

# Agenda



**AGENDA for a meeting of the DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Hertford on THURSDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2016 at 10.00 am.**

**MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE (10)** (Quorum = 3)

D J Barnard, D S Drury, G R Churchurch, M J Cook, J Lloyd,  
M D M Muir (Vice-Chairman), P A Ruffles, S Quilty, I M Reay (Chairman),  
A D Williams

## **AGENDA**

### **AUDIO SYSTEM**

The Council Chamber is fitted with an audio system to assist those with hearing impairment. Anyone who wishes to use this should contact the main (front) reception.

### **PART I (PUBLIC) AGENDA**

Meetings of the Committee are open to the public (this includes the press) and attendance is welcomed. However, there may be occasions when the public are excluded from the meeting - for particular items of business. Any such items are taken at the end of the public part of the meeting and are listed below under "Part II ('closed') agenda".

### **MINUTES**

To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Development Control Committee held on 22 June 2016 (attached).

### **PUBLIC PETITIONS**

Any member of the public (who is a resident in Hertfordshire or is on the electoral register for Hertfordshire) may present a petition to the Committee. An authorised representative of any Hertfordshire parish or town council subscribing to a parish charter approved by the County Council may also present a petition to the Committee in relation to matters within that parish. The subject of the petition must be appropriate for the Committee and must be signed by at least 100 residents or business ratepayers of Hertfordshire.

Notification of intent to present a petition must be given in writing to the Chief Legal Officer, (County Hall, Hertford, SG13 8DE) at least five clear days before the meeting where an item relating to the subject matter of the petition does not appear on the

agenda for the meeting and at least three clear days before where the item is the subject of a report.

If you have any queries about the procedure please contact Nicola Cahill on telephone no. (01992) 555554

### **MOTIONS (Standing Order C9)**

Motions may be made on a matter relevant to the Committee's terms of reference (other than motions relating to a matter on the agenda, which shall be moved when that matter is discussed).

Motions must have been notified in writing to the Chief Legal Officer by 9 am on the day before the meeting and will be dealt with in order of receipt.

No motions had been submitted at the time of agenda dispatch.

The following reports of the Chief Executive and Director of Environment are attached to this agenda: -

- 1. PLANNING APPLICATION (5 /1180-16 CM0964) FOR PROPOSED IMPORTATION OF 47,000 CUBIC METRES OF RECOVERED MATERIALS TO CHANGE THE LANDSCAPED FORM OF THE EXISTING GOLF COURSE AROUND HOLES 12,13 AND 14 WITH THE AIM TO IMPROVE SAFETY, PLAYABILITY, MAINTENANCE AND DRAINAGE AT HARPENDEN COMMON GOLF CLUB, EAST COMMON, HARPENDEN HERTFORDSHIRE AL5 1BL**

Local Member: Teresa Heritage  
Adjoining Member: Maxine Crawley

- 2. PROPOSED APPLICATION FOR ENHANCEMENT TO THE RESTORATION OF 31 HECTARES AT GREAT WESTWOOD QUARRY THROUGH THE IMPORTATION OF INERT MATERIALS WITH COMPLETION OF ALL OPERATIONS WITHIN 24 MONTHS TO DELIVER LANDSCAPE, DRAINAGE, ECOLOGICAL, COMMUNITY AND LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT ENEFITS AT GREAT WESTWOOD QUARRY, FIR TREE HILL, CHANDLERS CROSS, WATFORD, HERTS, WD3 4LY**

Local Member: Chris Hayward

- 3. APPLICATION FOR THE CREATION OF A SIGNALISED JUNCTION TO REPLACE THE EXISTING ROUNDABOUT, INCLUDING ASSOCIATED EXTENSIONS AT HERTFORD ROAD, SOUTH-EAST STEVENAGE, WITHIN THE AREA KNOWN AS BRAGBURY END, HERTFORDSHIRE.**

Local Member: Councillor Sherma Batson

### **OTHER PART I BUSINESS**

Such other Part I (public) business which, the Chairman agrees, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration.

## **PART II ('CLOSED') AGENDA**

### **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

There are no items of Part II business on this agenda but if an item is notified the Chairman will move:-

"That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph \*\* of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the said Act and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information."

If you require a copy of any of the reports mentioned above or require further information about this agenda please contact Nicola Cahill, Democratic Services Officer on telephone no. 01992 555554 or email: [nicola.cahill@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:nicola.cahill@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

Agenda documents are also available on the internet

<https://cmis.hertfordshire.gov.uk/hertfordshire/Calendarofcouncilmeetings.aspx>

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**HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE**

**THURSDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2016 AT 10.00 AM**

**DISTRICT: CITY & DISTRICT OF ST.ALBANS**

Agenda No. <b>1</b>
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**PLANNING APPLICATION (5 /1180-16 CM0964) FOR PROPOSED IMPORTATION OF 47,000 CUBIC METRES OF RECOVERED MATERIALS TO CHANGE THE LANDSCAPED FORM OF THE EXISTING GOLF COURSE AROUND HOLES 12,13 AND 14 WITH THE AIM TO IMPROVE SAFETY, PLAYABILITY, MAINTENANCE AND DRAINAGE AT HARPENDEN COMMON GOLF CLUB, EAST COMMON, HARPENDEN HERTFORDSHIRE AL5 1BL**

Report of the Chief Executive and Director of Environment

Contact: Felicity J Hart      Tel: 01992 556256

Local Member: Teresa Heritage

Adjoining Member: Maxine Crawley

## **1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To consider application no. 5/1180-16 (CM0964)

## **2 Summary**

- 2.1 This application seeks permission for the importation of 47,000 cubic metres of soils to landscape the western section of an existing golf course at Harpenden Common.

## **3 Conclusion**

- 3.1 It is concluded that having taken the balance of all the issues and policy into account, that it is recommended that planning permission should be granted subject to referral to the Secretary of State and him not wishing to call the application in, and conditions.

## **4 Description of the site and proposed development**

- 4.1 The application site comprises a strip of the existing golf course along its western edge close to Harpenden Road situated in a rural area to the south of Harpenden town centre in the Metropolitan Green belt. The existing Harpenden Common Golf Club comprises an 18 hole course which was founded in 1931.
- 4.2 The application has been submitted in order to address a number of issues with the golf course in the south western portion of the site. The proposed development comprises a landscaping scheme around holes 12,13 and 14, aiming to improve safety, playability, maintenance, and drainage.
- 4.3 The applicant also considers that the proposed development would improve the economic viability of the golf club and would increase its attractiveness to existing users and newcomers to the sport.
- 4.4 It is envisaged that the proposed works would utilise recovered soils (47,000 cubic metres) for landscaping that would be brought to the site in around a time period of 13 weeks. The application advises that a further 4 weeks would be required for final landscaping, seeding and sculpting.
- 4.5 The proposed landscaping works comprise noise attenuation, safety and playability attenuation landscaping along the 12<sup>th</sup> fairway; 13<sup>th</sup> hole tee re-alignment and playline re-orientation; hole separation and ball containment works between the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> hole; and removal of a low lying depression between the 13<sup>th</sup> tee and fairway.
- 4.6 The A1081 Harpenden Road runs close to the western boundary of the planning application site, although separated from the golf course by a house and a paddock at one point. The applicant states that the current layout poses safety issues and does not comply with the 60m safety margin as set out within established golf architectural guidance. The 12<sup>th</sup> hole which is in that location is a Par 5, which means that players in that area would be hitting full shots along the entire length of the hole, so the margin for error is much greater. Hence the proposed banking and landscaping has been designed to significantly improve safety provisions and minimise the amount of shots that reach Harpenden Road.
- 4.7 The improvement would be achieved by increased levels of standard tree planting and transplants which it is hoped would block a considerable amount of offline shots before reaching their maximum trajectory. Also the reversed incline alongside the fairway has been designed to stop balls rolling towards the boundary, significantly reducing the amount of balls rolling towards the boundary with the public highway.
- 4.8 The appearance of the proposed safety banking has been designed to blend in with the existing golf course topography with its irregular undulations, humps and hollows and the re-profiling works have been

designed to provide a visual and audible screen from the road for users of the golf course.

- 4.9 The material proposed to be used in the proposed landscaping would be delivered to the site via a gate on Ayres End Lane approximately 85m from its junction with Harpenden Road. A temporary passing place is to be provided on the southern side of Ayres End Lane close to the junction with Harpenden Road to enable 2 HGV's to pass one another.
- 4.10 The hours of operation that are proposed are 7am -6pm Monday to Friday with no work proposed at weekends. A temporary site compound area would need to be constructed in the site containing wheel washing facilities, a site office and mess facilities for construction workers.
- 4.11 Lorries delivering soils to the site are expected to follow a route coming off the M1 (junction 9) and then south along the A5183 Dunstable Road, then east along the B487 Redbourn Lane, then south along the A1081 Harpenden road to Ayres End Lane.

## 5 Consultations

- 5.1 St Albans City & District Council has no objections subject to clarification on points raised below.
- The subject site is within the designated Metropolitan Green Belt and Landscape Character Area 100 (Harpenden Common). The submitted plans and reports propose the creation of a series of low mounds along the south west boundary of holes 12, 13 and 14 of the existing golf course. The development will lead to the loss of existing amenity grassland and the removal of around one hundred sapling and early mature trees. However, the plans indicate that new areas of conservation grassland and heathland will be created and new native woodland, hedgegrow and scrub planting will take place. Other ecological features are also proposed such as a, pond, ditch and wet grassland habitats. As the site is located in a rural location within the designated Green Belt, additional landscaping is required to screen the proposed development and help it to integrate into the landscape. Further information will therefore be required on the design and implementation of the proposed scheme and such details should include; the source/ specification of soil to construct the mounded areas; the profile/design of wetland features; the source of seed and plant material for landscaping; reinstatement of land used for access post-development; an implementation programme with timescales, and a long term management and maintenance plan. More details are also required in respect of the recommendations for other habitat enhancements outlined in the ecological report, and the protection of existing trees which are to be retained. The application indicates indicative tree and shrub planting mixes. Whilst the majority of

species proposed are native to Britain, the inclusion of *Betula lenta* as a nurse crop should be omitted in favour of a native Birch, such as *B. pendula* or *pubescens*. The native Ash, *Fraxinus excelsior* is also included, however, in light of current issues with Ash die back disease this should also be omitted, though it is likely that most reputable tree nurseries will not supply *Fraxinus sp.* at the present time. Tree and shrub species should also be carefully selected to reflect the local landscape character area, suitable mixes would be as follows:  
Woodland: Oak, Hornbeam, Hazel, Silver Birch, Hawthorn, Field Maple, Blackthorn, Holly, Crab Apple, Wild Cherry.  
Hedgerow: Hawthorn, Hazel, Field Maple, Blackthorn, Holly, Hornbeam, Oak standards. Scrub: Stands of pure Gorse would be appropriate. Seed mixes for grassland and heathland areas should also be carefully considered and specified, avoiding those that include non-native, or rare and/or uncharacteristic species to the local area.

- 5.2 Wheathampstead Parish Council recommend refusal -Wheathampstead Parish Council is very concerned about the application to import a large quantity of recovered material to Harpenden Common Golf Club. Importing waste material into Green Belt land would cause intrinsic harm to the land as well as setting an unacceptable precedent for other land owners. Moreover, we are concerned about the amount of traffic this will produce. Increased number of lorries accessing the site by travelling through our already congested village and surrounding narrow lanes, would not be acceptable to our residents. In addition, please note that some of our lanes already have their sides eroded by heavy vehicles using them as short cuts. Therefore Wheathampstead Parish Council would regard this application as being unacceptable.
- 5.3 Harpenden Town Council comments that while supporting the golf club's aspiration to enhance the course, the committee expressed concern regarding the arrangements for transporting material to the site. Harpenden notably lacks self-containment and the majority of economically active residents work elsewhere while many who work in the town, commute in each day. The principal routes into and out of the town are congested until 9am each weekday. The estimated requirement to have 140 3 or 4 axle truck movements to/from the site each weekday for 13 weeks will add significantly to this congestion. There is a discrepancy in the reports with proposed timings noted as both 7am to 5pm and 7am to 6pm. The committee requests that there are no deliveries before 9am. The committee also expects a fixed route to be established for the movements. It is considered it would be unacceptable for there to be any movements on the A1081 through the town centre, along the B653 Lower Luton road or via Wheathampstead Road.

- 5.4 Environment Agency has no objection to the application but does have some concerns over the activity which the applicant would have to address through an environmental permit.

The main concern is that the proposal involves the importation of a significant quantity of waste and must therefore comply with the Environmental permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010 (as amended). There is no information in the application regarding the source or quality of this waste soil forming the material which would be imported and therefore this development may be regarded as a Waste Disposal operation and would need to comply with the Landfill Directive.

The site is located in an area that has been the subject of significant concern with regard to air quality and we feel that the proposed development has the potential to increase levels of airborne particulate pollution and Nitrogen Dioxide if robust abatement measures and management systems are not put in place. Therefore we strongly advise robust conditions are put in place to address the air quality issues.

- 5.5 Historic England comments that the application should be determined in accordance with national and local policy guidance, and on the basis of your specialist conservation advice.

- 5.6 Hertfordshire County Council -Ecology comments that the limited impact on habitat features of poor quality do not represent an ecological constraint on the proposals. There is no reason to disagree with the view that no mitigation or compensation is necessary. The usual provisions in case of nesting birds have been outlined and the restoration of the bank using wildflower seed is supported. On this basis there is no ecological objection to the new details.

- 5.7 Hertfordshire County Council – Landscape comments as follows:

The NPPF promotes the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment and good design, ensuring that developments respond to local character and are visually attractive as a result of good landscape design.

The site lies within the Harpenden Common landscape character area as defined within the Landscape Character Assessment. The area description states that *'The common provides a relaxed entrance to sub-urban Harpenden. The range of grassland communities helps to create an informal character which supports a range of recreational activities, both active and passive...'*

The strategy for managing change in this area is to *conserve* and *strengthen*. In order to achieve this, the following guidelines should help shape the proposed development:



- *Promote a planting strategy ... to visually integrate both the permanent structures e.g. club houses...*
- *Use locally indigenous species and native stock of local provenance...*
- *For all formal recreational facilities including the Harpenden Golf Course...a long term management plan should be produced...A high proportion of the total area shall be dedicated to and maintained as wildlife habitat, building upon established areas of wildlife interest already present*
- *Ensure all existing and proposed recreational land uses include appropriate measures to manage and enhance the existing landscape setting and historical and ecological value. Particular attention should be given to ensure earth work proposals complement the natural landform patterns*

Comments were submitted regarding a previous iteration of the scheme dated 25<sup>th</sup> May 2016. At this stage concerns were raised regarding the negative landscape and visual impact of the proposed hummock in the southern corner of the course, the location of the attenuation basin, and the potential impact of the new access upon Ayres End Lane.

The above concerns have been reviewed in light of the submitted further information including the following:

- Proposed Grading Plan (HCGC-152.03 H)
- Ecological Assessment of Access Road Modifications (June 2016)

Earthworks - With regards the hummock in the southern corner of the course, it was advised to explore opportunities to reduce its height and gradient.

It is now proposed to create a hummock that at its highest point (116m) is 2m lower than that previously proposed (118m). There also appears to be a slight reduction in the gradient to the southern side, fronting the attenuation basin.

On its northern side, the hummock is up to 2m above the existing fairway, and relates better to the wider landscape as it begins to flatten out at this end of the course.

On its southern side, the hummock is up to 5m above ground level (Ayres End Lane). There remains some concern for the change in levels, as it is generally encouraged not to exceed 3m. There are views towards the hummock from users of Ayres End Lane; from here the sloping hummock is viewed with the attenuation pond in the foreground.

