works, within three distinct site areas:-

Area A

- Change of use of The French House from residential dwelling (Use Class C3) to a 10 bed boutique hotel (Use Class C1), to be named 'Giraffe Hall'.
- Improvements to the setting and landscaping around Giraffe Hall.
- Partial demolition, reconstruction and conversion of out-buildings to ancillary storage/support use.
- Erection of five new build bedroom 'pods', screened from 'Giraffe Hall'
- Erection of a social interaction canopy together with footways providing links to Giraffe Hall and the bedroom 'pods'.
- Creation of giraffe access routes linking these areas to the Port Lympne Wildlife Reserve.

Area B

- Creation of a new access road through part of the existing animal enclosures from the existing gated access on Aldington Road towards Giraffe Hall.
- Creation of a new 50 space formal car park in the south western corner of Area B. This is intended for use by visitors staying at the proposed on-site accommodation.
- Erection of a visitor check-in and guest services building close to the formal car park.
- Erection of a new refuse store to the south east of the proposed car park.

Area C

- Creation of a new restaurant extension to the existing small-scale restaurant building, suitable to accommodate 100 covers.

- 1.1.3 This TP has been produced to ensure that the future users of the site have access to suitable information about local transport infrastructure and are provided with on-site facilities to allow them to make sustainable travel choices.

1.2 How a Travel Plan can Benefit the Proposals

- 1.2.1 A TP is a long term management strategy for an organisation or site that seeks to deliver sustainable transport objectives through action and is articulated in a document that is reviewed regularly. A TP involves identifying an appropriate package of measures aimed at promoting sustainable travel, with an emphasis on reducing reliance on single occupancy car journeys. It can also assist in meeting a range of other objectives, as discussed elsewhere in this document.
- 1.2.2 TPs can assist in increasing accessibility whilst reducing congestion, local air pollution, greenhouse gases and noise. Importantly, a TP can increase business efficiency and equality, which is why an increasing number of organisations are deciding to produce voluntary TPs.
- 1.2.3 A well-developed TP can mitigate the adverse traffic impacts of a development and the Government recognises their importance in achieving improvements in transport conditions at the local level. The Department for Health publication 'Choosing Health: Making Healthy Choices Easier' (2004) recognises the health benefits of walking and cycling. Active travel as part of a TP enables people to enjoy these health benefits as part of their daily routine.

1.3 Purpose of this Travel Plan

- 1.3.1 The main reasons for implementing this TP are to:-
- Demonstrate to the Local Planning and Highway Authorities the commitment of the applicant to provide a development with suitable facilities that will encourage its users to travel to and from the site in a sustainable manner;
 - Set out the necessary survey and monitoring requirements needed to assess the performance of the TP;
 - Reduce users' dependency on car-borne trips; and
 - Inform users of the health benefits of sustainable travel.

1.4 Policy and Guidance

- 1.4.1 The TP concentrates on sustainability issues and outlines a package of initiatives that are designed to encourage more efficient use of the car and promote a choice of alternative travel modes. The policy context for the TP is summarised below:-
- (1) The National Planning Policy Framework (2019);
 - (2) The National Planning Practice Guidance (2014);
 - (3) Smarter Choices: Changing the Way we Travel (2005);

- (4) Folkestone and Hythe District Core Strategy (2013); and
- (5) Shepway Places and Policies Local Plan, Submission Draft (2018).

1.5 Structure of this Plan

1.5.1 Following this introduction, the TP is structured as follows:-

- Section 2 provides details of the site characteristics and current transport infrastructure in the vicinity of the site;
- Section 3 outlines objectives as well as targets;
- Section 4 gives details on the management of the Plan;
- Section 5 sets out the package of measures that will be introduced in order to influence the way users travel to/from the site;
- Section 6 outlines an action plan; and
- Section 7 sets out the monitoring and reporting strategy for the TP.

2 Site Characteristics

- 2.1.1 The site is located within the eastern part of the Port Lympne Wildlife Reserve, to the west of the village of Lympne, and is presently an existing Grade II* listed residential dwelling ('The French House') with associated outbuildings, gardens and informal private parking for approximately seven vehicles. The overall site adjacent to The French House encompasses animal enclosures and a campsite ('Livingstone Lodge') with tented accommodation, a cottage and a small restaurant. The site is shown in a local context in Figure 2-1 below.

