

Dear Kay

### **Kentish Wine Vault: Response to Questions**

I hope my email finds you well. Further to your letter setting out further questions on the plans for Kentish Wine Vault, please see below some further information we have collated in response which I hope will be of use.

*Q: What infrastructure changes will be made to reduce the traffic flow problems this proposal will create?*

Although nothing is currently agreed, we are in dialogue with the Highways Team at Medway Council, reviewing the proposed development trips and their potential impact on the surrounding highway network. Once this assessment and the subsequent junction capacity modelling has been completed the need for any infrastructure improvements will be reviewed and agreed.

*Q: What other alternative access routes have been considered? For example, a link with the A228 roundabout at the bridge to Peters village?*

Alternative routes of access to/from the A228 were assessed but were restricted by land ownership and topographical restrictions. The suggested link with the A228 roundabout at the bridge to Peters village would require a new access road of considerable length and passing through large areas of land not under the ownership of Vineyard Farms. This would have a significant impact on the surrounding environment due to a much longer route through currently un-trafficked land as well as having a much greater impact on woodland that it would have to pass through. It is also considered likely that this route would also present significant challenges due to its topography.

*Q: What measures will be in place to ensure that traffic will flow freely on to the access road and not result in traffic grid lock in the village?*

All traffic is expected to be routed to the site from the east resulting in left-in, right-out manoeuvres at the access that would limit the potential for queuing on Bush Road. The access has been designed to DMRB (Design Manual for Roads and Bridges) standards and with consideration of the guidance in the Manual for Streets to provide an access of appropriate dimensions to accommodate the free movement of the largest vehicles (HGV's). The distance between the access on Bush Road and the car park will also ensure that there would not be any queuing back onto Bush Road. In addition, it should be noted that arrival and departure times and numbers will be controlled by fixed tour scheduling.

*Q: Can the traffic plan be made available for scrutiny so the evidence to support the report's conclusions can be understood?*

A full Transport Assessment will be produced and submitted as part of the planning application that will include all the details regarding the calculation of development trips and the assessment of their impact on the local highway network.

*Q: When was the traffic survey conducted? Was it during the pandemic?*

No traffic surveys undertaken during the pandemic would be considered suitable for use due to the significant impact that lockdown measures have had on traffic flows. We undertook a survey at the western end of Bush Road adjacent to Dean Farm in September 2019 and Medway Council provided

survey data for the A228 dated August 2017. Industry standard growth factors were then applied to this data to produce current and future year traffic flows for our assessment.

*Q: What will the schedule of tours look like and how large will each group be?*

It is proposed that there will be two tours per day; one from 10am to 1pm and the other from 2pm to 5pm. Both will have a maximum capacity of 150 visitors.

*Q: Will visitors have to book, in order to visit the Wine Vault?*

All visitor tour spaces will need to be pre-booked.

*Q: How will travelling by train be incentivised?*

It is intended that there will be discounted 'all-in-one' ticketing options available where train travel, collection by minibus and entry to the winery/tour will be included for a single price. Free minibus travel from local stations to the site will be available to all visitors.

*Q: What evidence is available to support the view that incentivised travel by train will be successful?*

From many points of origin, the train will provide an easier and more convenient travel choice, especially when combined with the free minibus shuttle to/from the site. Furthermore, the nature of the site will make public transport a preferred choice for many to avoid having to have a 'designated driver' who would be unable to sample/taste the wines available.

*Q: What size are the electric vehicles that will be used to transport visitors through the village to the site?*

Although not confirmed, it is envisaged that 16 seater minibuses will be used.

*Q: How many traffic movements are anticipated in Bush Road at peak times:*

*Through the village?*

During the morning peak (7am – 8am) there will 29 arrivals and no departures (equivalent to one additional vehicle every two minutes)

During the midday peak (12pm – 1pm) there will be no arrivals or departures.

During the evening peak (5pm – 6pm) there will be 15 arrivals and 31 departures (equivalent to approximately one additional vehicle every one-and-a-half minute)

The above numbers include ALL predicted trips; visitors, staff, deliveries etc., and much consideration has been given to the arrangement of staff shift patterns and visitor tours to meet the operational needs of the site whilst minimising the traffic impact at peak times. Of particular concern has been to avoid additional traffic at the beginning and end of the school day.

*Via Cobham/Luddesdown?*

All staff/visitor/delivery trips are to be routed to and from the east (A228) to avoid the narrower lanes to the west.

*Q: Why are so many parking spaces needed if visitors will be coming by rail and linked electric vehicles?*

It is important to provide sufficient parking to accommodate all potential demand to ensure that there is no possibility of visitors being unable to find a space and parking elsewhere (on-street). The car park is intended to be used by all staff (parked all day) and visitors, with the maximum demand for spaces at the middle of the day when those leaving the first tour could crossover with those arriving for the afternoon tour.

*Q: How many HGV deliveries/collections are expected/day once the facility is up and running?*

There are predicted to be a maximum of three daily HGV arrivals/departures per day consisting of two export vehicles (delivering wine) and one delivery to the site of raw materials (bottle etc). The vehicles used will be 26t Rigid vehicles of approximately 11 metres in length and arrivals/departures will be scheduled to avoid the peak traffic periods.

*Q: How many of these job opportunities will be full time?*

We would envisage 50% of these roles being permanent roles.

*Q: How many of the job opportunities will be part-time or seasonal?*

We anticipate 50% of the jobs being part-time or seasonal, focussed around the visitor numbers and vineyard work required.

*Q: What proportion of the seasonal workers will require accommodation and where will that accommodation be located?*

We are aiming to make seasonal workers more local and bring the skills necessary to the area, so the accommodation we have currently will suffice in the short term. We would assess future accommodation needs based on the success of local employment.

I hope these provide the additional clarity and information you were looking for.

Many thanks



Gary Smith

CEO, Vineyard Farms