It is advised to mitigate the impact of the hummock through sensitive profiling and planting of the south facing slope and the attenuation basin, ensuring that the slopes do not appear as a contrived amenity grass bank.

With regards the attenuation basin, the previous comments remain relevant as follows. The introduction of an attenuation basin is supported in principle as it is a typical golf course feature, however in its current location it is hidden from view of the golf courses users between the southern hummock and the vegetated course boundary.

The opportunity to bring the basin into the course as a landscape/wildlife feature, and to provide passive surveillance, would be preferable in landscape and visual terms, however it is understood that its location is also influenced by its drainage function.

Strong concerns were raised for the potential negative impact of the proposed access upon the rural character of the lane, and the amenity of views. Details have now been submitted and are assessed below.

- Paragraph 3.2.1 of the report states that 3 individual trees and 1 hedgerow were assessed. It is suggested that this should in fact be 3 individual trees (T1, T2 and T4) and 2 hedgerows/groups (G3 and G5).

It goes on to state that the root protection areas are listed as notional circles, however they are not shown on a plan. A plan is therefore required to show the location of the root protection areas (RPAs) in relation to the proposed works.

- Paragraph 3.2.2 refers to a tree location map and tree schedule in Appendix II. It appears that there are only photographs of the site in Appendix II, the tree schedule is in Appendix III, and there is no specific tree location plan. The tree locations are shown on the engineering drawings (Carson Consulting), however tree survey and tree protection plans are required in line with BS 5837:2012 to show trees to be retained/removed/pruned, RPAs, location of proposed works in relation to trees/RPAs etc.

It is understood that the proposed carriageway widening is temporary. It is therefore questioned whether or not there is an opportunity to use less invasive construction techniques than highly engineered kerbs etc., that would require less excavation and could be more easily removed on completion of the works, for example no-dig solutions or similar.

It is disappointing that T1 (Ash) and G3 (Elm Hedge) have suffered damaged roots and signs of disease respectively. Should this vegetation be negatively impacted by the works (directly or indirectly) then compensatory planting should be provided.

It is proposed to remove G5 (3 Ash) at the site entrance. The loss of the trees negatively impact upon the rural and enclosed character of the Ayres End Lane, opening up views from the lane into the golf course. Whilst it is not deemed necessary to compensate for their loss at the construction stage, they should be compensated for at the restoration stage with new hedgerow trees (standards) in addition to

the reinstatement of the bank and hedgerow (as outlined under paragraph 3.2.7).

### Conclusion

The proposed southern hummock and attenuation basin are supported provided that the following is provided:

- Design detail (layout and profile) for the attenuation basin to provide mitigation and maximise landscape, visual and biodiversity benefit.

With regards the carriageway widening/site entrance the following is required:

- Tree survey and protection plan(s) in line with BS 5837:2012 to show trees to be retained/removed/pruned, RPAs, location of proposed works in relation to trees/RPAs etc.
- Restoration plans to include new hedgerow standards at entrance to restore enclosed character of rural lane and mitigate views into the golf course, and demonstrate appropriate sensitive construction technique

- 5.8 Hertfordshire County Council – Lead Local Flood Authority does not object to the application and considers that the proposed development site can be adequately drained and mitigate any potential existing surface water flood risk if carried out in accordance with the overall drainage strategy.

The points raised in our previous responses dated 20<sup>th</sup> April 2016 and 18<sup>th</sup> July 2016 have been addressed.

The flood risk assessment demonstrates a feasible surface water drainage strategy based on infiltration and provides the results of the infiltration tests to demonstrate its feasibility. The drainage strategy has shown how the mitigation measures will reduce the broader area's surface water flood risk.

We therefore recommend the following condition to the Local Planning Authority should planning permission be granted.

1. The development permitted by this planning permission shall be carried out in accordance with the Flood risk assessment (FRA) ref K0679/pw dated of 4<sup>th</sup> March 2016, and the approved drainage strategy report carried out by Hydro-Logic Services for Woodland Golf Build dated July 2016 reference K0679/2 and the following mitigation measures detailed within those documents:

1. Implement appropriate drainage strategy based on infiltration.
2. Undertake the drainage and mitigation measures to include :

- Flow Diversion Bund to divert overland flows from the nearby buildings;
- Flow Conveyance Swale required to collect flows from the steeper slopes resulting from the proposed landscape earthworks.
- Two infiltration basins required to manage additional flows resulting from the proposed development and prevent the increase of flood risk elsewhere. The basins will be as a minimum of 650 m<sup>2</sup> (between Areas A and B) and 176 m<sup>2</sup> (south of Area C) and assume an infiltration rate of 0.02 m/h.

The mitigation measures shall be fully implemented prior to the use and subsequently in accordance with the timing / phasing arrangements embodied within the scheme, or within any other period as may subsequently be agreed, in writing, by the local planning authority.

Reason:

To prevent flooding by ensuring the satisfactory storage of and disposal of surface water from the site.

2. No development shall take place until the final design of the drainage scheme is completed and sent to the Spatial Planning and Economy Unit for approval. The design of the swale and basins should be in line with best practice standards as shown in The SuDS Manual.

The design of the drainage scheme shall also include detailed engineering details of the design of the proposed swale and basins in line with The SuDS Manual (CIRIA C-753), along with the detailed surface water run-off and volume calculations for all rainfall return periods up to and including the 1 in 100 year event plus climate change allowance.

Reason: To ensure that the site has the capacity to accommodate all rainfall events up to 1:100 year + climate change.

5.9 Hertfordshire County Council – as Highway Authority does not wish to restrict permission subject to conditions as follows: a condition survey of Ayres End lane to be submitted;

1) The development shall not commence until a condition survey of Ayres End Lane (from the point of ingress/ egress) to St Albans Road has been undertaken and approved in writing by the Waste Planning Authority. The survey shall be undertaken at 3 month intervals for the duration of importation and once more upon completion of importation. All surveys shall be submitted to and for the written approval of the Waste Planning Authority. Any proven damage relating to and caused

during the material delivery operation to the road structure including pavement, kerbing, verge and street furniture (lamp columns and road signs) shall be repaired at the developers or applicants own expense. The extent and method for repairs shall be approved in writing by the Waste Planning Authority. Reason: To ensure that the local road network is maintained to a standard compatible with the use of the local road as part of the national system of routes for through traffic in accordance with Section 10(2) of the Highways Act 1980.

2) Before the development commences access and off-site highway works as shown on the agreed in principle plans (C209-206 rev B dated 6/6/2016 and CH209-002) shall be constructed and completed to the satisfaction of the highway authority and retained until practical completion of works. All widening shall thereupon be removed and the highway reinstated to the original alignment and width to the satisfaction of the highway authority. Reason: So construction traffic may pass within Ayres End Lane and to ensure that the safe and efficient operation of the A1081 is not compromised.

3) Concurrent with the implementation of improvements to the existing site access as shown within the agreed in principle drawing a lorry routing plan shall be submitted demonstrating routes from the site to the primary highway network and agreed in writing with the Highway Authority. All lorry movements shall be in accordance with these agreed details. Reason: To ensure that vehicles are directed from the site to the principle highway network by the shortest and most appropriate route.

4.) Unless otherwise agreed in advance in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority, there shall be no more than 160 lorry movements (80 in, 80 out) entering/leaving the access/egress onto Ayres End Lane in any one working day. Written records of vehicles entering and leaving the site in connection with all lorry movements from/to the site complex shall be kept by the site operator and made available for inspection by the Mineral Planning Authority upon request. Reason: In the interest of highway safety and so that there shall be the least possible adverse effects upon the free and safe flow of traffic along the highway in the vicinity of the site.

5) No commercial vehicles shall enter the public highway unless their wheels and chassis have been cleaned to prevent material being deposited on the highway. Reason: To prevent the deposit of mud onto the road in the interest of highway safety.

I recommend inclusion of the following Advisory Notes (AN) to ensure that any works within the highway are carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Highway Act 1980.

AN1) It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit mud or other debris on the public highway, and section 149 of the same Act gives the Highway Authority powers to remove such material at the expense of the party responsible. Therefore, best practical means shall be taken at all times to ensure that all vehicles

leaving the site during construction of the development are in a condition such as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway.

AN2) All works to be undertaken on the adjoining highway shall be constructed to the satisfaction and specification of the Highway Authority, by an approved contractor, and in accordance with Hertfordshire County Council's publication "Roads in Hertfordshire ? Highway Design Guide (2011)". Before works commence the applicant will need to apply to the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements. Further information is available via the website <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

AN3) The Public Right of Way should remain unobstructed by vehicles, machinery, materials, tools and any other aspects of the construction during works.

- The safety of the public using the route and any other routes to be used by construction traffic should be a paramount concern during works, safe passage past the site should be maintained at all times.
- The condition of the route should not deteriorate as a result of these works. Any adverse effects to the surface from traffic, machinery or materials (especially overspills of cement & concrete) should be made good by the applicant to the satisfaction of this Authority.
- All materials should be removed at the end of the construction and not left on the Highway or Highway verges.

If the above conditions cannot reasonably be achieved then a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order would be required to close the affected route and divert users for any periods necessary to allow works to proceed. A fee would be payable to Hertfordshire County Council for such an order.

Comments:

The Highways Authority have provided comments and recommendations previously in respect of this application, my comments dated 03/05/2016 refer. At this time a Grampian style condition was recommended (my comments, condition 2) that sought to secure a passing point sufficient for 2 HGVs to pass clear within Ayres End Lane. It was the Highway Authority position that sufficient ability existed within the limits of the public highway that such a condition was reasonable, despite not forming part of the application. Subsequent discussion between the Highways Authority and the developers Transport Consultant has identified the extent of such requirements, shown on drawing CT209-006 rev B and now forming part of the application. Localised widening within Ayres End Lane is provided such that a minimum of 6m width is provided, supported by swept path plots for large tipper demonstrating that the provision of this temporary widening would be sufficient to accommodate traffic associated with construction of the road.

This, itself, follows an original recommendation that the application should be refused as details of the safe use and construction of the construction access had not been provided. (my response dated 2/3/16 refers)

The applicant subsequently provided additional details in respect of the visibility from the access, as well as assessed vehicle speeds within Ayres End Lane to justify the reduced visibility. HCC have previously identified that given Ayres End Road being subject to 60mph speed limits, visibility would be required to be provided to 215m as directed by DMRB. This information informed the Highway Authorities comments dated 3/5/2016.

I therefore revise the Highway Authorities earlier response in order that works as shown on the agreed in principle plan be provided prior to commencement, and retained until such point as practical completion (and for the avoidance of doubt this being the completion of the importation of the 47000m<sup>3</sup> of recovered materials (primarily soils) is reached, whereupon widening works shall be removed and the highway reinstated to its former width and alignment to the satisfaction of the Highway Authority. Consequently, I have also revised my recommended conditions to further minimise and prohibit development traffic on Ayres End Lane to the NE of the access, and require that a vehicle routing plan be provided concurrent with improvements to the access preventing departing traffic leaving via this route.

The proposals represent landscaping to the existing golf course (Harpenden Common Golf Course). The golf course is bounded to the west by the A1081 (Principal A road), Cravells Road to the north (unclassified road) and Ayres End Lane to the south (un-numbered classified road). The nature of the 18 hole golf course is that it is intersected by Limbrick Road and Cross Lane, each a public highway.

The re-landscaping justification includes regard to golf course best practice which suggests that with improvements to technology drive distance for balls has increased, and this in turn shall serve to decrease the risk or likelihood of errant shots played on the 12th hole from being carried into line with the A1081 and potential interference with vehicle safety. The Highway Authority does not accept that any responsibility is conveyed under its duties under the Highway Act in such matters. A review of accidents (five year, latest to dates) identifies few accidents on local roads in the vicinity, including (but not limited to) both roads intersecting the golf course where upon the incidence of such conflict would reasonably be higher.

Notwithstanding this position, it is recognised that there may be a small highway benefit arising from the works.

#### Access

HCC previously observed that HCC that Eyres End Lane is subject to a 60mph speed limit past the site. It is Hertfordshire County Councils

policy that for roads in excess of 30mph that the provisions of DMRB in terms of appropriate visibility splays are adhered to (<http://www.hertsdirect.org/docs/pdf/h/statement.pdf> and as set out in Roads in Hertfordshire Section 1 : policy information and general guidance). For a road subject to 60mph such visibility splays shall be 215m in each direction.

The applicant has subsequently assessed vehicle speeds within Ayres End Road (7 day survey, from 31/3/16) and identifies that North East bound traffic has an average mean speed of 26.7mph, with 85%ile assessed to 33.7mph. Southwesterly traffic is measured as similar being an average mean of 26.7mph and an 85%ile of 33.3mph.

The applicant demonstrates on drawing C209-001 that visibility from the access measured 2.4m set back shall provide visibility of 77mph in SW direction (to junction with St Albans Road) and 50m in a NE direction. Such splays achievable within verge / land in applicants control. Visibility splays of 50m are appropriate for assessed vehicle speeds.

The applicant has demonstrated turning movements from the proposed access, and whilst detailed within accompanying email that the access shall be widened appropriately to accommodate these swept paths, the exact details of the regrading / formation of the access is unclear from drawing C209-002.

It is however, possible to provide access improvements that shall accommodate the needs of vehicles into the site, and provide an arrangement that shall facilitate large vehicles only being able to enter / depart from the direction of St Albans Road, prohibiting / preventing vehicles departing SE along Ayres End Lane.

Applicant suggests that Ayres End Lane measures 5m. Such a width would be consistent with the ability for an HGV (3m (with mirrors) and private car (2m (with mirrors) to pass clear of each other. HCC records suggest that the width of Ayres Lane is variable, ranging from 5.5m down to 4.5m to the east of the access. Access is 77m from the junction with St Albans Road.

As construction below, based on the level of soil importation and duration of construction, it is possible for the County Council to have a general assessment of vehicle attendance during a day. There shall be likely 7 HGV arrivals (and corresponding departures) per hour, representing 1 every 8 minutes). I recommend a condition that shall restrict vehicle attendance daily to a reasonable level on this basis.

Width of Ayres End Lane provides opportunities for HGV and private car to pass, but insufficient width exists to enable two HGVs to pass clear of each other. The access shown involves vehicle conflict when vehicles seek to enter / leave. I recommend that prior to commencement, details of arrangements for the construction of an access that shall adequately accommodate two way flow, or measures to ensure that opportunities for passing at some point along Ayres End Lane (reasonably, localised



widening to provide for a minimum carriageway width of 6m across a length sufficient to enable two HGVs to pass) are provided and maintained for the duration of construction. Failure to provide such measures shall potentially result in obstruction of Ayres End Lane and force one HGV to reverse unacceptably long distances along Ayres End Lane.

## Construction

The Design and Access statement suggests that construction shall require the importation of 48,000m<sup>3</sup> of soil. The County Council as Highway Authority would consider that the likely capacity of vehicles for use transporting this material shall be 10m<sup>3</sup> per vehicle. There shall therefore be a level of construction trips of approximately 4,800 vehicles.

Construction is defined as expected to take 13 weeks, and defined as occurring Monday to Friday 7am - 6pm.

On such expectations the Highway Authority calculate that average likely attendance shall be 369 movements per week, or 74 vehicles per day. If spread across the 11 hour day, this shall result in circa 7 lorry movements per hour, and HCC accept that limitations on availability of materials / vehicles commonly does ensure a reasonable spread of attendance over the entire day.

Drawing HCG 152.09 provides details of internal haul road and construction compound.

HCC recognise that provision is made for wheel cleaning, as well as construction compound arrangements. By condition, HCC shall expect all haul roads between point of egress to the public highway and the wheel bath to be of a bound material construction to ensure that the wheel wash facilities are effective. Such facilities shall be expected to be maintained and use for the entirety of the construction period.