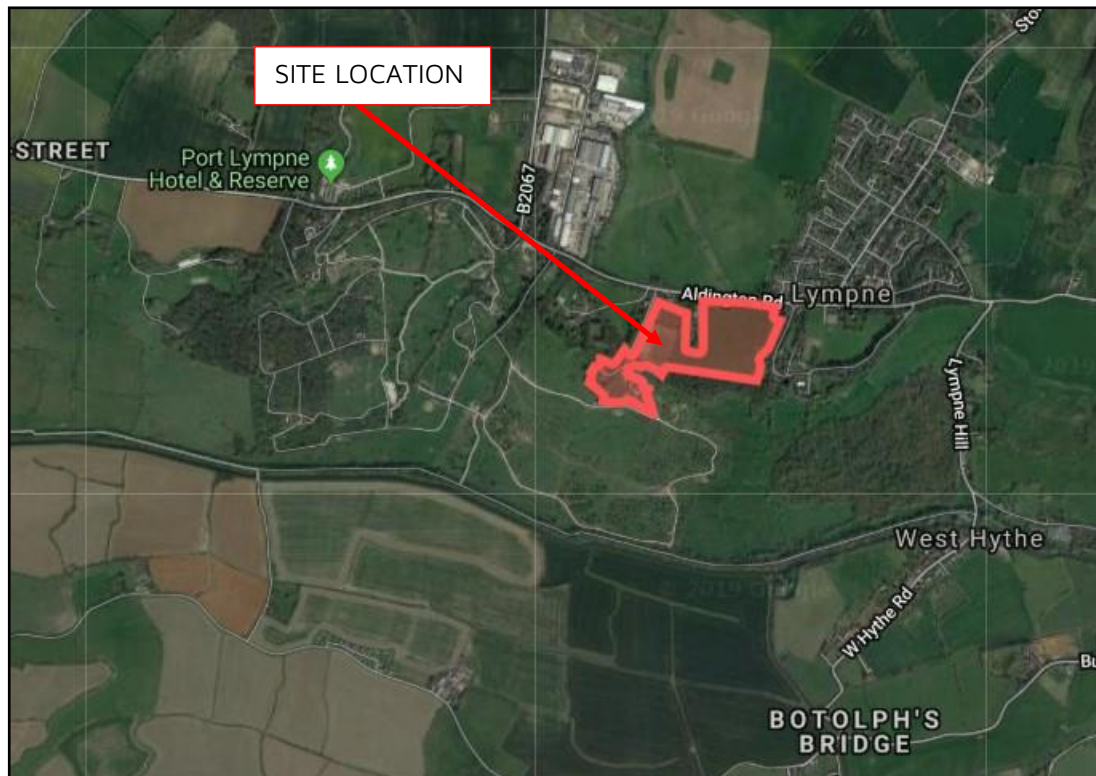


Figure 2-1: Site Location (Courtesy of Google)

- 2.1.2 The site is bound by Aldington Road to the north, with the village of Lympne and The Street forming the north eastern boundary. To the south and west, the site is surrounded by the paddocks and enclosures of the Port Lympne Wildlife Reserve.

2.2 Local Highway Network

- 2.2.1 Aldington Road takes a general west to east alignment in the vicinity of the site and has an approximate carriageway width of 5.7m at the existing gated access to the animal enclosure on the southern side of the road. Across the site frontage, Aldington Road is subject to a derestricted (60mph) speed limit, reducing to 30mph approximately 60m to the east of the existing gated access.
- 2.2.2 To the west, Aldington Road joins the B2067 at Otterpool Lane, connecting with the A20 to the north and the A2070 at Ham Street to the west. To the east, Aldington Road connects with Stone Street in Lympne, providing access to the A20/A261 and M20 to the north. To the east of Lympne, Aldington Road continues

towards Hythe, providing additional connections to the A259. To the south of Lympne, access to the A259 is also possible through the villages of West Hythe and Botolphs Bridge.

- 2.2.3 It is therefore evident that the site enjoys good access to the Primary Route Network and that a range of local and regional destinations is readily served.

