

From the Parliamentary
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Department
for Transport

Dear Resident,

RE: Acquisition of the White Cliffs site

I would like to inform you that the Department for Transport has purchased the White Cliffs site in Dover and intends to develop an Inland Border Facility for use from July 2021. We expect some preparatory works to commence soon. These will include securing the perimeter of the site, clearing the site of grass and vegetation and carrying out surveys.

From December 31st at 2300 hours, the UK will cease to be a member of the customs union or the single market and will have to introduce new customs checks at the border. The UK must prepare for new trading arrangements with the EU which will include additional border checks. Those preparations are relevant whether or not we conclude a Trade Agreement with the EU. The UK will in all circumstances be leaving both the customs union and single market, so new border controls will be introduced. Those new controls necessitate the provision of additional infrastructure at key strategic points of entry into the UK, such as the Port of Dover or Eurotunnel.

Why this site?

The site was chosen for its strategic location close to the A2, with easy access to the Port of Dover. The Port of Dover is just four miles away and does not have sufficient space or land to build the border infrastructure needed for the extended checks required at the end of the transition period. The site at Dover White Cliffs also offers shorter

journey times for live animals and perishable goods and is within an existing experienced Port Health Authority area.

Did you consider alternative sites to White Cliffs?

This site was identified through a cross-government exercise. Other sites were considered during the search, but were discounted as they did not meet some of the basic requirements such as the vicinity to the main point of entry (i.e. The Port of Dover) or not having sufficient space to build the border infrastructure required. The Official Controls Regulations which require Border Control Posts to be located in the immediate vicinity of the point of entry. White Cliffs site was the only viable solution due to its strategic location and vicinity to the main point of entry.

What is the planned use of the site?

Plans have not yet been finalised, but it is envisaged that this site will be used as a place for HMRC and DEFRA to undertake border controls.

HMRC will carry out Common Transit Checks (CTC) and Admission Temporaire / Temporary Admission (ATA) Carnet checks inbound and outbound. Defra will use this site as a Border Control Post for goods needing sanitary and phytosanitary checks (SPS), and Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITIES) checks.

The development of this site is an attractive proposition for the local area and may bring in local jobs and support wider economic activity on the site. Our use of the site will require further planning consent, which the Government intends to pursue by means of a Special Development Order process. Residents will of course have the opportunity to express their views on the use of the site as part of that process in the new year.

What kind of disruption will the works entail?

Working hours will be agreed at a later date but will ensure minimal disturbance to the local community. We will be working closely with Kent County Council to keep disruption to a minimum.

Did you consider the environmental impacts of this site?

The environmental analysis and screening in relation to the site are ongoing. Although we are still very much in the early stages of site development, I'd like to assure you that we absolutely respect the areas of natural beauty. We will be taking extensive advice from Natural

England, Historic England, Kent County Council and Dover District Council and putting in place all the mitigation necessary to preserve this asset to the community. I would like to reassure you that we are fully committed to implement all the necessary measures to ensure robust mitigations will be put in place to minimise any negative impacts our studies will identify. Air quality assessments and land surveys will take place to monitor pollution levels and ensure there is as little disruption to residents as possible. We expect to use various methods, both natural and manmade, such as landscaped bunds, acoustic barriers and light buffers to ensure our commitment to the residents is upheld.

What happens next?

We will begin site readiness ahead of construction work on the Dover site shortly. While we do not expect the works will have a significant impact on the surrounding roads, we will continue to monitor the situation closely to ensure any noise and disruption is minimised. As the scheme begins to develop and construction is due to begin, more information will be provided to you.

If you have any queries about the scheduled works at Dover White Cliffs, please contact DFT at this address whitecliffsIBF@dft.gov.uk

Yours sincerely,

**RACHEL MACLEAN MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR
TRANSPORT**