Improvements to the access, concurrent with the creation of the internal haul road, shall require that the access be constructed to prohibit vehicles turning left out of the site and traversing Ayres End Lane via Ayres End before arrival in Wheathampstead, such details shall be form part of details requested within recommended condition .

The passage of HGVs to the level expected on Ayres End Lane shall be considered as extraordinary, and have the potential to cause additional wear and tear to the local road network during construction. It is recommended that any recommendation for approval includes conditions in respect of road condition surveys and an undertaking that damage attributable to construction activity shall be remedied to an acceptable standard by the applicant.

## Impact on Rights of Way

The golf course is crossed by Public Footpath Harpenden 003 also known as Wheathampstead 092. The applicant describes that the right of way is not clearly delineated given the site being mown amenity grassland. The definitive map record however is clear, and the proposed haul road shall potentially interfere with the rights of enjoyment of the public right of way. The Construction Management Plan should further consider the safety of users of the RoW network, or consider temporary closures to this route.

5.10 A total of 111 consultation letters were sent out and 8 letters objecting to the application have been received. The issues of concern can be summarised as:

- The development would affect the Green Belt and the character of the country lane
- Cause noise pollution for the duration of works
- Cause highway danger both at junction of A1081 and Ayres End Lane and on Ayres End Lane especially to pedestrians and horse riders.
- Sheer volume and frequency of lorries on small lane will be dangerous.
- Will increase congestion and road traffic use.
- An alternative access (ie from Cross Lane) should be sought.
- Concern that there could be serious injury/death as a direct result of the development and this would be immediately reported in connection with this application, if it happens.

5.11 Publicity for the application was as follows: A site notice was erected on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2016 and the application was advertised in the St Albans Harpenden Review on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2016.

## **6 Planning Policy**

### **National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF)**

6.1 The NPPF was released in March 2012. The NPPF contains the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The document also promotes the development plan as the starting point for decision making and that decisions should be made in accordance with an up to date Local Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

- 6.2 The NPPF refers to three dimensions of sustainable development; economic, social and environmental and the purpose of the planning system being to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. In order to achieve sustainable development economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system. Pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life and improving the conditions in which people live, work, travel and take leisure.
- 6.3 The NPPF also seeks to protect Green Belt land stating that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics being their openness and their permanence. Green Belt purposes include checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas; preventing neighbouring towns merging into one another; assisting in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; preserving the setting and special character of historic towns; and to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 6.4 Inappropriate development in the Green Belt is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Local Planning Authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

### **National Planning Policy for Waste 2014 (NPPW)**

- 6.5 This policy document seeks to secure the re-use, recovery or disposal of waste without endangering human health and without harming the environment, together with ensuring the design and layout of new development and other infrastructure such as safe and reliable transport links complements sustainable waste management.
- 6.6 Waste Planning Authorities should assess the suitability of sites/areas for new or enhanced waste management facilities against a list of criteria which includes the following:
- The extent to which the site will; support the other policies set out in the document,
  - The physical and environmental constraints on development, including existing and proposed neighbouring land use, and having regard to the factors in Appendix B,
  - The capacity of existing and potential transport infrastructure to support the sustainable movement of waste,
  - The cumulative impact of existing and proposed waste disposal facilities and the well-being of the local community, including any

significant impacts on environmental quality, social cohesion and economic potential.

- Green Belts have special protection in respect to development.

6.7 In determining planning applications, the likely impact on the local environment and amenity also needs to be considered... Waste management facilities should be well-designed, so that they contribute positively to the character and quality of the area in which they are located.

### **Development Plan**

6.8 The Development Plan is the Hertfordshire Waste Development Framework Waste Core Strategy.

6.9 The relevant development plan policies are:

#### **Hertfordshire Waste Development Framework Waste Core Strategy Adopted November 2012**

Policy 1- Strategy for provision for waste management facilities

Policy 1A- Presumption in favour of sustainable development

Policy 6 - Green Belt

Policy 7- General criteria for assessing planning applications outside of identified locations.

Policy 9 - Sustainable transport

Policy 11- General criteria for assessing waste planning applications

Policy 13- Road transport and traffic

Policy 16 – Soil, Air and Water

#### **St Albans City & District Local Plan Review 1994**

Policy 1 Metropolitan Green Belt

Policy 34 Highways considerations in Development Control

Policy 74 Landscaping and Tree preservation

## **7 Planning Issues**

7.1 The principal issues to be taken into account in determining this application are:

- Impact on local highway network and traffic
- Impact on local residential amenity

- Green Belt

## 7.2 Highways and traffic issues

It is proposed that there would be likely to be 140 HGV movements per day on average during the course of the development. It is anticipated that it would take around 13 weeks to bring the material to the site, with a further 4 weeks of work required for landscaping, seeding and sculpting. However, given there may be extenuating circumstances that could arise such as bad weather that could delay deliveries, the applicant considers that a period of 20 weeks would be required to cover all eventualities.

- 7.3 The application proposes a route that the lorries delivering material would take, coming off the M1 at junction 9 and following a route along the B487 Redbourn Lane to Harpenden Road (A1081) and then south towards the site entrance off Ayes End Lane.
- 7.4 Ayres End Lane is a narrow country lane with mature hedgerows and trees. The entrance to the site is approximately metres away from the junction on the north side of the lane. The application proposes the temporary construction of a passing bay on the south side of the lane close to the junction with Harpenden Road. Highways are satisfied that the passing bay proposed provides sufficient width for two HGVs to pass one another safely.
- 7.5 HCC Highways consider that the development proposal would be satisfactory in highway terms as the lorry movements would amount to approximately 7 outbound and 7 inbound trips per hour and that would only be for a short temporary period of time. It is considered that there would not be any significant or severe impact on highway capacity and does not require a detailed junction assessment on likely reroutes to be taken to and from the site.
- 7.6 As the route that the lorries would take would be outside of the red line of the application site, it is suggested that a scheme of signing that would direct and encourage vehicles to only be able to turn right out of the site, thereby designing out the likelihood of vehicles travelling to and from the site by inappropriate roads within the road hierarchy.

## Residential amenity

- 7.7 There are few residential dwellings in the vicinity of the proposed site entrance off Ayres End Lane, however a number of people have expressed concern about the potential for perceived danger that would occur from usage of the lane whilst HGV lorries are using it.
- 7.8 It is acknowledged that the use of the short stretch of the lane by HGVs is not ideal, however, it is for a temporary period and at a rate of 7 in, 7

out on average per hour, it is considered on balance to be acceptable from a highway safety point of view.

- 7.9 Air quality has been raised as an issue by the Environment Agency in that the proposed development could have the potential to contribute to increased levels of airborne particulate pollution. It is considered that an appropriate condition should be attached.
- 7.10 The applicant has proposed working hours at the site of 7am to 6pm Monday to Friday. It is considered that although there are few residential properties in the vicinity of the site, it would be more appropriate to have a start time of 7.30am for any deliveries to or from the site or any on-site working. A condition can be attached restricting hours.

### Green Belt

- 7.11 The site is situated in a rural area to the south of Harpenden and is in the Metropolitan Green Belt. The NPPF (as well as policies in the HCC Waste Development Framework and St Albans City & District Local Plan) seeks to protect the Green Belt and the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics being their openness and their permanence.
- 7.12 This application is for the importation of 47,000 cubic metres of waste soils to landscape part of a long established golf course. The reasons for proposed landscaping are set out earlier in this report.
- 7.13 Parts of the proposed additional earthworks proposed would result in raised landscape features up to 5 metres above ground level although impacts are intended to be mitigated by sensitive profiling and planting.
- 7.14 The introduction of an attenuation basin brings an opportunity for the golf course to get visual and biodiversity benefit. Although there will be some tree and hedge removal, it is considered that overall restoration plans following the works would restore the character of the rural lane.
- 7.15 Justification has been put forward by the applicant for the importation of the soils to the site in terms of improved safety and playability, which, due to the unusual location of the golf course parallel and close to the main Harpenden Road seems correct. The re-profiled golf course, if this development were to go ahead would assist in all the ways put forward.
- 7.16 These reasons therefore form the basis of 'very special circumstances'. The NPPF states in para. 88, that when considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. The harm identified in this case falls into two parts; that of a temporary nature during the construction period and that which may arise as a permanent result of the development.

- 7.17 Given the proposed mitigation put forward by the applicant in terms of planting and replacement trees and hedging, it is considered that there would not be significant harm caused as a result of the construction period. With regard to the final scheme, there would be an increase in height as a result of the overall design, but it is not considered to be so significant relative to the total quantity of waste soils to be imported. Although it is acknowledged that the lorry movements along a short stretch of country lane will have some impact on local usage, it is considered that on balance it is a relatively short timeframe until the development is complete. Therefore, although the proposed development would be classed as inappropriate development in the Green Belt, the very special circumstances put forward by the applicant are considered sufficient and clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and any other harm identified. In this case it is therefore considered appropriate to allow the development to be considered acceptable in the Green Belt.
- 7.18 Policy 4 of the Hertfordshire Waste Development Framework says that disposal of waste and raising of land levels will only be granted permission where they meet certain criteria including where it would result in significant or other environmental benefit. The very special circumstances put forward are also considered to lead to significant benefits; these are improved safety and playability and visual and biodiversity benefit.

## **8 Conclusions**

- 8.1 This application is in essence, an application for the importation of waste soils to be deposited in the Green Belt. National policies in relation to the Green Belt apply as well local policies in the Hertfordshire Waste Development Framework. The siting, scale and design of the development together with transportation of the waste are all important material considerations.
- 8.2 In terms of this proposal, it is of a relatively small scale at 47,000 cubic metres and would be sited on land already landscaped forming the existing gold course. Further landscaping of the site has been designed as part of this application which proposes to mitigate any impacts. There are few residential properties in close proximity to the site. Given the relative short term temporary nature of the proposed importation, it is not considered that there would be any significant adverse impact on amenity and human health as a result.
- 8.3 The proposed operation is required for specific reasons outlined in this report, is not contrary to national or waste policy and would be operational for relatively short period of time. Overall it is therefore considered acceptable.

## 9 Recommendation

- 9.1 It is recommended that planning permission should be granted subject to referral to the Secretary of State, and his not wanting to call the application in, and to the following conditions:

1. **Time Limit for Commencement**

The development hereby permitted shall commence within three years of the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. **Approved Plans and Documents**

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Waste Planning Authority:

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt.

3. **Commencement of importation**

The applicant shall notify the Waste Planning Authority of the expected 'start date' for importation at least two weeks prior to that date.

Reason: In order to monitor importation to the site.

4. **Importation Timescale**

Importation of waste soils to the site shall cease within 20 weeks of the date confirmed to the Waste Planning Authority as the 'start date'.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and residential amenity.

5. **Ayres End Lane Condition Survey**

The development shall not commence until a condition survey of Ayres End Lane (from the point of ingress/ egress) to Harpenden Road has been undertaken and approved in writing by the Waste Planning Authority. The survey shall be undertaken prior to commencement of importation and once more upon completion of importation. All surveys shall be submitted to and for the written approval of the Waste Planning Authority. Any proven damage relating to and caused during the material



delivery operation to the road structure including pavement, kerbing, verge and street furniture (lamp columns and road signs) shall be repaired at the developers or applicants own expense. The extent and method for repairs shall be approved in writing by the Waste Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the local road network is maintained to a standard compatible with the use of the local road as part of the national system of routes for through traffic in accordance with Section 10(2) of the Highways Act 1980.

6. **Construction of temporary passing bay on Ayres End Lane**

Before the development commences, access and off-site highway works to construct the passing bay as shown on the approved plans (C209-206 rev B dated 6/6/2016 and CH209-002) shall be constructed and completed to the satisfaction of the highway authority and retained until completion of importation of material. All widening shall thereupon be removed and the highway reinstated to the original alignment and width to the satisfaction of the Waste Planning Authority.

Reason: So construction traffic may pass within Ayres End Lane and to ensure that the safe and efficient operation of the A1081 is not compromised.

7. **Reinstatement of passing bay**

Before development commences a landscaping scheme for the reinstatement of the passing bay shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Waste Planning Authority. The passing bay shall be removed within 3 months of importation ceasing and the landscaping scheme implemented by the next available planting season in accordance with the approved plans.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

8. **Lorry movements**

There shall be no more than 160 lorry movements (80 in, 80 out) entering/leaving the access/egress onto Ayres End Lane on any one working day. Written records of vehicles entering and leaving the site in connection with all lorry movements from/to the site complex shall be kept by the site operator and made available for inspection by the Waste Planning Authority upon request.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety and so that there shall be the least possible adverse effects upon the free and safe flow of traffic along the highway in the vicinity of the site.

9. **Wheel Cleaning**

No commercial vehicles shall enter the public highway unless their wheels and chassis have been cleaned to prevent material being deposited on the highway.

Reason: To prevent the deposit of mud onto the road in the interest of highway safety.

10. **Signage at exit from site**

Prior to commencement of development a scheme of signage (to show the route along the highway network to be taken for deliveries) to be displayed at the entrance/exit from the site on Ayres End Lane shall be submitted to and approved by the Waste Planning Authority in writing. The approved signage shall be erected in the agreed position for the duration of the importation and shall require right turn only when exiting the site. The sign/s shall be removed when importation ceases.

Reason: To communicate the preferred route that lorries should take to the M1.

11. **Landscaping**

Prior to commencement of development, a landscaping scheme for restoration of the site and passing bay on Ayres End Lane shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Waste Planning Authority. The planting scheme shall include a programme of planting of new hedgerows and trees and shall be carried out in accordance with the approved programme. Any tree or shrub required to be retained or to be planted as part of the approved landscaping scheme, that is found to be dead, dying, severely damaged or seriously diseased within five years of the carrying out of the landscaping scheme, shall be replaced by specimens of similar or appropriate size and species in the next available planting season.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

12. **Tree Survey**

Prior to commencement of development a tree survey of the site and the area of Ayres End Lane shall be undertaken and submitted to the Waste Planning Authority for approval in writing. The submitted tree survey shall

include a tree protection plan as required in line with BS5837:2012 to show all trees to be retained/removed/pruned. The plan shall also show all Root Protection Areas in relation to the proposed works.

Reason: To protect trees in the vicinity of the site.

#### 14. **Flood Risk Assessment**

The development permitted by this planning permission shall be carried out in accordance with the Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) ref K0679/pw dated of 4<sup>th</sup> March 2016, and the approved drainage strategy report carried out by Hydro-Logic Services for Woodland Golf Build dated July 2016 reference K0679/2 and the following mitigation measures detailed within those documents:

1. Implement appropriate drainage strategy based on infiltration.
2. Undertake the drainage and mitigation measures to include :

- Flow Diversion Bund to divert overland flows from the nearby buildings;
- Flow Conveyance Swale required to collect flows from the steeper slopes resulting from the proposed landscape earthworks.
- Two infiltration basins required to manage additional flows resulting from the proposed development and prevent the increase of flood risk elsewhere. The basins will be as a minimum of 650 m<sup>2</sup> (between Areas A and B) and 176 m<sup>2</sup> (south of Area C) and assume an infiltration rate of 0.02 m/h.

The mitigation measures shall be fully implemented prior to the use and subsequently in accordance with the timing / phasing arrangements embodied within the scheme, or within any other period as may subsequently be agreed, in writing, by the Waste Planning Authority.

Reason: To prevent flooding by ensuring the satisfactory storage of and disposal of surface water from the site.

#### 11. **Design of swale and basins**

Prior to commencement of development, the final design of the drainage scheme shall be completed and submitted to the Waste Planning Authority for approval. The design of the swale and basins should be in line with best practice standards as shown in The SuDS Manual and the implemented design shall be in accordance with the approved details. The design of the drainage scheme shall also include detailed engineering details of the design of the proposed swale and basins in line with The SuDS Manual (CIRIA C-753), along with the detailed surface water run-off

and volume calculations for all rainfall return periods up to and including the 1 in 100 year event plus climate change allowance.