2.3 Walking and Cycling Infrastructure

- 2.3.1 Formal footway infrastructure is present on the northern side of Aldington Road, providing access to Lympne to the east, and other areas of the wildlife reserve to the west. This footway is approximately 1.8m wide and is maintained to a good standard. It is also noted that forward visibility is good along the site frontage for all road users.
- 2.3.2 Several Public Rights of Way (PRoW) are present within the vicinity of the site, as shown highlighted in purple in Figure 2-2 below. The Public Footpaths to the east connect to the village of Lympne, while the Footpath to the south links to other Footpaths routing towards Hythe. Footpath HE318 routes directly through the proposal site and will be maintained in its existing alignment as part of the proposed development. The green highlighted line to the west of the site is a Bridleway, which also routes towards Hythe.

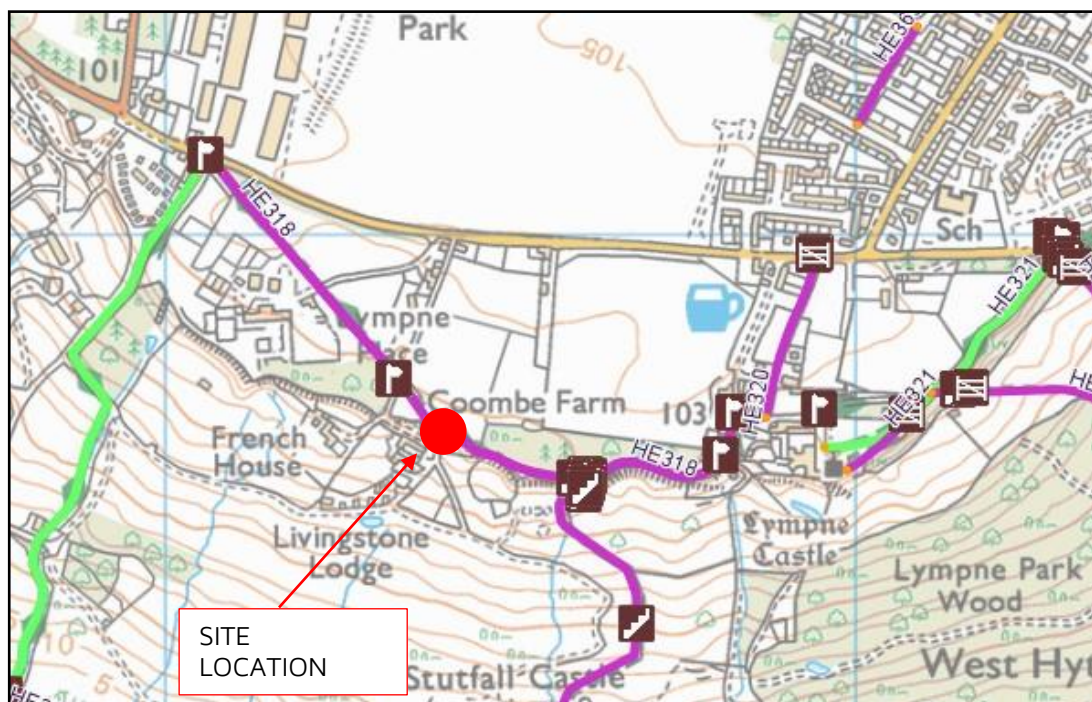


Figure 2-2: Local PRoW Network (Courtesy of Kent County Council)

- 2.3.3 National Cycle Route 2 can be accessed approximately 600m to the south of the site, as shown in Figure 2-3 below. This route provides a local connection between Hythe and the Romney Marsh, with long sections being traffic-free. Given the rural nature of the local highways in the vicinity of the site, on-road cycling options are also available to competent cyclists.

