

**Kings Hill**  
Kings Hill

**567710 156279**

**1 November 2007**

**TM/07/03969/RM**

Proposal: 3 storey B1 development with separate energy centre building and associated landscaping and car parking (submission of Reserved Matters pursuant to TM/05/00163/FL)  
Location: 1 Jubilee Way Kings Hill West Malling Kent ME19 4UW  
Applicant: The Rolex Watch Company Limited

**1. Description:**

- 1.1 This Reserved Matters application relates to a new business development to be used as an administrative centre for watch storage and distribution plus servicing/repair workshops. The outline planning permission commitment goes back to an original planning permission in 1990.
- 1.2 The main building will be 3 storeys high and the top floor will include a roof garden screened by a parapet wall. The detached energy centre building will have 2 floors of accommodation with the lower floor at basement level. Total floor area is 6771 sq m.
- 1.3 Illuminated car parking for 123 vehicles and 30 cycles is to be provided plus landscaping comprising of block paving, water features and seating areas. CCTV cameras will be included, including some on 6m high poles. The car park lighting will be cowled on 6m high poles. There will also be bollard lighting and ground level uplighting to illuminate the walkways and landscaping. This is supplemented with floodlighting, near the loading and unloading area, for security purposes.
- 1.4 The boundary to the access road is proposed to be planted with landscaping plus gates 1.5m high and 13m wide that will slide open behind the hedge during normal office hours.
- 1.5 The main building will have 2 external facades of curtain walling in a green tint with silver/white vertical wave frit patterns in front of glazed curtain walling with charcoal grey/black spandrel panels. The other facades will be glazed curtain walling with charcoal grey/black spandrel panels plus chestnut timber louvres. The building as a whole is designed with high levels of energy efficiency in mind.
- 1.6 The energy centre has external facades of polyester powder coated panels in charcoal grey/black.
- 1.7 Although the site has a boundary with Tower View, it is not proposed to be directly accessed from that road. The access road is the subject of a separate planning application (TM/07/04000/FL) which, due to the interrelationship of this site with a possible hotel development, includes a proposed "Left in-Left out" junction with the A228 Bypass. However, only part of the proposed access road is necessary in order to adequately serve this B1 development. I consider that details of access to this proposed development can be the subject of a condition.

- 1.8 The application includes an archaeological report (which concludes that there is no archaeological interest on the site) and arboricultural report plus a sustainability report. An ecological report concludes no occupation of the site by protected species such as bats, dormice or reptiles.
- 1.9 This application is reported to Committee due to the level of local interest and due to the relatively long period of time since the principle of development on the site was established in 1990 by the outline planning permission (TM/89/1655).

## **2. The Site:**

- 2.1 The site is 2.424 ha and is formerly orchard, the fruit trees having been cleared recently. To the south is a copse of woodland between the site and the northern side of Tower View.
- 2.2 To the north, east and west are undeveloped areas of former orchard, plus areas of copse and lines of Poplar shelterbelts.
- 2.3 The site is generally level but is raised on a slight plateau at a ground level of approx 75m OD.
- 2.4 A PROW runs along the NW boundary of the site.
- 2.5 The north-eastern boundary of the set is some 500m from the edge of the hamlet of New Barns, a Conservation Area with a number of listed buildings.

## **3. Planning History:**

TM/89/01655/OUT    Grant with Conditions    12 June 1990

Mixed use development , comprising business use, with ancillary storage and ancillary distribution (use class B1); residential (C3); Hotel/conference centre (C1); convenience retail (A1 and A3); financial and professional services (A2); Residential education and training facilities (C2); creche (D1); leisure (D2); sports and recreation facilities, open spaces and landscaping, new access on approx 647 acres with ancillary road works.

TM/02/03429/OAEA    Grant with Conditions    28 October 2004

Outline Application: Additional 92,900 square metres B1 Business floorspace, residential development, public open space, sports, leisure and recreation facilities and associated infrastructure at Kings Hill and adjoining land at Heath Farm, East Malling

TM/05/00163/FL      Grant with Conditions      6 June 2005

Variation of conditions 2 and 6 of planning application no. TM/02/03429/OAEA (outline application: Additional 92,900 square metres B1 Business floorspace, residential development, public open space, sports, leisure and recreation facilities and associated infrastructure at Kings Hill and adjoining land at Heath Farm, East Malling) to enable the submission of details and implementation of the development to be undertaken in phases.

**4. Consultees:**

4.1 EA: No objections in principle but would need more details if the ground source heating system is to be progressed.

4.2 PC: No objections in principle but wishes for clarification on the chemicals to be stored on the site. *[DPTL comment: This information has been provided to the PC and any further comments from the PC will be the subject of a supplementary report.]*

4.3 KCC (Highways): No response at the time of writing the report; any comments will be the subject of a supplementary report.

4.4 Private Reps + site and press notice: (10/6R/0S/0X) Objections are as follows:

- Although there is currently a buffer consisting mainly of orchards between New Barns (which is 19th Century conservation area) and Kings Hill, we are concerned about the plans which have been submitted for the development. We believe that in their current form they would adversely impact on the countryside surrounding the Kings Hill boundary and that they do not take account of the rural setting of the area.
- The overall environmental impact of developing this near-boundary site has not been adequately assessed.
- 18m is unacceptably high for the new building, it should be lower and wider.
- More tree screening is needed, for example on earth bunding at the edge of the Kings Hill Site.
- Materials need to be sympathetic to a semi-rural site; glass could be a huge reflector.
- There should be no lighting outside opening hours and the pole heights should be reduced to reduce light pollution in the rural area.
- Will affect the quiet enjoyment of the historic New Barns hamlet.
- The application site is 15m higher than the New Barns hamlet.