Reason: To ensure that the site has the capacity to accommodate all rainfall events up to 1:100 year + climate change.

## 12. **Construction Management Plan**

Prior to commencement of development, a Construction Management Plan shall be submitted to the Waste Planning Authority for approval in writing. The plan shall consider the safety of users on the RoW network and nearby Public Footpaths, proposing a scheme for temporary closures/diversion of the route if necessary for the duration of the development.

Reason: In the interests of site safety and public amenity.

## 11. **Air Quality**

Prior to commencement of development, a scheme for minimising air pollution in the vicinity of the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Waste Planning Authority. The agreed scheme shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that air quality in the area is managed appropriately.

## 12. **Details of site compound**

Prior to commencement of development, details of the site compound and all structures within, shall be submitted to the Waste Planning Authority for approval in writing. The approved site compound shall be removed in its entirety and the area landscaped once importation to the site has ceased.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity.

## 13. **Working Hours**

No deliveries to or from the site or on-site operations shall take place outside of the hours 7.30am – 6.00pm Monday to Friday.

Reason: In the interests of local amenity.

Background information used in compiling this report

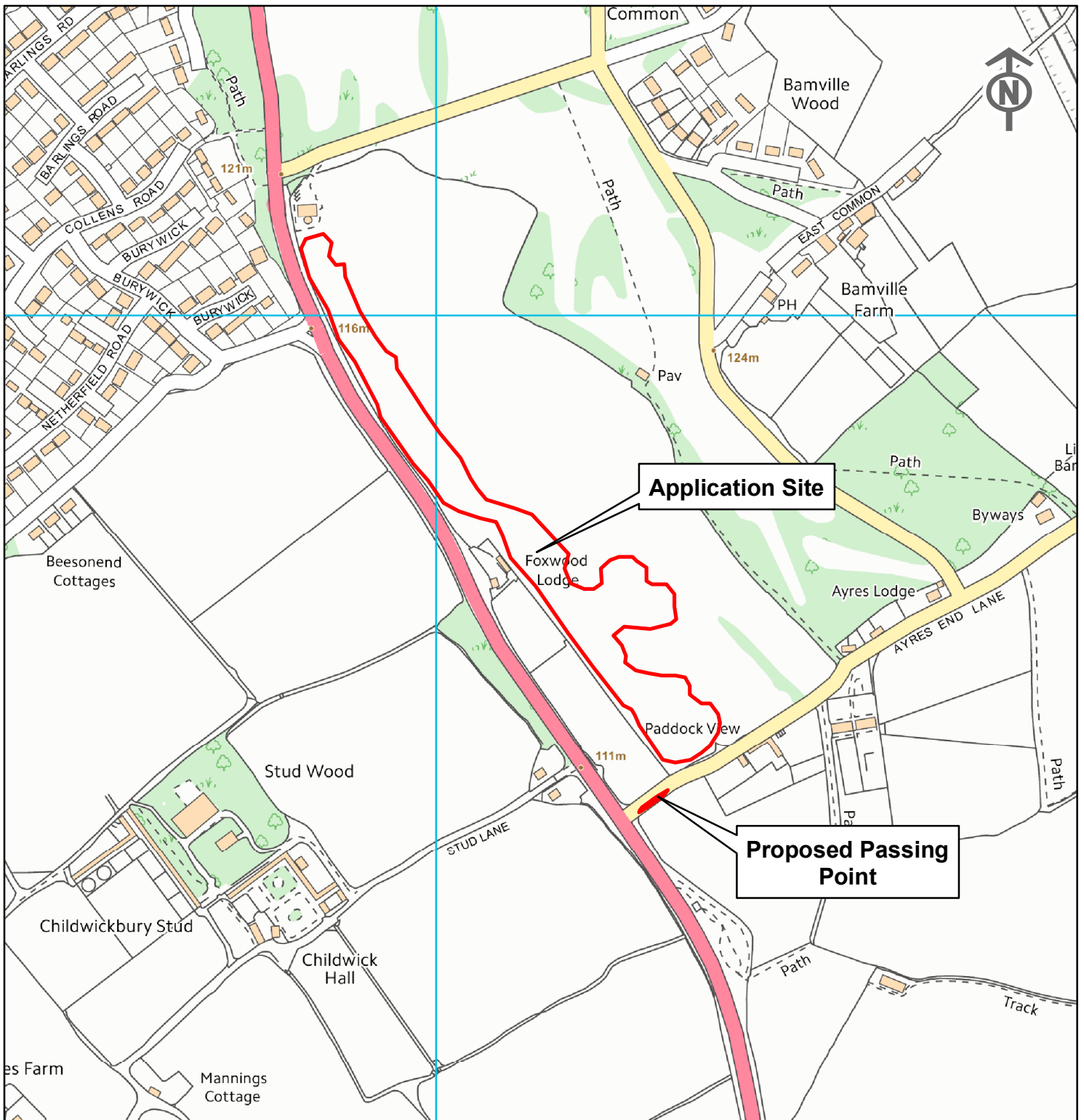
NPPW

NPPF

Herts Waste Core Strategy

St Albans City & District Local Plan Review.

Representations received



**DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE**

Date: Thursday 22nd September 2016



Proposed importation of 47,000 cubic metres of recovered materials (predominantly soils) to change the landscaped form of the existing golf course around holes 12, 13 and 14 with the aim to improve safety, playability, maintenance and drainage  
 At: Harpenden Common Golf Club, East Common, Harpenden, Hertfordshire, AL5 1BL

0 60 120 180 240 300 360 420 480 540 Meters

**HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE**

**THURSDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2016 AT 10.00 AM**

**THREE RIVERS DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**PROPOSED APPLICATION FOR ENHANCEMENT TO THE RESTORATION OF 31 HECTARES AT GREAT WESTWOOD QUARRY THROUGH THE IMPORTATION OF INERT MATERIALS WITH COMPLETION OF ALL OPERATIONS WITHIN 24 MONTHS TO DELIVER LANDSCAPE, DRAINAGE, ECOLOGICAL, COMMUNITY AND LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT BENEFITS AT GREAT WESTWOOD QUARRY, FIR TREE HILL, CHANDLERS CROSS, WATFORD, HERTS, WD3 4LY**

Agenda No.

**2**

Report of the Chief Executive and Director of Environment

Author: Christopher Martin Tel: 01992 556308

Local Member: Chris Hayward

## **1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To consider application 8/0780-16 (CM0122) for the proposed enhancement to the restoration of 31 hectares at Great Westwood Quarry through the importation of inert materials with completion of all operations within 24 months to deliver landscape, drainage, ecological, community and long-term management benefits at Great Westwood Quarry, Fir Tree Hill, Chandlers Cross, Watford, Hertfordshire, WD3 4LY (“the Site”).

## **2 Summary**

- 2.1 Great Westwood Quarry is a former mineral working. Mineral extraction from the Site ceased in 2002. Planning permission was first granted for importation of inert waste to restore the Site in 1990.
- 2.2 This application seeks permission to import approximately 237,000m<sup>3</sup> (450,000 tonnes) of inert waste to the Site to enhance the restoration at the Site from September 2016 for completion of the restoration by September 2018, with 18 months of importation and 6 months of restoration.
- 2.3 The Site currently has permission to import 78,600m<sup>3</sup> of inert material under permission 8/0825-15 (“the Original Planning Permission”). The current application allows for an increase in the time limit for restoration and to amend the final restoration contours; this is expected to be complete in September 2016. The current permission for restoration is deemed to be an acceptable restoration scheme.
- 2.4 During the process of restoring the Site, the applicant has identified further amendments that are required and which are intended to

enhance the appearance, quality and after-use benefits of the Site and has subsequently submitted this application.

2.5 The main changes to the current proposal compared with the scheme granted permission in 2015 are:

- Importation of additional inert waste
- Increase in height of between 1m and 2m across the Site with a more domed rather than flat topography in Phase 3
- Increased woodland planting
- Reorientation of catchment areas alongside implementation of drainage ponds
- New bridleway link on the edge of the Site and Public Right of Way footpath loop internal to the Site
- New on-site car park
- Implementation of Turtle Dove seed mix area in Phase 3
- Negotiation to purchase land to be used as a car park for the St. Pauls C of E Primary School or if unsuccessful the provision of between £25,000 and £30,000 for further community benefit to be agreed in writing with the council
- A 2-year delay in restoration until end of September 2018 from the completion date anticipated by the Original Planning Permission

2.6 The determination of the application should focus on:

- Green Belt
- Restoration / Afteruse
- Transport
- Landscape
- Drainage
- Noise, air quality and neighbour amenity
- Public access / Rights of way
- Ecology

### **3 Conclusion**

3.1 Having considered all the relevant planning matters, it is recommended that permission be granted subject to referral to the Secretary of State and him not wishing to call the application in, signing and completion of the legal agreement and the conditions set out in this report.

### **4 The Site and Local Area**

4.1 Great Westwood Quarry lies approximately 2km northwest of Watford and 2km southeast of Bucks Hill. Abbots Langley is 1.5km to the northeast and Chandlers Cross is 500m to the south west.

4.2 The Site originally comprised of three extraction areas: Lees Wood (to the south of Fir Tree Hill); Great Westwood (main central area to the



north of Fir Tree Hill); and Brickfield Spring (to the north of the main site, separated by a spur of the M25). Lees Wood is restored and now owned by the Leeswood Scout and Guide Activity Centre. This planning application relates to the Great Westwood part of the Site only, which covers an area of approximately 31 hectares.

- 4.3 The nearest properties to the southwest of the Site, off Fir Tree Hill, include The Grove Lodge, High Fires, Highoaks, Woodside, Chandlers Cottages and Hartfield. Leeswood Cottage lies to the south of the Site. The Lodge is located on the junction of Langleybury lane and Fir Tree Hill. South Lodge lies off Langleybury Lane to the northeast of Brickfield Spring.
- 4.4 The Site is bounded by an area of Ancient Woodland (Lees Wood) and a County Wildlife site. The Site is within the Metropolitan Green Belt.

## **5 The Proposal**

- 5.1 The application seeks to extend the operation of the Site to September 2018, by using 450,000 tonnes of inert waste to enhance the existing permitted restoration; this would include 18 months of material importation and 6 months restoration period. The enhancements being offered as part of this application to be considered as the very special circumstances for importing further material include; a landform which better fits the character of the Local Character Area Sarrat Plateau, improved drainage within Phase 3 with re-profiling to redistribute run-off and implementation of retention/infiltration basins and swales, creation of habitat within the infiltration ponds, further woodland planting to closer match the pre-extraction landscape, introduction of turtle dove grass seed mix within Phase 3, creation of a new public right of way (Bridleway) on the eastern boundary of the main site and public Right of Way footpath within the Site, early restoration of the former plant site, further access for the local scout and guide group, new car parking provision on-site for public access and CEMEX offering to negotiate the purchase of land to construct a car park for the St. Pauls C of E Primary School or if unsuccessful the provision of between £25,000 and £30,000 for the provision of further community benefit to be agreed in writing with the council.
- 5.2 Phase 1 would deliver the early restoration of the majority of the old quarry plant site through the use of approximately 1,564m<sup>3</sup> (or 2,815 tonnes) of site derived soils suitable to aid the creation of dry acid grassland habitat and seasonal ponds for amphibians and invertebrates, and to provide temporary storage as part of the proposed drainage strategy.
- 5.3 Phase 2 would comprise the restoration of the southern half and the western edge of Great Westwood. This area requires approximately 181,705m<sup>3</sup> of (or 327,069 tonnes) of imported clay to deliver the proposed landform. The original site derived soils would then be placed above the clay for restoration planting to provide a mosaic of habitat

types including wood pasture (grassland and tree planting), lowland meadow, and amenity grassland. The maximum elevation across this part of the Site would be 89m AOD.

- 5.4 Phase 3 would complete the restoration of Great Westwood, and would require approximately 53,325m<sup>3</sup> (or 95,985 tonnes) of imported clay to create the proposed landform. The existing soils across Phase 3 would be stripped and stored and then placed above the clay for planting. This part of the Site would be restored to a combination of lowland meadow, ponds and damp grassland, and amenity grassland linking the lowland meadow to the retained woodland edge of Great Westwood Quarry. The maximum elevation across this part of the Site would remain 89m AOD, and would be designed to provide a suitable shallow gradient for pedestrians to walk along the new public right of way. Habitat suitable for Turtle Doves would be created in Phase 3 – it would be sown with a mix of Early English Common Vetch, Birdsfoot Trefoil, Early White Clover, Black Medick, Early Red Clover, and Fumitory. A new tree belt, which would replicate a former plantation belt, would be established between phases 2 and 3.
- 5.5 Phase 4 would see the restoration of the existing plant site which would involve re-profiling with indigenous material and limited imported soils to slopes (approximately 510m<sup>3</sup> or 918tonnes). The existing structures and haul route would be removed, although the route of the haul road would be retained for a public right of way and maintenance access. It is proposed to construct a new car park for visitors to access the Site once fully restored.
- 5.6 The anticipated number of daily HGV movements would be on average 120 (60 in and 60 out). There would be some seasonal variation but this would be below the currently permitted 300 daily movements.
- 5.7 The operational hours would remain as currently permitted i.e. 0700 to 1800 Monday to Friday, 0700 to 1300 Saturdays and no operations would take place on Sundays or Public Holidays.
- 5.8 In addition to the material differences set out in paragraphs 2.5 and 5.1 above, the main differences between the submitted restoration master plan (P5/158/18) and the consented restoration masterplan (P5/158/16/H) relate to:

(a) Landform

- Phase 3 – contours are steepened to a dome shape
- Phase 2 – increase of between 1m and 2m of landform
- Phase 4 – increase of between 1m and 2m of landform
- Phases 1 and 2 – introduction of infiltration basin

(b) Landcover

- New tree belt in-between Phases 2 and 3
- Turtle Dove seed mix in Phase

## **6 Policy Considerations**

### **6.1 National Planning Policy Framework 2012**

- Section 9 Protecting Green Belt Land
- Section 11 Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

### **6.2 Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan Review: Adopted 2007**

- Policy 9 – Contribution to Bio-Diversity
- Policy 12 – Landscape
- Policy 13 – Reclamation Scheme
- Policy 14 – After use
- Policy 15 – Landfill

### **6.3 Hertfordshire Waste Core Strategy & Development Management Policies: Adopted November 2012**

- Policy 4 – Landfill and Landraise
- Policy 6 – Green Belt
- Policy 7 – General Criteria for Assessing Planning Applications Outside of Identified Locations
- Policy 11 – General Criteria for Assessing Waste Planning Applications
- Policy 13 – Road Transport & Traffic
- Policy 14 – Buffer Zones
- Policy 15 – Rights of Way
- Policy 16 – Soil, Air and Water
- Policy 19 – Protection and Mitigation

### **6.4 Three Rivers Development Management Policies Local Development Document: Adopted July 2013**

- Policy DM2 – Green Belt
- Policy DM6 – Biodiversity, Trees, Woodland and Landscaping
- Policy DM7 – Landscape Character
- Policy DM8 – Flood Risk and Water Resources
- Policy DM9 – Contamination and Pollution

## **7 Relevant Planning History**

- 8/0258-15: Application for the proposed variation of condition 1 (Approved Plans), 2 (Time Limit for Completion), 17 and 19 (Pre/post Settlement Contour Levels) of Planning Permission 8/0874-11 to increase the time period to complete restoration by one year and

amend final restoration contours i.e. by August 2015 using 78,600m<sup>3</sup> of inert material.