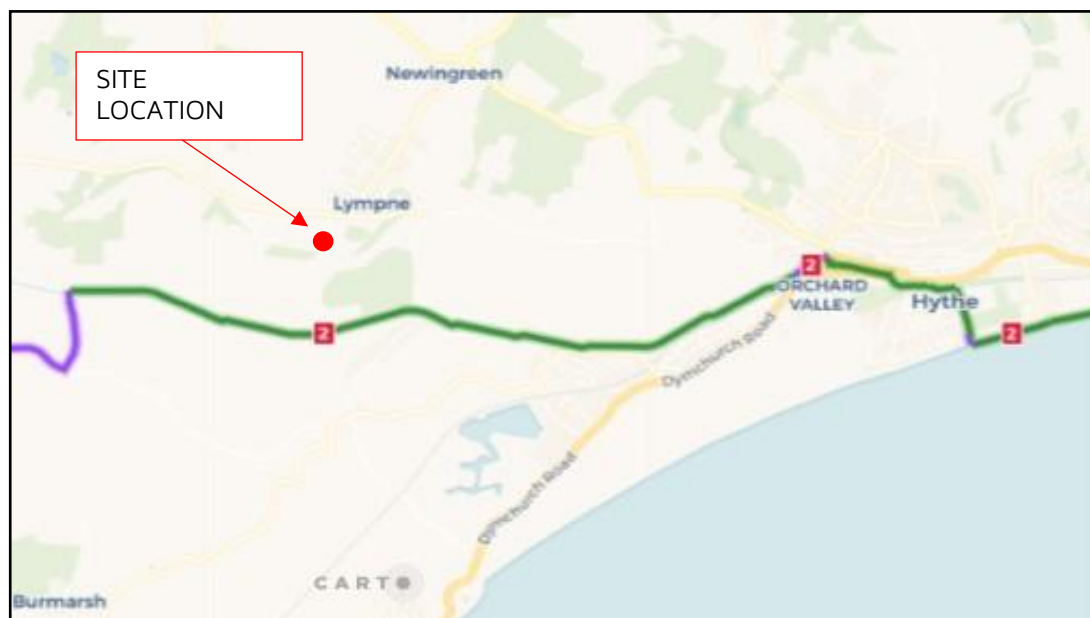


Figure 2-3: Local Cycle Network (Courtesy of Sustrans)

2.4 Public Transport Infrastructure

- 2.4.1 The closest bus stops to the site are located on Aldington Road at the County Members Public House, approximately 200m to the east of the existing gated site access, taking just over two minutes to reach on foot. The stops are served by four routes in both directions, the details of which are provided in Table 2-1 overleaf.

Service No.	Route	Frequency
10	Folkestone-Shorncliffe-Hythe-Lympne-Sellindge-Ashford	12 journeys weekdays between 08:50 and 19:50. 13 journeys Saturdays between 07:50 and 19:50. 5 journeys Sundays between 09:50 and 18:50.
10A	Folkestone-Hythe-Sellindge-Ashford	3 journeys weekdays between 06:15 and 19:20. 2 journeys Saturdays between 06:15 and 19:20. No service on Sunday.
18A	Canterbury-Sellindge-Ashford	1 journey weekdays 07:28 to Canterbury and 17:07 from Canterbury. No service on Saturday or Sunday.
111	Folkestone-Hythe-Aldington-Ashford	1 journey Thursdays 10:03 to Folkestone and 13:52 from Folkestone. No service on other days or at weekends.

Table 2-1: Local Bus Routes and Frequencies

- 2.4.2 The closest railway station to the site is Westenhanger, approximately 2.9km to the north. This station provides regular train services to London Charing Cross, Ashford International, Folkestone, Dover and Ramsgate, with enhanced service frequencies during the weekday peak periods.

2.5 Accessibility

- 2.5.1 The accessibility of the site is reflective of its rural location. Nevertheless, several local services and facilities are located within an acceptable walking distance. These include a village store and a public house/restaurant. A summary of walking distances measured along walking routes and not taken 'as the crow flies', is provided in Table 2-2 below.

Facility	Walk Distance (m)	Walk Time (Minutes)
Bus Stops	200m	3 minutes
Public House/Restaurant (The County Members)	230m	3 minutes
Lympne Village Stores	850m	11 minutes

Table 2-2: Site Accessibility to Local Services

- 2.5.2 In addition, the Port Lympne Wildlife Reserve offers a range of leisure and dining related services within its boundary.

- 2.5.3 The walk times provided above are based on a walk speed of 80m per minute, a figure which is widely used to estimate walk times and forms the basis of the London based Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) analysis. It aims to provide a typical average value that estimates it takes 5 minutes to walk 400m, 10 minutes to walk 800m and so on.
- 2.5.4 On this basis, it is evident that there is the potential for a number of everyday journeys to be undertaken by visitors to the site without the need for a private vehicle, in accordance with the sustainability requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

2.6 Proposed Development

- 2.6.1 The development proposals have been outlined in section 1.1.2.
- 2.6.2 Of the 50 total parking spaces, at least three will be provided as designated mobility-impaired parking. In addition, 5 spaces will be provided with active Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points and 5 spaces with passive provision.
- 2.6.3 Cycle parking for staff will be provided within the overall wildlife reserve as is currently the case. Given the nature and usage of the proposed development, it is unlikely that visitors to the site will require additional cycle storage however the exact level of provision will be confirmed at the detailed design stage.