- Sound insulation measures around the site are needed.

**5. Determining Issues:**

- 5.1 The site is subject to saved Policy P2/2 of the TMBLP and strategic policy TM1 of the KMSP.
- 5.2 This together with planning permission TM/89/1655 establishes both the principle of built development on this site, and the principle of B1 development being acceptable within a campus style business park on certain parts of the Kings Hill policy area. The subsequent permissions in 2004 and 2005 re-confirmed this situation.
- 5.3 The main issue is therefore an assessment of the proposal against Policy QL1 of the KMSP and Policy CP24 of the TMBCS in terms of design and impact on the locality. Policies QL6 and QL8 of the KMSP and PPG15 (Planning and the Historic Environment) relate to the character and appearance of Conservation Areas and the setting of listed buildings respectively.
- 5.4 The main building reflects the established bulk of similar office complexes on Tower View. In this case, the materials are dark coloured facades with frit work that will be a mix of colours mainly black/dark grey/green. It is considered that this use of materials and the colours to be used will be the most effective in creating a subdued visual impact in the surrounding rural area. These are good colours to help the building blend in with its setting when it is viewed against treescape that is predominantly green with black shadows in the summer and brown with black shadows in the winter.
- 5.5 The building is over 500m from the edge of the New Barns hamlet. The New Barns hamlet is set at a lower level than the application site as the orchards slope downhill to the NE. It is feasible that a building in this location will be visible from that area. However, there are further areas of land allocated for office and hotel development (and subject to the outline planning permissions) between the application site and the hamlet. The residential development that has taken and is taking place along the northern edge of Kings Hill also impinges to a certain extent on the wider setting of the hamlet, albeit at some distance. I recognise the legitimate concerns regarding any impact there might be on the rural setting of the New Barns hamlet. Members will also be aware of statutory requirements relating to the preservation of the settings of listed buildings and Conservation Areas. However, given the context outlined, I believe that all these factors will be adequately protected, and the development now proposed will not have an unacceptable impact.
- 5.6 The development involves a relocation of the occupier from its premises in Dartford. Initially, it is understood that the staff will be provided with a coach service to access the site. Notwithstanding this, it is considered that a building of this size warrants a travel plan and a condition is so proposed.

- 5.7 The application includes a scheme of uplighting of the building, to accentuate its urban design features and the high quality landscaping. Other lighting is needed for security. I note the concerns of the residents of New Barns hamlet with regard to light pollution of the rural area but security lighting is a normal requirement for this type of premises and of course the street lighting on the A228 Bypass already affects the hamlet. I therefore suggest a condition requiring the submission of a detailed scheme of lighting management, with the objective of ensuring that any lighting outside operating hours is the minimum required for security purposes as opposed to the pursuit of aesthetic benefits.
- 5.8 In conclusion, I am of the view that this is development that should be welcomed, being in compliance with strategic policy and a long standing outline planning permission. Whilst the proposal has resulted in some opposition from some local residents (partly because of concern at the concurrent road access application TM/07/04000/FL) I am of the view that this does not justify refusal of the scheme.

**6. Recommendation:**

- 6.1 **Approve Reserved matters** as detailed by Letter dated 01.11.2007, Letter dated 01.11.2007, Certificate B dated 01.11.2007, Letter dated 01.11.2007, Certificate B dated 01.11.2007, Notice dated 01.11.2007, Site Plan 1813(PI)102 P1 dated 01.11.2007, Location Plan 1813(PI)104 P3 dated 01.11.2007, Floor Plan 1813(PI)111 P7 dated 01.11.2007, Floor Plan 1813(PI)112 P7 dated 01.11.2007, Floor Plan 1813(PI)113 P5 dated 01.11.2007, Elevations 1813(PI)125 P4 dated 01.11.2007, Elevations 1813(PI)126 P5 dated 01.11.2007, Section 1813(PI)135 P5 dated 01.11.2007, Section 1813(PI)135 P5 dated 01.11.2007, Floor Plans And Elevations 1813(PI)150 P2 dated 01.11.2007, Landscaping WT1265L001 A dated 01.11.2007, Landscaping WT1265L002 dated 01.11.2007, Landscaping WT1265L003 dated 01.11.2007, Planning Layout 4644/E/200 Lighting Layout dated 01.11.2007, Design and Access Statement dated 01.11.2007, Report SUSTAINABILITY REPORT dated 01.11.2007 subject to the following conditions:

- 1 No development shall take place until details of a means of access to Tower View have been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority and the premises shall not be occupied until the access has been completed as approved.

Reason: No such details have been submitted.

- 2 The premises shall not be occupied until a detailed scheme for the control and management of external lighting has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority, and the approved scheme shall be adhered to at all times thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of amenity of the surrounding rural area.

**Informative**

- 1 You are reminded of the need for on-going compliance with conditions on outline planning permission TM/05/00163/FL.

Contact: Marion Geary