- 8/0874-11: Application for the proposed variation of conditions 4, 19, 20, 21 and 30 of planning permission 8/0503-90 to increase the time period to complete infilling and restoration by 3 years, a temporary increase in vehicle movements and to amend the final restoration scheme from woodland and heath grassland to woodland, amenity grassland and agriculture.
- 8/1398-03: Application to vary condition 3 of planning permission 8/0735-96 to extend time limit for completion of extraction and restoration (land south of Fir Tree Hill).
- 8/0496-03: Change of use of land from general plant area to designated sorting area for recycling of construction waste. Completion (excluding aftercare) by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2004.
- 8/0860-98: Review of Minerals Planning Permission. All mineral working and deposit of mineral waste to cease on or before 31<sup>st</sup> December 2005.
- 8/0735-96: Sand and gravel extraction with restoration to woodland (land south of Fir Tree Hill). Complete restoration within 3 years of commencement.
- 8/0704-95: Variation of condition 4 pp 8/603-77 to allow importation of crushed concrete.
- 8/0466-84: Retention of aggregates processing plant.
- 8/0603-77: Mixed and batching unit for ready mixed concrete.
- 8/0407-77: Ready mix mortar plant.

## **8 Consultations & Representations**

8.1 Three Rivers District Council: raises no objection subject to the following conditions being implemented:

1) That the hours of operation are 0700-1800 Monday to Friday and 0700-1300 on Saturdays with no workings on Sundays or public/bank holidays.

2) That site traffic continues to approach and exit the Site via Langleybury Lane and wheel washing, dust, mud and debris mitigation measures are properly utilised and enforced.

8.2 Environment Agency: raises no objection and does not require the implementation of any conditions.

8.3 Forestry Commission: has suggested it would be beneficial to restore the Site to woodland and using the same species that are in the existing Cartpath wood would be desirable.

8.4 Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority: as the proposal will not generate additional HGV movement greater than already permitted

the Highway Authority does not wish to restrict the grant of planning permission.

- 8.5 Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust: are interested in the long-term management of the Site and would be happy to work alongside CEMEX to ensure a well-designed, feasible and appropriately resourced scheme that delivers ecological and community benefits. They see this as an exciting opportunity to use their knowledge and experience to add to and enhance the biodiversity of the Site.
- 8.6 Natural England: does not consider that this application poses any likely or significant risk to those features of the natural environment.
- 8.7 Rights of Way: welcome the proposed new bridleway and footpaths shown on the Restoration Masterplan. However HCC would wish to see Bridleway Status rather than the footpaths shown on the restoration plan. This would cater for multi-user demand, as they link to the verge route on Langleybury Road, Sarratt Restricted Byway 71 and Bridleway's within Whippendell Woods (see attached Rights of Way plan). To achieve this you as landowner would need to enter in agreement with Hertfordshire County Council to dedicate the Bridleway's under the Highways Act 1980 section 25.
- 8.8 Sarrat Parish Council: The Parish Council object strongly to the granting of a further extension on this property for the purpose of importing inert materials. The infilling and landscaping has been going for 13 years now with approximately 120 lorries per day entering and leaving the Site. The Council feel that the time has come to cease this operation and therefore no further extensions should be granted.
- 8.9 Highways England: raises no objection subject to the condition below:
- 1) The applicant is required to provide and submit a Construction Phase Plan to the Local Planning Authority, prior to commencement of works, detailing appropriate mitigation measures to ensure that the risk of dust and air borne particles are minimised. Any mitigation measures should be agreed with Connect Plus Services, who are the operations and maintenance contractor for the M25 network on behalf of Highways England.
- 8.10 Lead Local Flood Authority: initially objected to the proposal as the submitted flood risk assessment was not suitable. Further information was submitted by the applicant and the objection was removed subject to the following conditions:
- 1) The development permitted by this planning permission shall be carried out in accordance with the Further information to support Outline SuDS Drainage Design prepared by ESI, reference 6496cTN2 dated May 2016 and the following mitigation measures as detailed within the surface water drainage strategy.

2) No development shall take place until a detailed surface water drainage scheme for the Site, based on sustainable drainage principles and an assessment of the hydrological and hydro- geological context of the development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The drainage strategy should demonstrate the surface water run-off generated up to and including the 1 in 100 year + 40% for climate change critical storm will not exceed the run-off from the undeveloped site following the corresponding rainfall event. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is completed.

8.11 Local Member: objects to the proposal on behalf of their constituents and has objected to the application being determined under delegated powers.

8.12 Neighbours / Publicity: Publicity for this application was as follows:

1 site notice was erected on the main vehicular access on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2016. An advert was also placed in the Watford Observer on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2016.

A total of 119 properties were consulted and 2 responses have been received from individual residents, as well as a joint response from the Chandlers Cross Residents Association. The concerns raised in these representations include:

- Noise from vehicles and site operations
- Vehicle movements on the highway
- Suitability of the road for HGVs
- Continued extension in use of the Site
- Lack of consultation with residents
- Application has been submitted purely for financial gain
- Doubts regarding drainage issues
- Condition of the road surface due to mud
- Impact on pickup / drop off at St. Paul's Primary School

## **9 Planning Issues**

9.1 The principal planning issues to be taken into account in determining this application are:

- Green Belt
- Transport
- Landscape
- Restoration / Afteruse
- Flood Risk / Drainage
- Noise, air quality and neighbour amenity

- Public access / Rights of Way
- Ecology / Biodiversity

### **Green Belt**

- 9.2 The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belt are their openness and their permanence (NPPF, paragraph 79). Inappropriate development is by definition harmful to the Green Belt and should not be permitted except in very special circumstances (NPPF, paragraph 87). Very special circumstances will not exist unless the harm by inappropriateness and any other harm are clearly outweighed by other material considerations (NPPF, paragraph 88). Certain other forms of development, such as mineral extraction, are not inappropriate in the Green Belt, provided that they would preserve the openness and would not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt (NPPF, paragraph 90).
- 9.3 Local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access and recreation (NPPF, paragraph 81).
- 9.4 Policy DM2 (Green Belt) of the Three Rivers Development Management Plan states the purpose of Green Belt is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open and Policy 6 of the Hertfordshire Waste Core Strategy requires applications within the Green Belt to demonstrate very special circumstances.
- 9.5 The quality of the Green Belt in this location is already compromised by the existing major road development in the area. The construction of the M25 and slip road divided the original area of the Site. The land south of the Site is characterised by a large area of ancient woodland (Lees Wood). The character of the northern part of the Site is defined by major roads and speeding vehicles are clearly seen from the northern and western parts of the Site. Nonetheless, the land retains an open character, particularly in the southern part of the Site.
- 9.6 The proposed infilling across the Site would increase the levels of the land between 1m and 2m across Phases 1, 2 and 4 of the Site and this would have an impact upon openness, although this impact would be very limited and the Site would retain an overall feeling of openness. The land will form a dome shape in Phase 3 but will retain a gently sloping and open aspect with the maximum height of the land not increasing, such that the impact upon openness would be very limited. As the landform will keep the overall sloping characteristic, albeit at a raised level, the absence of any excessively raised points means that openness is retained.
- 9.7 The proposed number of HGV movements which have an adverse impact in terms of visual amenity, vehicle noise and emissions are to

be reduced significantly from existing movements. These movements would however be temporary, ceasing in September 2018 and can be effectively managed by planning condition.

- 9.8 The development would not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt because it would allow a former mineral working to be restored to a mix of woodland and open pastures, provide opportunities for access to the countryside with a new carpark, one new bridleway and one footpath, create a landform more in keeping with the Landscape Character Area, improve the drainage of the land and provide additional habitat with particular emphasis on turtle doves which are endangered.
- 9.9 These matters, alongside those stated in section 5.1, are considered to constitute very special circumstances that clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt, in terms of inappropriateness and any other harm.

### **Transport**

- 9.10 The Site is accessed via an entrance on Fir Tree Hill close to Langleybury Lane and is close to the core road network provided by the A41 and M25. Access to the Site from the west is not entirely suitable and essentially all of vehicles do access the Site from Langleybury Lane on the eastern approach, as requested by the operator who will take action against vehicles not adhering to this routing. Vehicles are not permitted to turn right out of the Site towards Fir Tree Hill and Chandlers Cross; however residents have reported this does occur on occasion.
- 9.11 Currently the Site has permission for 300 vehicle movements (150 in, 150 out) per day. The Applicant has stated that they expect that the number of vehicle movements would fall to an average of 120 (60 in, 60 out), with some requirement for seasonal variation and this has been reflected in the condition attached.
- 9.12 Residents have raised concerns about the condition of the highway due to deposit of mud from Lorries connected to the Site. The operator of the Site will be responsible to ensure that the highway remains in a suitable condition during site operations and will make provision for highway clearance if required. Conditions will be imposed as part of this permission to ensure the operator adheres to its responsibility to keep the road in suitable condition.
- 9.13 The impact upon the local roads would be for a limited time period, notwithstanding the Site has been in operation for many years, and would not result in significant harm for the extended period of the Site operating.
- 9.14 As part of this application, the applicant has offered to negotiate the purchase of land off Langleybury Lane for the construction of a car park for St. Pauls C of E Primary School, which if successful would reduce



the impact of HGV movements occurring at the same time as the peak school pick up / drop off. It is proposed to include this offer as part of the S106 to be signed as part of this application to ensure that best effort has been made to secure the land. In the event that the applicant cannot secure the land for the provision of a carpark for the school, they have offered the alternative of a set amount of money (£25,000 to £30,000) to be provided which would be used for community benefit in a way to be agreed in writing with the Council if the land cannot be secured.

- 9.15 Highways England have formally responded to the proposal and have requested that a condition be implemented to ensure that any dust as a result of operations is managed to ensure that any potential risk from dust on the nearby M25 does not impact users.
- 9.16 Overall it is considered that the application complies with Policy 13 (Road Traffic & Transport) of the Hertfordshire Waste Core Strategy and there has been no objection from the Highway Authority.

### **Landscape**

- 9.17 The Site is situated within the 'Sarrat Plateau' Landscape Character Area, which is described in the Hertfordshire Landscape Character Assessments as 'a gently undulating plateau area divided by steep narrow chalk valleys with a mix of woodland throughout'. The strategy for managing change within this area is to 'improve and conserve' with specific objectives for Great Westwood Quarry to achieve a 'mix of woodland and grassland with landforms to blend with the local landscape'.
- 9.18 Policy 12 (Landscaping) of the Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan requires proposal to respect the landscape character, protect any distinctive landscape features and provide measures that both strengthen the character and enhance the condition of the landscape.
- 9.19 Policy DM7 states proposals should make a positive contribution to the surrounding landscape.
- 9.20 The Site has been in the restoration phase for a number of years and it is considered that this long term disturbance of the Site has resulted in negative landscape and visual impacts. However these impacts are temporary and can be reversed upon the final restoration when permanent benefits for the landscape and visual amenity can be delivered.
- 9.21 The proposed restoration landform would be higher than the approved restoration landform but taking into consideration the overall size of the Site, it is considered that the variation in topography would not be excessive and the Site would integrate well with the surrounding undulating landscape. The highest level on the Site will not increase.

- 9.22 During a site visit the county landscape officer noted the poor drainage on the north east corner of the Site. They have reported that the change in landform in this area would remove the standing water and therefore deliver a landscape and visual enhancement.
- 9.23 The county landscape officer has also commented that the introduction of the new tree belt, which reflects a historic tree belt, is fully supported and the overall net gain in tree cover enhances the landscape character of the area. Furthermore they have supported the creation of ponds, swales and the car park provided that they are designed to fit the rural location to be secured by condition.
- 9.24 Although a scheme has already been approved, which would provide for restoration of a landscape that has been negatively affected by mineral extraction and restoration, it is considered that the new proposal would offer a slight enhancement compared to the currently approved scheme and it is therefore deemed to be borderline acceptable from a landscape perspective.
- 9.25 It is considered that the application is in accordance with Policy DM6 (Biodiversity, Trees, Woodland and Landscaping) of the Three Rivers Development Management Plan.

### **Restoration / Afteruse**

- 9.26 The primary aim for reclamation of former mineral workings is to prevent sites becoming derelict or remaining out of beneficial use (Minerals Policy 13 – Reclamation Scheme). Mineral operators will be required to facilitate proposals for sustainable after-use as part of the reclamation scheme; proposals will enhance the local area and benefit the local community (Minerals Policy 14 – After use). The reclamation of mineral workings with waste will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the disposal of waste is necessary and within an appropriate timescale. Sufficient resources must be available and the past and present record of the operator will be considered (Minerals Policy 15 – Landfill).
- 9.27 Disposal of waste and the restoration of the Site with inert material by raising the level of land will only be granted permission where it would result in significant other environmental benefit and it would not give rise to unacceptable implications to human health, amenity, landscape and the environment (Waste Core Strategy Policy 4 – Landfill and Landraise).
- 9.28 Although a scheme already exists to meet the primary aim of reclaiming the former mineral working to prevent the Site becoming derelict or remaining out of beneficial after use, it is considered that the further enhancements being provided as part of this application will improve the beneficial after use of the Site and offer environmental improvements.

- 9.29 The enhancements to the local area as part of this restoration include further woodland planting, enhanced biodiversity, a more suitable landform and improved drainage. While the improvements for the local community include the provision of a car park on site for access, one new bridleway, one public right of way footpath, access for the local scout group (who have provided a letter of support) and the potential of a new car park for St. Pauls C of E Primary School subject to negotiations.
- 9.30 It is stated that restorations must occur within an appropriate time scale and as quickly as possible. The Site has been subject to several applications for extension to the restoration period, which does contravene the need to restore the Site as quickly as possible. However previous delays were caused by a lack of available material, which have now been resolved with a new provider (Lynch), inclement weather conditions, economic downturn and previous extensions to the restoration. However with the significant enhancements being offered within a reasonable timeframe of two years, it is considered that the benefits resulting from this proposal outweigh the inconvenience caused by final restoration being delayed.
- 9.31 The current permission has a 10-year aftercare period and as part of this application a 10-year aftercare period will be required to ensure that potential biodiversity benefits are secured and the land is appropriately managed throughout the aftercare period.
- 9.32 Questions have been raised about the potential loss of benefit to the local area and local community from the proposed after use of the Site due to an option on the land held by the Grove Golf Club. However, the Section 25 and S106 legal agreement being entered into between the County Council and CEMEX on this application will secure the Rights of Way being offered and the car park on site regardless of whether the ownership of the land changes hands.
- 9.33 Concern has also been raised by local residents over the repeated applications to extend the restoration period at Great Westwood. The applicant has agreed that this will be the last application submitted for importation of material at the Site; however this is not part of the legal agreement and cannot be secured by condition either.

### **Flood Risk / Drainage**

- 9.34 The Site is within Flood Zone 1 and therefore has a low probability of flooding from rivers. The majority of the Site is considered to be at a low risk of pluvial flooding. The groundwater flood risk to the Site is considered to be low. The Site is considered to be at low risk in the event of reservoir failure.
- 9.35 Changes to the topography would increase run-off to the west and decrease run-off to the east of the Site when compared with the consented scheme. Currently there are issues with the land within

Phase 3 not draining in an appropriate manner. This application includes an outline strategy comprising a combination of swales and retention/infiltration basins. The combination of proposed changes to the topography, and measures to prevent run-off leaving the Site would, together, have a beneficial effect on the drainage of the Site.

- 9.36 The proposal is not subject to unacceptable risk from flooding and incorporates Sustainable Drainage Systems and is therefore considered to comply with Policy DM8 (Flood Risk and Water Resources) of the Three Rivers District Plan.