2.7 Delivery and Servicing Vehicles

- 2.7.1 To ensure that the proposed site layout is accessible to service vehicles, swept path analysis has been undertaken. A refuse vehicle, delivery vehicle and fire tender have been assessed. An assessment of the accessibility of parking bays for an estate car within the car parking areas has also been undertaken.
- 2.7.2 The refuse and recycling vehicle will enter the site at the proposed access from Aldington Road and continue along the access road to an enlarged car park access point, which has been sized to allow the refuse vehicle to reverse into the car park and service the proposed refuse collection area. Following collection, the refuse vehicle will drive out of the car park and return to Aldington Road along the access road. Refuse and recycling from the surrounding area would be brought to this collection area for storage once or twice daily, by on-site staff using service vehicles or buggies.
- 2.7.3 Delivery vehicles will follow the same route as the refuse vehicle. All deliveries will then be transported to other areas of the site by the on-site service vehicles or buggies.
- 2.7.4 A fire tender will be able to service all buildings within the development from the access roads through the site. A suitable turning area for the tender has been provided next to the French House.
- 2.7.5 The assessment has shown that the site layout can comfortably accommodate these larger vehicle movements, ensuring that accessibility to all accommodation and public spaces is maintained and that they can leave the site in a forward gear.

- 2.7.6 All visitors to the proposed accommodation will park in the formal car park and check-in at the guest services building, from where they will be transported with their luggage by on-site buggies to the accommodation. Guests staying in existing accommodation such as Livingstone Lodge already have agreed access and parking strategies for those units, which do not require usage of the new access road or car parking.
- 2.7.7 In addition, to ensure that residents (or their visitors) who live along the existing access lane can turn their vehicles around before exiting back on to Aldington Road, a new turning area will be provided at the end of the lane close to the proposed Check-in Building.

3 Objectives and Targets

3.1 Overview

- 3.1.1 This section sets out the objectives of the TP, as well as draft targets for the early years of the development. Objectives are the high-level aims of the TP, providing a focus and direction. They are in line with and reflect local guidance.
- 3.1.2 The objectives are supported by a set of quantified SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timed) targets so that progress towards achieving them can be measured.
- 3.1.3 At this stage, indicative targets have been set to cover the first five years post-occupation of the development. It is anticipated that these indicative targets will be updated following occupation and once new travel surveys have been carried out.

3.2 Objectives

- 3.2.1 The overarching objectives of the TP are to overcome the challenges and optimise the opportunities at the development site by:-
- Providing the required information and incentives to users to encourage travel to the site by sustainable modes of transport;
 - Reducing the transport related environmental impacts associated with users/visitors/servicing at the site; and
 - Where possible, designing measures which could be incorporated into a wider TP network.

3.3 Draft Targets

- 3.3.1 Best practice guidance places emphasis on targets which are 'SMART': that is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time Bound. Based on the objectives set out above, draft targets have been identified below. These will be reviewed and amended as required following completion of the initial baseline travel surveys:-
- A minimum 10 per cent reduction in staff single occupancy car travel, split between other sustainable modes of travel;
 - A minimum 10 per cent reduction in guest single occupancy car travel, split between other sustainable modes of travel.

4 Travel Plan Coordinator and Management Commitment

4.1 Overview

- 4.1.1 A TP strategy that sets out the stages by which the Plan will be developed and implemented is very important. The TP strategy for the proposed development is contained within this section. It discusses how the Plan will be managed and marketed, as well as who the key partners will be.

4.2 Travel Plan Coordinator

- 4.2.1 The Travel Plan Coordinator (TPC) role will be undertaken by a member of on-site staff on a part-time basis. The responsibilities of the TPC will include:-

- (1) Obtaining and maintaining commitment and support from employees;
- (2) Implementing an effective marketing campaign for the TP and its specific measures;
- (3) Liaising with parties within the site and outside (e.g. stakeholders, public transport operators) to facilitate coordinated sustainable transport strategies and TP promotion;
- (4) Providing advice and information on transport-related subjects to employees and guests;
- (5) Setting up and facilitating employee steering group meetings; and
- (6) Coordinating the necessary data collection exercises and monitoring programme for the TP.

