

Sharon Thompson, Head of Planning Applications Group, Kent County Council

Subject: Objection to planning application KCC/TH/0050/2026

Date: 4 May 2026

Dear Sharon

I am writing on behalf of Manston Parish Council to make a formal objection to HTE Manston's proposal, as stated in KCC/TH/0050/2026:

"Full planning application for development of waste to hydrogen facility with associated ancillary infrastructure, a non-residential innovation and educational facility including offices, new junction onto Manston Road, access and internal roads, boundary treatments, landscaping and other associated works".

### **Context**

In recent years Manston residents have seen the building of large numbers of houses within the village centre, as well as close to its boundary. In addition to this, the house building at Westwood 1 and 2 will encroach to the north, north-east and north-west, adding another 1450 houses. A consequence of these 'developments' is an increase in vehicular traffic through and in the village, as motorists seek 'rat runs'. Congestion occurs at pinch points (e.g. the junction of the High Street / Preston Road / B2050). The establishment of a HTE facility a mile from the village of Manston would inevitably bring an increase in undesirable heavy-duty container traffic through and into the village.

Manston Parish Council (MPC) is supportive of efforts to salvage, recycle and re-use materials. However, we feel that this proposal is on far too large a scale, poses environmental threats and is an unwelcome intrusion into a semi-rural location.

Our objections to this proposal are based on a number of considerations, as follows.

### **The burden on roads, traffic, transport and safety**

The publicity materials available to the general public refer to the number of Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGV) journeys that would be made every day: 12 x waste; 56 x hydrogen; 28 x carbon dioxide; 8 x aggregate trips = 104 total HGV movements (In and Out).

Vehicle movements to waste sites have spills. Rubbish escapes en route regardless of assurances given to the contrary.

Six out of the seven councillors on MPC live in the village centre. We know that HGV drivers try on a regular basis to find rat runs, and use Preston Road and Spratling Street for this purpose. Many of the HGV drivers will come from outside of the Isle of Thanet and, regrettably, too many drivers prioritise satellite navigation over common sense, particularly when driving in the dark. It is planned for the HTE facility to be a 24-hour a day operation, with 3 x 8-hour shifts.

- **Must the inhabitants of Manston and the surrounding area tolerate non-stop HGV traffic day and night ?**

HGV traffic is noisy, dusty (in dry weather) and intrusive. Empty vehicles can be noisier than loaded ones, with skips and chains banging and rattling. The road surface in and around the village is typically rural, consisting of thin tarmac over compacted chalk, and regularly lifts and breaks up in winter frosts, creating deep pot-holes and puddles. It is unsuitable for large,

constant traffic movements. And yet the publicity materials state: “Development expected to have a modest traffic impact on local network”. This claim we find to be overly optimistic and lacking up-to-date knowledge of Manston village and nearby roads. The publicity materials state; “No collision ‘hot spots’ identified”. This is another claim that requires close analysis. The B2050 / B2190 Spitfire Way / Manston Road is a very busy junction (in effect a staggered crossroads) and unsuitable for constant HGV traffic in addition to the existing vehicular traffic, cyclists and some pedestrians accessing the Spitfire and Hurricane Memorial Museum from the overflow car park. Work on expanding this junction is linked to the development of Manston Airport, currently expected to open in 2029. Any road or traffic problems along Spitfire Way will lead to more HGVs using Manston village section as a convenient cut-through route.

- The publicity materials state that there would be “100+ daily staff”. How would these employees expected to travel from the towns and villages to the site ? What extra bus services would have to be created ? At whose cost ?
- The publicity materials refer to proximity to Manston Airport, Ramsgate and Dover seaports. Is HTE Manston planning to import rubbish from abroad ?

### **The loss of Grade 1 agricultural land and open green space**

The current agricultural site in question is very well-established, arable farm land, able to grow potatoes, cauliflower, wheat and other crops. This land is Grade 1 (Land Classification Map, South East, published by Natural England, 2010). The land is Excellent Quality Agricultural Land with “little to no limitations to agricultural use... This land can support a very wide range of agricultural and horticultural crops... Yields are consistently high” (Land Research Associates, 2025).

The UK continues to be highly dependent on imports to meet consumer demand for fruit and vegetables (HM Government UK Food Security Report, 2024), all the while that our agricultural land is paved over and built on, never to be recovered.

If this proposal were to be given the go-ahead, yet more agricultural land would be paved over and built on in Thanet. The publicity materials state that the proposed drainage system will “enhance local biodiversity and green space”.

- Why is our biodiversity and green space best served by its destruction ?

### **Threat to air quality**

The publicity materials, as we might expect, make reference to things such as “clean energy”, “sustainability” and “doing no harm”. What concerns councillors, and others in Manston in this regard, is the materials that are to be burned: food waste, medical waste (human tissue, needles, soiled dressings), plastics and wind turbine blades (fibre glass and epoxy resin). The last of these will be heated /burnt at around 1500 degrees C.

We believe that this proposed facility is an incinerator. It would be working 24 hours a day. Manston village is one mile south of this proposed site. It is obvious to those who know the area that if a north wind were blowing, people in the village would smell the fumes from the site.

- How can a proposed industrial facility of this size, operating as an incinerator, not produce unpleasant and harmful fumes ?

### Miscellaneous points for consideration

- There is a finite amount of water on this planet. Kent is one of the driest areas in the British Isles. What credible evidence is there that “rainwater harvesting” would provide sufficient water for the site, as claimed ? How would and to what extent would “local water supplies” be exploited to maintain and run the site at the expense of local householders ?
- What cast-iron guarantees are there that no waste pollution and burn-off would affect the water table and aquifers ?
- Hydrogen is a highly-explosive gas (*vide* the Hindenburg disaster, 1937, causing 36 deaths): What measures would be in place to bring about a total shutdown to prevent a conflagration on a similar scale ?

### Summary

As stated above, MPC supports endeavours to salvage, recycle and re-use materials. Nevertheless, we cannot uphold our duty to the residents of Manston village and surrounding area if we do not oppose the HTE Manston proposal. Thanet is not the place for this industrial facility. The costs in terms of roads, road safety, loss of excellent agricultural land, and threats to our air and water quality are simply too serious.

We respectfully request that this planning application be carefully considered in the light of these concerns. I would be happy to discuss my objections further or provide additional information if required. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours Sincerely

Councillor Graham Elliott  
Manston Parish Council  
cllr.elliott@manstonparishcouncil.gov.uk