### **Noise, Air Quality and Neighbour Amenity**

- 9.37 The dominant background noise source is from traffic on the M25 and A41. The waste operations at the Site will form part of the background noise, although to a lesser degree than road traffic noise. The nature of noise created by HGVs, excavators and dozers is fairly typical of many restoration sites but will be at a lesser level than present due to a reduction in vehicle movements.
- 9.38 HGVs using the haul road, weighbridge and wheel wash will be audible from the nearest residential properties, although for six of the properties (Little Liz Caravan Park; South Lodge; The Grove Lodge; Long Pightley Mobile Home Park; Kesma; and Green Hedges. It is not at a level which would be considered a nuisance or cause a change in behaviour. However for the Lodge, Grove Mill Lane, the calculated noise without mitigation exceeds the suggested site noise limits. Therefore a temporary bund of approximately 3.5m would be placed to mitigate the noise issue during the importation phase.
- 9.39 The proposed restoration enhancements have the potential to generate air quality impacts from the movement, placements and shaping of restoration material and the movement of HGVs. It is commonplace to mitigate these effects through the use of water bowsers, wheel wash facilities and if necessary suspending operations during high prevailing wind speeds cause nuisance to residential properties.
- 9.40 The waste operations proposed as part of this application should not have an adverse impact on air pollution levels in the locality and the impact of dust particulates and emissions can be satisfactorily mitigated by condition and this is necessary to avoid unacceptable impacts.
- 9.41 The proposal is therefore considered to comply with Policy 16 (Soil, Air and Water) of the Hertfordshire Waste Core Strategy and Policy DM9 (Contamination and Pollution) of the Three Rivers Local Plan.

### **Public Access / Rights of Way**

- 9.42 As part of this proposal a car park will be provided on the Site, which will allow local residents to travel to the Site by vehicle and access the

Site via the new right of way around the boundary of the Site. Gates will be provided at three points at the Site to access the right of way from the external area.

- 9.43 The applicant has proposed a new bridleway on the eastern side of the Site which would connect the verge route on Langleybury Road, Sarratt Restricted Byway 71 and the Bridleway's within Whippendell Woods as well as a Public Right of Way footpath loop internal to the site. This proposal for new rights of ways has been supported by the Hertfordshire Rights of Way Team.
- 9.44 Access to the Site would be made available for the Lees Wood Scout and Guide Group who have written a letter in support of the application.
- 9.45 Both the extended Rights of Way and public access car park will be secured by S106 to ensure their permanence and can be given significant weight in the determination by securing public access to the Site, which is supported in Paragraph 81 of the NPPF.
- 9.46 Overall it is considered the proposals comply with Policy 15 (Rights of Way) of the Hertfordshire Waste Core Strategy.

#### **Ecology / Biodiversity**

- 9.47 The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment (Paragraph 109, NPPF) and local authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity (Paragraph 118, NPPF).
- 9.48 The aims for biodiversity are set out in Policy 9 (Contribute to Biodiversity) of the Hertfordshire Minerals Plan, Policy 19 (Protection and Mitigation) of the Hertfordshire Waste Core Strategy and Policy DM6 (Biodiversity, Trees, Woodland and Planting) of the Three Rivers District Plan for development to provide opportunities to contribute to biodiversity action plan targets and through restoration seek long-term overall enhancement to local biodiversity.
- 9.49 The Site offers considerable potential to enhance biodiversity on a local level through the creation of additional habitats and links with the existing network of habitats in the area. The existing habitats on site will remain and further habitats will be created with the implementation of further mixed deciduous woodland and provision of ponds. The enhancement of biodiversity should be given significant weight.
- 9.50 Phase 3 of the restoration will incorporate a special seed mix to encourage Turtle Doves to stop and feed. Turtle Doves are currently considered to be vulnerable and the provision of further habitat is necessary. The applicant has provided similar habitat at other sites under its ownership and has been encouraging evidence of success with Turtle Doves appearing at two CEMEX sites including three

juveniles. The measure is fully supported by the RSPB who work alongside CEMEX on a national programme of enhancing bird habitats and have provided a letter of support for this scheme.

- 9.51 A letter from the Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust has been submitted stating that CEMEX have asked the HMWT about taking on the long term management of the land. HMWT have said they would be happy to work alongside CEMEX to ensure a well-designed, feasible and appropriately resourced scheme that delivers ecological and community benefits.

## **10 Summary**

- 10.1 The application proposes the infilling and restoration of Great Westwood Quarry by importation and disposal of 237,000m<sup>3</sup> of inert waste material.
- 10.2 The application will enable the Site to be restored to an enhanced restoration scheme compared to the scheme currently approved. The importation of additional material supports the viability of the scheme to enable enhanced restorations to be completed. The planning conditions will ensure that the Site is restored within the specified time scale, reflecting the position that the extension of operations is only acceptable due to the enhancements being offered and the Site must be restored completely.
- 10.3 The proposal represents inappropriate development in the Green Belt, however very special circumstances have been demonstrated, including allowing a former mineral working to be restored to a mix of woodland and open pastures, provide opportunities for access to the countryside with a new carpark, creating two new bridleways, creating a landform more in keeping with the Landscape Character Area, improving the drainage of the land, providing additional habitat with particular emphasis on turtle doves and negotiating the purchase of land to provide a car park for St. Pauls C of E Primary School. Such considerations clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt and limited other harm in this particular case.
- 10.4 The timescale for completion of the restoration is extended until 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018 in order to provide ample opportunity to restore the Site whilst the weather conditions are suitable.
- 10.5 It is not necessary to refer the application to the Secretary of State under the Town and Country planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2009 because the proposed development would not have a significant impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
- 10.6 Overall having taken the balance of all the issues and policy into account, it is recommended that planning permission should be granted subject to referral to the Secretary of State and him not wishing to call the application in, signing and completion of the legal agreement and

the conditions as follows:

## **11 Conditions**

### **Accordance**

1. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans and documents submitted as part of the application:
  - Planning Statement (March 2016)
  - Transport Assessment (21283/TA/01 – March 2016)
  - Flood Risk & Drainage Assessment (6496cR2 – March 2016)
  - Further information to support outline SuDS Drainage Design (6496cTN2 – May 2016)
  - Noise Assessment (4410 – March 2016)
  - Air Quality Assessment (March 2016)
  - Habitat Management Plan Area (PLAN A – March 2016)
  - Landscape and Visual Appraisal (March 2016)
  - Woodland and Habitats Management Plan (PLAN B – March 2016)
  - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (June 2015)
  - Sequence of Restoration (March 2016)
  - Annual Schedule of Landscape and Management Operations (March 2016)
  - Outline Woodland and Habitats Aftercare and Management Plan (March 2016)
  - Site Plan (P5/158/20 – February 2016)
  - Restoration Master Plan (P5/158/18 – March 2016)

Reason: to ensure that the Site is properly restored in accordance with the planning application documents.

### **Date for completion**

2. The Site to which this development relates shall be restored (excluding aftercare) by 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018.

Reason: to ensure restoration is completed at the earliest opportunity in accordance with the NPPF (Paragraph 144).

### **Inert waste only**

3. Only inert waste shall be deposited at the Site, consisting of clean rubble and excavation material. Any waste deposited at the Site shall be free from timber, plastic, plaster, plasterboard, paper, empty containers, chemical contamination, or other material likely to cause pollution or affect the quality of final restoration.

Reason: to minimise the risk of pollution to land and water and to ensure the land is in a suitable state to be taken in to aftercare.

### **Final contours**

4. After the placement of topsoil the final pre-settlement contours of the Site shall conform to and not exceed the levels shown on drawing number P5/158/18 dated March 2016. No further material shall be placed above the level of the final contours, except as may be permitted as part of the aftercare requirements.

Reason: to ensure that an appropriate landform is achieved in accordance with the restoration plan in accordance with Policy 13 (Reclamation Scheme) of the Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan Review 2007.

### **Hours of operation**

5. All operations at the Site authorised by this planning permission shall only take place within the following hours:
  - 7.00am and 18.00pm on Mondays to Fridays
  - 7.00am and 13.00pm on Saturdays

No operations shall take place on Sundays or Public Holidays. For the purposes of this condition operations shall include vehicle movements connected with the importation of waste.

Reason: in the interest of residential amenity

### **Vehicle movements**

6. For the purposes of the development hereby permitted, there shall be no more than 180 lorry movements (90 in, 90 out) at the Site Monday to Friday, and 100 lorry movements (50 in, 50 out) on Saturdays unless otherwise agreed in writing in advance with the Mineral Planning Authority. Written records of vehicles entering and leaving the Site in connection with the development hereby permitted shall be kept by the Site operator for the duration of the development and made available for inspection by the Minerals Planning Authority upon request.

Reason: in the interests of highway safety and local amenity.

## **OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

### **Traffic Direction**



7. HGV traffic should approach and exit the Site via Langleybury Lane (Right turn into the Site and left turn out of the Site only).

Reason: in the interests of highway safety and local amenity.

#### **Noise from operations**

8. Noise levels from temporary operations at the Site shall not exceed 70dB LAeq (1 hour) as measured at the boundaries of the Site. Noise levels measured at the nearest sensitive receptor shall not exceed 10dB above background noise (i.e. existing noise sources including road traffic and aircraft noise).

Reason: in the interests of residential amenity.

#### **Noise from vehicles**

9. All vehicles, plant and machinery operated within the Site shall be maintained in accordance with manufacturer specification at all times. All such vehicles shall be fitted with white noise (non-tonal) reversing alarms and effective exhaust silencers.

Reason: in the interests of residential amenity.

#### **Mud on the highway**

10. The operator shall ensure that mud and other debris are prevented from being deposited on to the public highway. The operator shall put in place the following measures:
  - i. suitable wheel wash facilities maintained in working condition throughout the operation,
  - ii. all HGVs shall use the wheel wash facilities before exiting the Site,
  - iii. HGVs shall not be permitted to enter the public highway until all mud and debris likely to be deposited on to the road surface has been removed from the chassis and wheels,
  - iv. the haul road shall be kept free of mud and debris at all times,
  - v. Fir Tree Hill and Langleybury Lane shall be kept free of mud and debris originating from the Site at all times,
  - vi. a truck mounted road sweeper shall be deployed to clean the haul road, Fir Tree Hill and Langleybury Lane for each day of the operation (as regularly as required).

Reason: in the interests of highway safety and amenity

#### **Haul road: maintenance**

11. The surface of the haul road shall be properly maintained for the period of restoration specified in Condition 2. The haul road shall be inspected by the operator each day prior to the Site opening. Any damage identified by the operator or brought to their attention by the Mineral Planning Authority shall be repaired using ready-mix concrete within **one week** of the fault having being identified.

- Reason: to ensure the haul road is maintained in a suitable condition
12. The operator shall take all necessary steps to prevent unauthorised access to the Site and take appropriate measures to secure the Site through the provision and maintenance of suitable gates, fences, and other means of enclosure that shall have been agreed in writing the Mineral Planning Authority.

Reason: to prevent unauthorised access to the Site and reduce the risk of accidental damage to persons and property.

### **FURTHER INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS**

#### **Scheme of working**

13. Within **one month** of the date of this planning permission, a scheme of working shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Minerals Planning Authority. The scheme shall:
- a) provide a Method of Working Plan;
  - b) specify the method, direction, sequence, expected timing, duration and area of working and the machinery to be used;
  - c) specify the location, height and proposed management of soil and waste stockpiles;

The operation of the Site shall take place in accordance with the approved working scheme.

Reason: to ensure restoration of the Site is properly managed in accordance with Policy 13 (Reclamation Scheme) of the Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan Review 2007.

#### **Dust Suppression scheme**

14. Within **one month** of the date of this permission the operator shall submit a dust suppression scheme to demonstrate how dust emissions will be controlled and approved in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority. The scheme shall include:
- the use of water bowsers on haul roads and stockpiles,
  - cessation of working when the wind speeds are high enough to carry dust emitted from the Site toward nearby residential properties
- The approved scheme shall be implemented in full at all times the Site is operational.

Reason: to minimise emissions to the air in the interests of human health and to minimise potential nuisance to nearby residential properties as a result of operations on site

### **Car Park Details**

15. Within **three months** of the date of this permission the operator will submit full drawings detailing the layout and visual aesthetic of the proposed car park.

Reason: to ensure the car park is suitable and fits the rural aesthetic.

### **Surface water management scheme**

16. The development permitted by this planning permission shall be carried out in accordance with the Further information to support Outline SuDS Drainage Design prepared by ESI, reference 6496cTN2 dated May 2016 and the following mitigation measures as detailed within the surface water drainage strategy.

1) The surface water run-off generated by the Site will infiltrate via infiltration basins as shown in drawing P5/158/18 included in Appendix A of the Further information to support Outline SuDS Drainage Design prepared by ESI, reference 6496cTN2 dated May 2016.

2) A minimum attenuation volume of 10,604m<sup>3</sup> must be provided to ensure that there is no flooding from surface water run-off for all rainfall events up to and including the 1 in 100 year + climate change event. Attenuation to be provided in three infiltration basins and four soakaways shown in drawing P5/158/18 included in Appendix A of the Further information to support Outline SuDS Drainage Design prepared by ESI, reference 6496cTN2 dated May 2016.

The mitigation measures shall be fully implemented in accordance with the timing / phasing arrangements embodied within the scheme, or within any other period as may subsequently be agreed, in writing, by the local planning authority. If after further detailed design and calculations the applicant proposes a reduction in the attenuation volumes to be provided by the soakaways, such changes will need to be agreed with the LLFA.

Reason: To prevent flooding by ensuring the satisfactory disposal of surface water from the Site.

17. A detailed surface water drainage scheme for the Site, based on sustainable drainage principles and an assessment of the hydrological and hydro- geological context of the development will be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The drainage

strategy should demonstrate the surface water run-off generated up to and including the 1 in 100 year + 40% for climate change critical storm will not exceed the run-off from the undeveloped site following the corresponding rainfall event. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is completed. The scheme shall also include:

- 1) Infiltration tests in accordance with the BRE Digest 365 should be conducted where the infiltration basin of catchment 2 is proposed to be located.
- 2) Provision of a fully detailed drainage plan showing pipe diameters, pipe runs, outlet points and location of SuDS features and supporting calculations in accordance with the results of the infiltration tests.
- 3) Design details of the proposed swales and drainage basins.

Reason: To prevent the increased risk of flooding, both on and off site.

## **RESTORATION, SOIL HANDLING, & AFTERCARE**

### **Soil handling**

18. Topsoil and subsoil shall only be handled in dry and friable conditions between May to September unless it is demonstrated to the Mineral Planning Authority that operations can take place satisfactorily outside this period. Operations shall be suspended if:
  - (a) there is any standing water on the soil or soil storage bunds; and
  - (b) the surface of the material over which the machinery has to pass is wet or has exceeded its plastic limit.

Reason: To ensure that soils and other restoration material are handled and stored in such a way as to achieve the best possible standard of restoration and to minimise compaction and damage to the soil.

### **Soil layer composition**

19. On completion of landfilling, the stored subsoil and topsoil shall be spread over the filled area to an even depth so as to conform to the levels shown on Drawing number P5 /158/18. The final (top) one metre of fill shall be kept free from any material which may damage cultivation machinery or interfere with the subsequent land use. Prior to topsoiling, the area shall be thoroughly ripped with a winged subsoiler at a depth of 300mm at a tine spacing of no more than 450mm and then at a depth of 600mm. All rocks, stones and other solid objects in excess of 75mm diameter on the surface following ripping shall be removed.

Reason: to ensure that soils are constituted of material suitable for the proposed after use.

### **Commencement of soil placement**

20. The Mineral Planning Authority shall be given a minimum of **one week** notice of the intention to commence any soil replacement and cultivation works.

Reason: to allow the Mineral Planning Authority the opportunity to inspect the soil conditions and proposed working methods.