4.3 Steering Group

- 4.3.1 A steering group is also important to the success of the TP. It ensures that different stakeholders are represented during the development of the Plan and can contribute towards the identification and implementation of strategies that span across many areas of interest. The group allows opportunities for the sharing of knowledge, experience, valuable information and contacts.
- 4.3.2 The steering group will comprise a cross-section of individuals, including the relevant local authority Travel Plan Officer and staff working at the site. It would also be beneficial to include other TPCs in the surrounding area. The Steering Group's purpose will be to assist the TPC to implement and promote the measures identified within the TP. It is proposed that the Steering Group will meet at least annually.

4.4 Marketing

4.4.1 Marketing and awareness forms an important part of all TPs. The Plan will be marketed to prospective users via the following means:-

- Travel information boards located in communal areas, visible to all staff and guests;
- Travel leaflets and information available from reception for all staff and guests; and
- Information packs and newsletters on the TP given to all staff and guests.

4.4.2 It is important that there is continued marketing of the TP from the first day of occupation and thereafter. TP 'branding' is a key part of the promotion of any Plan. It is important for all users to have a brand that they recognise as it reinforces the TP, its initiatives and what it seeks to achieve.

4.5 Employees and Residents Welcome Pack

4.5.1 As noted, employees and guests will be made aware of all available travel choices and employees will be provided with accurate and up-to-date information as soon as they commence employment to encourage a culture of sustainable travel.

4.5.2 Accordingly, new employees and guests will be presented with a welcome pack by the TPC setting out the following:-

- (1) Details of the TP measures and its objectives and targets;
- (2) Plans of walking and cycle routes in the area;
- (3) Passenger transport timetable information for services in the vicinity of the site and onward connections, including train timetables and maps showing the nearest bus stops and routes;
- (4) Contact details for the local bus/train operators for ticket ordering;
- (5) Contact details for local cycling groups and shops and information on cycle training courses;
- (6) An invitation to join the TP steering group; and
- (7) Contact details for the TPC.

4.5.3 The development of the welcome pack is a crucial element of the TP. It is essential that it contains the necessary travel information to suitably inform recipients. To ensure that the benefits of receiving the welcome pack go beyond the first employees or guests, provision will be made to supply this information to future employees or guests at least during the initial five year period of the TP. This will be organised by the TPC as and when required.

5 Measures

5.1 Overview

- 5.1.1 This section sets out the package of likely measures that will be introduced in order to influence the way users travel to and from the proposed development. These measures have been derived from the objectives set out in Section 3 and reflect the context of the site in relation to its location.
- 5.1.2 The first travel survey may suggest that some measures included in this section may not be suitable for the site or, alternatively, additional measures may be identified. At this juncture it will be possible to modify the TP targets and measures following agreement with the Local Planning and Highway Authorities.

5.2 Walking

- 5.2.1 Walking is the most sustainable method of travel, has a number of proven health benefits and is an important source of personal freedom. Walking is important for the vast majority of people, including those using public transport or without access to a car. It potentially has an important role to play in journeys to work, particularly for those who live within 2km of the site.
- 5.2.2 Walking is free and offers predictable journeys. Furthermore, it does not cause negative impacts in the same manner as vehicular travel (e.g. emissions, pollutants, severance etc.). As with cycling, walking is a form of active travel that can offer a range of physical and psychological benefits to the individual.
- 5.2.3 The TPC will be responsible for raising awareness amongst staff and guests of the health, financial, and practical benefits of undertaking journeys by foot. The effective promotion of walking is a key part in encouraging people to move away from private car use. However, there are certain factors such as weather conditions, light levels and physical barriers to movement (including major roads, watercourses and railway lines) that affect the number of users willing to use this mode.
- 5.2.4 To combat these issues, the TPC will research the local area and provide a plan showing routes around the site which are lit, accessible and suitable for the use of pedestrians. This plan will be displayed within the welcome pack and on the communal notice boards. If necessary, the TPC will liaise with Kent County Council regarding the upkeep of local footpaths, signage, lighting and improvements to security on routes around the site.

5.3 Cycling

- 5.3.1 Cycling is cheap, offers reliable journey times and is environmentally friendly. Encouragement of cycling can help to improve people's health. In order to encourage staff and guests to cycle, the TPC will:-
- Make cycle route information easily available in communal areas;
 - Provide safe, secure, lit cycle parking facilities;

- Continually review the cycle parking arrangements;
- Publicise local initiatives being offered to promote safe cycling; and
- Promote the accessibility of the site by bike.

5.4 Public Transport

- 5.4.1 Increased use of public transport is a fundamental aspect of the Government's sustainable transport strategy.
- 5.4.2 It is important to recognise that, where possible, walking and cycling are usually favourable to public transport because they have fewer environmental impacts and offer health benefits. Nevertheless, public transport remains important, particularly for journeys of more than 5km.
- 5.4.3 Maps identifying the location of suitable routes to nearby bus stops and railway stations will be displayed in prominent locations on the site. The TPC will also provide information about which users are eligible for discounts when accessing local public transport (e.g. the retired). The TPC will consult with Kent County Council in order to establish the latest routes, any frequency alterations or capacity enhancements.

5.5 Travel Information and Planning

- 5.5.1 Complete and easy-to-understand information about travel is an essential ingredient for a TP, since the first step towards behavioural change is for an individual to understand and consider the options which are realistically available to them. The TPC will seek to disseminate relevant transport information to guests and staff in the following ways:-
- Make staff and guests aware of the journey planning and real-time information tools available;
 - Provide detailed information on signposted routes to and from the Port Lympne Estate to prevent usage of Stone Street;
 - Source local public transport maps showing bus stops, bus destinations, public transport costs and discounts;
 - Source local cycling maps showing safe lit routes for cyclists and local cycle repair shops;
 - Highlight any car club / lift share details and any offers for free or discounted membership; and
 - Provide details of useful websites (e.g. for local bus, coach and rail).

6 Action Plan

6.1 Action Plan

6.1.1 This section draws together the proposals for the TP implementation, monitoring and review. The actions which will be undertaken are summarised in Table 6-1 below.

Action	Responsibility	Timescale
Appointment of TPC	Port Lympne Estates Ltd	Prior to development commencing
Preparation of travel information for staff and visitors	TPC	Prior to occupation of the site / ongoing
Identify locations for communal notice boards	TPC	Prior to occupation of the site
Prepare staff information pack and communal board information	TPC	Prior to occupation of the site / ongoing
Install appropriate on-site cycle infrastructure	Port Lympne Estates Ltd	Prior to first occupation
Commission baseline travel surveys	TPC	Within 3 months of occupation
Review baseline survey data, produce monitoring report and modify TP if necessary	TPC	One month after undertaking survey
As part of the above, agree targets with Kent County Council following baseline survey	TPC	One month after undertaking survey
Seek to develop partnerships with other local TPC	TPC	Ongoing
Hold steering group meeting to investigate TP issues	TPC and all stakeholders	Annually
Undertake annual site audit	TPC	Annually
Monitor Travel Plan through annual monitoring surveys	TPC	Annually
Review Travel Plan	TPC	Annually

Table 6-1: Action Plan

7 Monitoring and Reporting

7.1 Overview

- 7.1.1 This TP is a continuous process for improvement, requiring monitoring, review and revision to ensure it remains relevant to those using the site in future years. This section builds on the details in the action plan and sets out the proposals for monitoring and reviewing the TP over the first five years of the operational life of the development.

7.2 Monitoring Plan

- 7.2.1 Table 7-1 below summarises the proposed monitoring plan, including the data collection activities that will be undertaken and when these will occur.

Data collection Exercise	Key information	Frequency	Responsibility
Baseline guest, staff & visitor travel survey	i. response rate ii. modal split iii. travel attitudes	Within 3 months of occupation and then annually for a minimum period of 5 years	TPC
Site audit	i. cycle parking usage ii. disabled parking bay usage	Annually for a minimum period of 5 years	TPC
TPC steering group meeting / identification of new TP initiatives	Potential new measures for inclusion within the TP	Annually	Steering Group & TPC
Monitoring report and updated TP to be submitted to Kent County Council	Summary of staff & visitor travel survey / TP updated	Annually	TPC

Table 7-1: Monitoring Plan

7.3 Reporting

- 7.3.1 As noted in the action plan, the TPC will report the survey results to Kent County Council within one month of the surveys. The TPC and officers at the County Council will then review the results and, if necessary, revise the TP targets accordingly. The results of the travel survey and revised targets will be included in the following revision of the Plan.
- 7.3.2 If the agreed targets are not met, the TPC will agree measures with the Council which seek to address the issues. The TPC will be responsible for communicating the results of the monitoring surveys and resultant amendments to the TP to staff. This will be achieved through the production of a newsletter and information on noticeboards.