### **Topsoil**

21. No topsoil, subsoil or overburden whether imported or indigenous shall be removed from the Site.

Reason: to preserve soil resources and to ensure the land is in suitable condition to be accepted into aftercare.

### **Aftercare**

22. Within **three months** of the date of this planning permission a full aftercare scheme requiring such steps as may be necessary to bring the land to the required standard suitable for use as woodland and grassland shall be submitted for the written approval of the Mineral Planning Authority. The scheme shall specify the steps as may be required to achieve and maintain the required standard of land for use for woodland and pasture, and shall:
- a) cover a **ten year** period;
  - b) specify all practical steps and periods during which they are to be taken;
  - c) contain provision for the submission of an annual report to be submitted to the Minerals Planning Authority;
  - d) contain provision for annual site meetings with officers of the Minerals Planning Authority and any relevant consultee in order to assess the progress to date, any remedial action required, and the management of the Site for the following year.

Reason: to ensure the proposal meets the standards of aftercare specified in Policy 14 (Afteruse) of the Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan Review 2007.

23. The approved aftercare scheme shall be implemented in full on completion of restoration in accordance with Condition 22 for a period of ten years.

Reason: to ensure the land is provided in a suitable condition for its intended after use.

24. The period for aftercare specified in Condition 22(a) shall not commence until the Year 1 annual aftercare report has submitted to and agreed in writing by the Mineral Planning Authority.

Reason: to ensure the land is in a suitable condition to be accepted into aftercare

### **Annual report**

25. The applicant shall submit a written report to the Mineral Planning Authority at the end of each calendar year detailing progress in restoring the Site. This report shall include:
- a) a drawing indicating existing site levels for each of the phases of the development
  - b) details of the volume and nature of materials ripped for each of the phases of development at the Site during the year;
  - c) and estimation of the volume and nature of materials required for each of the phases of development to complete restoration to approved levels;
  - d) a statement as to whether the operation considers that a sufficient volume of materials will be forthcoming in the following year, together with anticipated sources of material, to achieve restoration to the approved levels;
  - e) additional measures as may be required as part of the restoration and aftercare, and proposed timescales.

Reason: to enable the Mineral Planning authority to review the need for further remediation works during the aftercare period.

### **Annual aftercare meeting**

26. The applicant (or successor in title) shall meet the Mineral Planning Authority in each calendar year during the aftercare period specified in Condition 22. The meeting shall take place no later than 30<sup>th</sup> March. Any works deemed necessary under Conditions 22 shall take place not later than the following year of aftercare.

Reason: to assess the condition of the land and aftercare requirements as may be necessary

## **COMPLETION OF RESTORATION**

### **Removal of hardstanding areas**

27. Within **three months** of the date of the completion of restoration (excluding aftercare) specified under Condition 2 (i.e. by 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018), all plant, foundations, hard-standings, machinery, haul and access roads shall be removed from the land and the land reinstated in accordance with the approved masterplan.

Reason: to ensure all development associated with the former mineral working is removed, and in the interests of providing the Site with a comprehensive landscaping scheme as required under Policy 13 of the Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan Review 2007.

## **GENERAL RESTRICTIONS**

### **Removal of permitted development rights**

28. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015, or any subsequent amendment of that Order, planning permission shall be obtained for the erection of any building, fixed plant, fixed machinery or fixed structures on the land and the written agreement of the Minerals Planning Authority shall be obtained prior to the placing on site of any buildings or structures in the nature of portable plant.

Reason: (a) the Site is within the Metropolitan Green Belt (b) structures are not required for the purposes of mineral extraction.

### **Storage of liquid fuel, oil or chemicals**

29. All fuel, oil and other liquid chemicals used or stored on site shall be kept in bunded storage tanks or bowsers. No fuel, oil, or other chemical likely to cause pollution to surface or groundwater shall be deposited at the Site.

Reason: to minimise the risk of pollution of soils and groundwater.

### **Groundwater protection**

30. No solid matter shall be deposited so that it passes or is likely to pass into any watercourse.

Reason: to prevent contamination of groundwater.

### **Water resources and groundwater protection**

31. Operations shall not be carried out in such a way as to cause any adverse change in flows or levels in any rivers, streams, ditches, springs, lakes or ponds in the vicinity of the Site.

Reason: to avoid having an adverse impact on the water environment.

## **Background information used by the author in compiling this report**

Application documents

NPPF 2012

Hertfordshire Minerals Local Plan Review: Adopted 2007

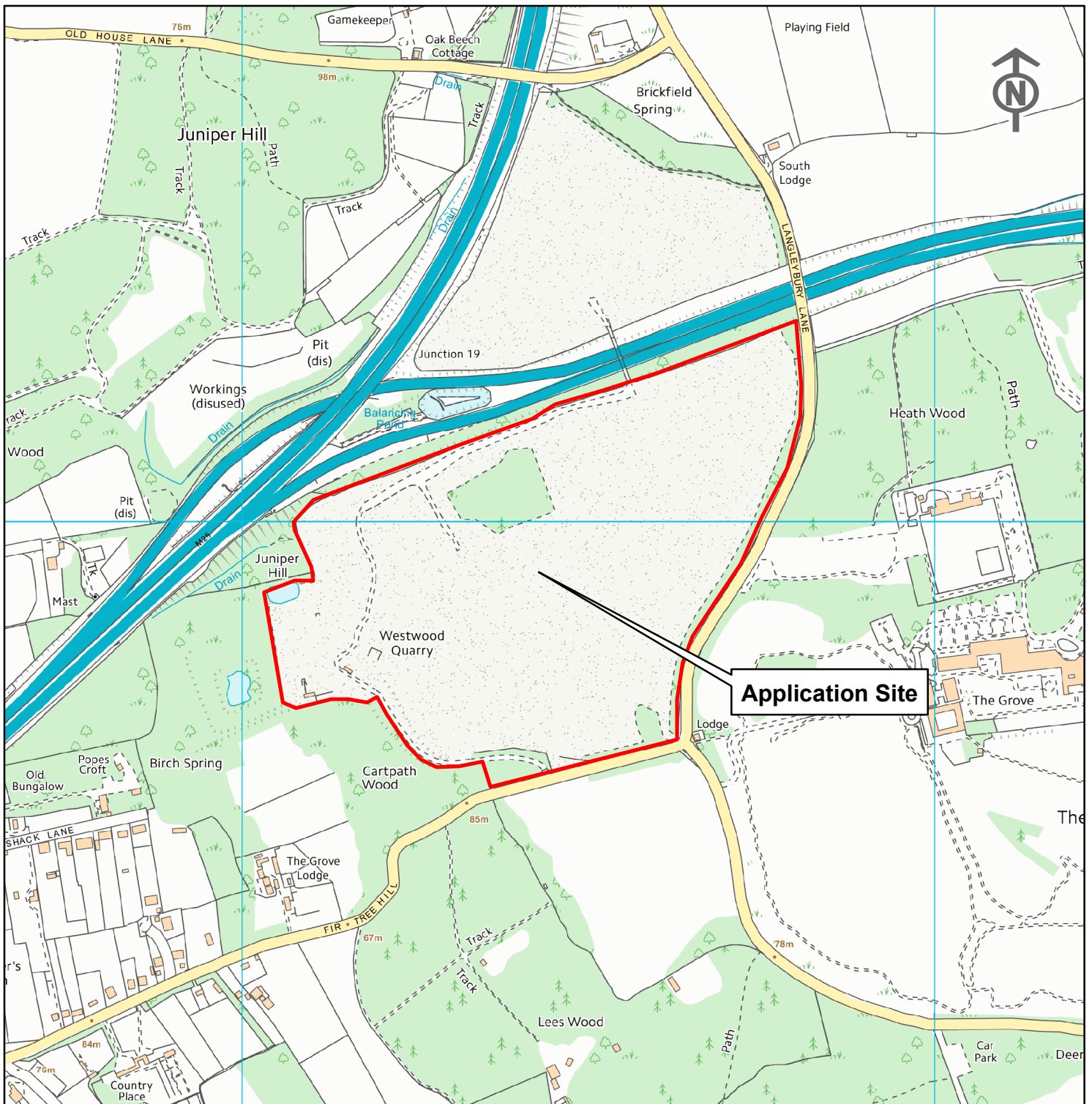
Hertfordshire Waste Core Strategy & Development Management Policies:  
Adopted November 2012

Three Rivers Development Management Policies Local Development  
Document: Adopted July 2013

Neighbour representations

Consultee responses



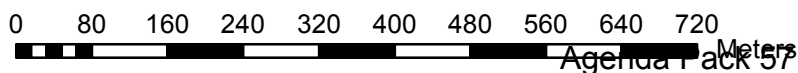


**DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE**

Date: Thursday 22nd September 2016

Proposed enhancement to the restoration of 31 hectares at Great Westwood Quarry through the importation of inert materials with completion of all operations within 24 months to deliver landscape, drainage, ecological, community and long-term management benefits

At: Great Westwood Quarry, Fir Tree Hill, Chandlers Cross, Watford, Herts, WD3 4LY



**HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE**  
**THURSDAY 22 SEPTEMBER AT 10AM**  
**STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Agenda No.

**3**

**APPLICATION FOR THE CREATION OF A SIGNALISED JUNCTION TO REPLACE THE EXISTING ROUNDABOUT, INCLUDING ASSOCIATED EXTENSIONS AT HERTFORD ROAD, SOUTH-EAST STEVENAGE, WITHIN THE AREA KNOWN AS BRAGBURY END, HERTFORDSHIRE.**

Report of the Chief Executive and Director of Environment

Author: Mrs Sharon Threlfall Tel: 01992 556270

Local Member: Councillor Sherma Batson

**1 Purpose of Report**

1.1 To consider planning application reference number 2/0372-16 for highway works at Hertford Road, South-East Stevenage, within the area known as Bragbury End.

**2 Summary**

2.1 The County Council are seeking to improve the A602 between Stevenage and Ware, through a series of proposals at a total of seven sites along this primary road. This application forms part of that wider scheme, and will development highway improvements of its own.

2.2 This application seeks planning permission for the creation of a signalised junction to replace the existing roundabout, including associated extensions at Hertford Road, South-East Stevenage, within the area known as Bragbury End. The development is also considered under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations 2011 (updated 2015) and is accompanied by an Environmental Statement.

2.3 The application site is located on the south east corner of the urban area of the town of Stevenage. There is a wide grassed verge on either side of the A602, and a grassed central reservation. The land to the north and east of the A602 is dominantly by a landscape of open fields and farmland. The area to the south is characterised by residential development, at the urban fringe of Stevenage.

2.4 Footways and cycleways run parallel to the existing roundabout, with a linking subway underneath the A602.

2.5 The application site is not located within or adjacent to any national, local landscape designated site or ecologically designated sites.

- 2.6 The application site is within the confines of the existing highway boundary. Ordinarily, such works would not require express planning permission, if carried out in isolation of any other road improvements. However, the applicant seeks to make improvements at a further three sections on the A602 between Stevenage and Ware. The County Planning Authority determined that the separate sections of the wider proposal were integral to each other.
- 2.7 Although they may benefit from separate planning applications, delivery contracts and bring their own benefits, the proposals seek to upgrade the A602 for the interlinked purpose of facilitating traffic along the route between Stevenage and Ware. As the total area of development exceeds the threshold of one hectare, the separate planning applications are accompanied by a (shared) Environmental Statement.
- 2.8 The General Arrangement plan is included at Appendix 1. A plan showing the wider proposals for the A602 is shown at Appendix 2. The non-technical summary of the Environmental Statement is included at Appendix 5.
- 2.9 The main planning issues of the application can be summarised as:
- Need and justification
  - Impact on highways and transport
  - Quality of design
  - Landscape and visual impact
  - Impact on ecology and biodiversity
  - Impact on residential amenity (noise, dust, light)
- 2.10 The report recommends that the Chief Executive and Director of Environment should be authorised to grant planning permission subject to the following TWELVE conditions: -
1. Time limit for commencement
  2. Approved plans and documents
  3. Landscaping plan; including tree protection and habitat improvements
  4. Materials used in construction
  5. Drainage strategy
  6. Flood risk assessment
  7. Connection to sewer network
  8. Ground investigations
  9. Traffic management plan
  10. Construction management plan; including compound details, hours of construction and wheel/chassis cleaning
  11. Lighting
  12. Fencing/boundary treatment

### **3 Description of the site**

- 3.1 The application site forms part of the A602, which provides the key road link from junction 7 of the A1(M) on the edge of Stevenage, in the west, to the junction with A10 at Ware, in the east.
- 3.2 The proposed development is for highway improvements is an existing three-arm roundabout on the urban fringe of the south east of Stevenage. The roundabout allows traffic from Hertford Road, which is a minor road, to join the A602. Hertford Road leads to a housing estate to the west of the roundabout, which is then bounded by the train line which runs into central London. Hertford Road provides an alternative to the B197 for those in southern Stevenage to travel to Knebworth.
- 3.3 Stevenage Golf Course and Conference Centre is located to the north east of the A602, and Stevenage Brook runs through the Centre's grounds.
- 3.4 Approximately 200 metres along the A602, travelling towards the south east, is the area of Bragbury End. This is an existing small residential housing estate, and the area has been identified for a housing allocation of 550 houses in the emerging Borough Plan 2011 – 2031.
- 3.5 There are wide grassed verges along both sides of the A602. The residential properties to the north-west are set back from the A602, and benefit from well-established planting as screening. A cycleway and footpath runs between the houses and the A602, with a link underneath the carriageway to provide non-vehicular access to Sacombe Mews, and Aston beyond.
- 3.6 The existing lighting, which is compliant with Hertfordshire County Council standards, will be realigned in order to match the new junction layout.
- 3.7 The site is bounded by the Metropolitan Green Belt to the north east.
- 3.8 Three ancient lanes and associated hedgerows are identified in relatively close proximity to the road junction; the proposed development does not impact or otherwise require the removal of any of these environmental assets. The site is not located within or adjacent to any national, local landscape designation or ecologically designated sites, the closest being the Stevenage Brook Marsh.
- 3.9 The site is in Flood Zone 1 (low probability of flooding) and is in Groundwater Source Protection Zone 3 (lowest zone for source protection).
- 3.10 Records show that there have been no previous planning applications sought from Hertfordshire County Council, for the A602 roundabout within the area known as Bragbury End.

- 3.11 A previous application (3/1914-06) for improvements to the A602 adjacent to Heath Mount School was approved by the Development Control Committee in November 2006, but was not implemented.

#### **4 Description of the proposed development**

- 4.1 The proposal is to replace the existing roundabout with a traffic signal T-junction operating on a full time basis.
- 4.2 Further, it is proposed to widen the carriageway on each of three arms, to allow for a two lane approach. A short right-hand turn lane (into Hertford Road) is also proposed in the southbound direction. This will largely be achieved by taking land to the east of the carriageway, which currently forms the wide grass verge. To facilitate this road widening, the subways will be extended, and footpath and cycleway to the south east of the junction will be aligned within the existing highway boundary.
- 4.3 The lighting columns will be relocated to reflect the revised junction alignment, but they have already been upgraded to new LED technology which has a lesser residual impact or spill.
- 4.4 The proposed development would require the removal of a number of trees along Hertford Road, and the southern carriageway of the A602. A compound area to the south of the junction will be constructed above ground level to ensure root protection of existing trees. Compensatory planting is proposed.
- 4.5 The land take is all within the existing highway boundary.

#### **5 Consultations**

- 5.1 A total of 1314 properties were consulted in respect of the application. A press notice was placed in the Hertfordshire Mercury, and site notices were erected on 2 June 2016.
- 5.2 Stevenage Borough Council as District Planning Authority raises no objection to the proposed junction improvement works. The council highlights the emerging Local Plan policies which are to be read in conjunction with the extant saved policies of the adopted Local Plan (2004), in addition to the allocation of up to 550 dwellings in close proximity to the proposed development. The consultation response is included at Appendix 3.
- 5.3 Stevenage Borough Council Arboricultural Officer considers the removal of trees as identified on the submitted plans as acceptable. It is recommended that replacement trees should be secured through condition, and carried out as part of an agreed landscaping scheme. A second condition should be imposed to protect all retained trees as set out in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment.
- 5.4 The Environment Agency has no comment to make on the application.

- 5.5 Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority does not wish to restrict the grant of planning permission. There are no highway safety issues associated with these proposals and therefore the Highway Authority has no objection to the proposal.
- 5.6 Highways England offers no objection to the proposed development.
- 5.7 Hertfordshire County Council Flood Risk Management has no objection to the development on flood risk grounds. Conditions requiring that the works be carried out in compliance with the approved drainage strategy and mitigation measures from the Flood Risk Assessment, and that no development should be commenced prior to confirmation of permission to connect discharge point(s) into the sewer network are recommended.
- 5.8 Natural England has no comments to make on the application, on the basis that the development is not likely to result in significant impacts on statutory designated nature conservation sites or landscapes.
- 5.9 Herts Ecology did not consider there to be any ecological constraints associated with the proposals. The fauna and flora in the vicinity of the proposed development are considered to have little ecological significance. The proposed mitigation in terms of timing of works, pre-checking for nesting birds, habitat replacement and the provision of bat boxes are considered acceptable, although further habitat improvements should be achieved through condition.
- 5.10 The Landscape Officer from Hertfordshire County Council advised that, while there will be moderate to large adverse landscape impacts during the construction phase, this will be short term and temporary. Overall, the proposed development does not result in any unacceptable adverse landscape and visual effects. It is recommended that the condition requiring a landscaping scheme should be applied to ensure that the loss of any planting is adequately mitigated and compensated for. A copy of the full consultation response is included at Appendix 4.
- 5.11 No other statutory consultation responses were received.

5.12 Public consultation

A total of 21 responses have been received. One response was in support of the proposal, one asking questions and a third was to confirm that the consultee had no comment to make. There were 18 responses either objecting to, or raising concerns in respect of the proposed development.

5.13 The objections can be summarised as follows:-

Objection 1 – Need

- Traffic congestion is only an issue for a very limited period of each weekday
- Waste of money
- Not an accident blackspot

- Money should be spent on resurfacing the roads or improving access to A1(M)

Objection 2 – Design of the development

- Preference for a roundabout over a signalised junction
- Junction is in the wrong place; should be at junction with Broadwater Crescent
- Will make it harder to turn right out of Broadwater Crescent
- Lights will favour A602 over Bragbury End making it harder for residents to join the carriageway
- It will be harder to join Hertford Road due to lights on junction
- Proposal takes in private residential land

Objection 3 – Road Safety

- Accidents will increase
- Congestion will only be moved to a different location
- No measures to reduce speed of vehicles
- Need to reflect more consideration of cyclists

Objection 4 – Wildlife Impact

- Rooks are present in area identified as a compound off Blenheim Way

Objection 5 – Residential Amenity

- Noise, disruption and inconvenience during construction phase

## **6 The Development Plan**

- 6.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. For the purposes the Act, the development plan comprises The Local Plan for Stevenage 2004 (District Plan Second Review), and the saved policies within it.
- 6.2 Material consideration is also given to the new Stevenage Borough Local Plan, which is due to be formally adopted in December 2016 following the conclusion of the most recent consultation in February 2016.
- 6.3 The most relevant planning policies to consider for this application are:

Stevenage Local Plan (adopted 2004)

Policy TW1	Sustainable development
Policy TW2	Structural open space
Policy TW9	Quality in design
Policy T6	Design standards
Policy T13	Cycleways
Policy T14	Pedestrians
Policy EN12	Loss of woodland

Policy EN13	Trees in development
Policy EN15	Ancient lanes and associated hedgerows
Policy EN17	Wildlife sites and Regionally important geological sites
Policy EN18	Natural habitats in adjoining local authorities
Policy EN21	Other sites of nature conservation importance
Policy EN27	Noise pollution
Policy EN29	Light pollution
Policy EN36	Water conservation

#### Emerging Stevenage Borough Plan 2011 - 2031

Policy SP1	Presumption in favour of sustainable development
Policy SP5	Infrastructure
Policy SP8	Good design
Policy SP12	Green Infrastructure and the natural environment
Policy IT4	Transport assessments and travel plans
Policy IT5	Parking and access
Policy IT7	New and improved links for pedestrians and cyclists
Policy GD1	High Quality Design
Policy NH2	Wildlife Sites
Policy NH5	Trees and Woodland
Policy FP7	Pollution

- 6.4 Hertfordshire County Council Local Transport Plan (2011 – 2031) sets out the County Council's vision and strategy for the long term development of transport within the county.
- 6.5 These policies are considered alongside national guidance in the form of The National Planning Policy Framework.

## **7 Planning Issues**

- 7.1 The principal planning issues to be taken into account in determining this application can be summarised as:
- Need and justification
  - Impact on highways and transport
  - Quality of design
  - Landscape and visual impact
  - Impact on ecology and biodiversity
  - Impact on residential amenity (noise, dust, light)

### **Need and justification**

- 7.2 The site is part of the wider proposals for improvements to the A602, which are considered necessary to reduce overall journey times and reliability on the route between Stevenage (A1(M)) and Ware (A10). This route is considered to be of a low standard for a primary route, within junction and alignment issues, and poor visibility.
- 7.3 The traffic flows often exceed the capacity of the major junctions on the route, which is anticipated to come under increasing pressure with major



housing growth planned in the draft Local Plan proposals for Stevenage and East Hertfordshire. Residents and businesses will be heavily reliant on the A602 to facilitate movement in and around the county.

- 7.4 The Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has highlighted, within the Strategic Economic Plan<sup>1</sup> (SEP) that the road network is chronically congested, and that this is a major constraint to growth in both housing and jobs.
- 7.5 It is considered that the proposed improvements to the A602 would meet the key objectives of the 2011 Government Transport White Paper<sup>2</sup>, which provides key objectives for future transport investment, namely:
- to create growth in the economy and to tackle climate change by cutting carbon emissions; and,
  - to tackle places where congestion causes slow and unreliable journeys with significant impacts on the economy and environment;
- 7.6 The White Paper also highlights that public transport does not represent a viable alternative to the private car for all journeys. There is limited provision of east-west public transport links between Stevenage and Ware, with the train lines running into the transport hubs of Central London.
- 7.7 The wider A602 improvements have been identified as one of the top three scoring schemes against deliverability and achievement of Local Transport Plan goals. It was one of three schemes submitted to the Department of Transport in July 2013, as the Local Transport Bodies' (LTB) priority list of major transport schemes to be delivered from 2015 – 2019. The LTB is tasked to prioritise transport investment.
- 7.8 The Hertford Road roundabout is identified as limiting the through flow of traffic, which results in significant queues during peak morning and evening periods. This is attributed to the capacity of the junction, in terms of the number of lanes available on the approach. The congestion is compounded by the lack of control over traffic flow priority.
- 7.9 The proposal is to remove the roundabout and provide a signalised T-Junction. Traffic signals provide for better control of the junction and to allow more vehicles along the A602, especially at peak times. Traffic signals also give a greater capacity at the junction and can allow for greater future flexibility. Additionally, Hertford Road will have its own phase which will allow vehicles to exit the junction in a safer manner.
- 7.10 Objections have been raised on the basis that the traffic lights will be operational full time, to address congestion issues which are experienced during the morning and evening rush hours, and

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<sup>1</sup> Perfectly Placed for Business: Hertfordshire's Strategic Economic Plan. March 2014

<sup>2</sup> Department for Transport, 2011, Creating Growth, Cutting Carbon. Making Sustainable Local Transport Happen

predominantly limited to weekdays. The traffic lights are required all day to ensure the safe operation of the junction, given the change in the nature of the junction from a roundabout which operates on a give way basis. Traffic lights will ensure that vehicles from Hertford Road will have safe opportunity to join the A602.

- 7.11 The proposal is therefore compliant with the overarching sustainability aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and aims of Local Plan Policy TW1, in seeking to deliver a long term solution to economic and social issues, by facilitating housing growth, job creation and movement of goods and people, while minimising the additional land take from the development. This is further supported by Emerging Local Plan Policies SP1, IT5 and IT7, to which material weight is to be given.

### **Impact on highways and transport**

- 7.12 The proposal seeks to provide junction improvements which will improve the throughput and flow of traffic, and to increase the capacity of the constraint offered by the existing carriageway layout. The roundabout is currently operating above its theoretical capacity threshold during peak hours, resulting in delayed and unreliable journeys on a primary route within the county.
- 7.13 The traffic in the area is projected to continue to grow, thereby exacerbating future capacity issues at the Hertford Road roundabout. However, the Transport Assessment found that proposed signal controlled junction would operate within the theoretical capacity threshold forecast for 2024.
- 7.14 The development is not sought to address road safety issues; the site is not an accident blackspot and there is no specific concern in respect of vehicle speed, other than would be regulated by the speed limit of 40mph set on the A602 at this point. The planning aim of the development is to address traffic flow, given that the existing roundabout is inadequate to handle the existing volume of traffic, with further housing allocation proposed in close proximity.
- 7.15 The A602 will remain open during the works and travellers would only be affected during short periods of construction, with some temporary potential for an increase in journey times due to the need for local diversions and traffic management. Once completed, the development would serve to improve the travelling experience for private road users and buses, reduce driver stress, provide more consistent journey times and reduce vehicle emissions. This is therefore consistent with the sustainability considerations as set out at paragraph 7.11, and provides a safe and efficient highway network as supported by Emerging Local Plan Policies SP5 and IT4.
- 7.16 Consideration is also given to the effect on other travellers; non-motorised users (NMUs), pedestrians, public right of way, cyclists and equestrians. The rural nature of the A602 means that there is limited

use along the length of the road between Stevenage and Ware by NMUs. The predominant NMU are cyclists, and this activity is concentrated at weekends and on summertime evenings, reflecting its recreational nature as opposed to a method of commuting.

- 7.17 The urban nature of the land in and around the Hertford Road roundabout means that there is an increased use by pedestrians and cyclists. Sustrans highlights that there is a traffic free cycle route next to the A602 in Stevenage and this continues through a subway beneath the existing junction.
- 7.18 This can be used by both cyclists and pedestrians. During the realignment and extension of the existing subway, the footpath and cycleway on the opposite side of the A602 will remain available for use. It is therefore considered that the construction phase will have a slight adverse impact, but that this will be a temporary period and once operational wider scheme is considered to have a slight beneficial effect. The benefit is only measured as slight due to the low number of cyclists and pedestrians using the wider scheme.
- 7.19 The completed scheme at Hertford Road would provide a planned highway infrastructure with segregated cycleways and footways as set out in Emerging Local Plan Policy SP6fii, and facilitates movement of groups in accordance with the Route User Hierarchy is set out in Manual for Streets (MfS); disabled users, pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users, specialist service vehicles, other motor traffic.
- 7.20 The proposal at Hertford Road junction is therefore in compliance with Local Plan Policies T13 and T14 and Emerging Local Plan Policies IT5 and IT7, and in support of paragraph 35 of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Local Transport Plan.
- 7.21 The proposed scheme across the wider route will maintain all public Rights of Way affected. While there may be a small increase in length of some routes, the significance of the effect is considered to be neutral and it is further noted that the number of people using these routes is low.
- 7.22 There are likely to be no equestrian flows at the Hertford Road junction. The wider scheme is anticipated to have a slight adverse impact during construction but deliver a slight beneficial effect in the longer term.
- 7.23 A Traffic Management Plan can be secured through condition to minimise driver stress and frustration, and to ensure the appropriate and timely sharing of information regarding works which may impact journey routes or times.
- 7.24 No rail routes would be impacted by the proposed development, or the wider scheme.

## **Quality of design**

- 7.25 All elements of the proposed improvements to the A602 have been designed in accordance with the latest guidance set from the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB). The details of any materials to be used in construction can be agreed by condition to ensure a cohesive design as relates to the local environment.
- 7.26 There are limited opportunities to make a design statement, given the relatively small scale of the project and the need to prioritise safety of road users, pedestrians, cyclists and other users. However, the proposal provides a broad and open subway to help to minimise the risk of crime, and allow for planting to enhance the junction setting. The design of the realigned junction at Hertford Road incorporates the requirements in Local Plan Policies TW9 and T6, in addition to Emerging Plan Policies GD1 and SP8.
- 7.27 A signalised roundabout would need to be significantly bigger, it require private land from the golf course and compromise the provision of a highway verge. This would be contrary to the provisions of Local Plan Policy TW2 Structural open space

## **Landscape and visual impact**

- 7.28 A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been submitted with the application. This considers the effect of the development on landscape and visual amenity.
- 7.29 The area to the east of the Hertford Road junction is described as 'Lowland Settled Farmlands', which is characterised as a settled agricultural landscape containing medium sized fields and a network of hedged and occasionally sunken lanes. This landscape is considered to be of moderate value and with a moderate susceptibility to change in relation to the proposed development.
- 7.30 The overall significance of effect during the construction phase on this landscape is considered to be neutral/slight adverse, with a neutral impact on the Aston Estate Farmland due to the localised nature of the proposed development.
- 7.31 The impact on these two landscapes during the operation phase is considered to be neutral, as vegetation removed during the construction process will be replaced and new hedgerows planted to link with existing hedgerows.
- 7.32 The Hertford Road junction is at the south-eastern extent of the Stevenage Urban Area, and dominated by mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century housing. This landscape is identified as being of low value and with a low susceptibility to change in relation to the proposed development.

- 7.33 The major impact in this area is resultant from the construction compound in an area of grass to the east of Blenheim Way, which will be visible from the rear upstairs windows of the residential properties. Measures can be taken to mitigate these impacts, such as conditions to limit the directional spray of floodlighting and the protecting the existing and retained mature trees. The LVIA finds that there would be no residual significant adverse effects on residential receptors from this element of the wider scheme.
- 7.34 The conclusions of the LVIA are supported by the Hertfordshire County Council Landscape Officer, who finds that any adverse impacts are small scale and limited to the construction phase. The loss of any planting should be mitigated for by the imposition of a condition requiring a submission of a detailed landscaping scheme for approval.
- 7.35 The scheme requires the removal of a total of 17 trees in and around the Hertford Road junction, in order to facilitate the development. The Arboricultural Officer of Stevenage Borough Council, finds that the removal of trees acceptable, in that they are not of significant value, but replacements are to be secured by condition. The Hertfordshire County Council Landscape Officer recommends replacement trees to be planted on a two for one basis.
- 7.36 Further, the Landscape Officer supports the proposed native hedgerow and planting mix specified within the submitted Landscape Strategy, which includes oak, maple and hornbeam planted at irregular spacing thereby reflecting the local setting.
- 7.37 The development is therefore compliant with Local Plan Policies EN12 and EN13, and with Emerging Local Plan Policy NH5. An arboricultural report has been submitted, and provisional mitigation proposals have been submitted which demonstrates the applicant's commitment to provide compensatory planting.

### **Impact on ecology and biodiversity**

- 7.38 The NPPF states that the planning system should seek to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment, and to provide net biodiversity gains. The Environment Statement provides details of the desk studies and field studies which have been carried out across the wider proposed scheme, including the Hertford Road junction.
- 7.39 The proposed works at Hertford Road junction take place entirely within the existing highway boundary and the associated verges. This is a mown grassland with some scrub and plantation woodland, which is considered to be of a low ecological value. Such an environment does not provide a suitable habitat for protected or notable species. This view supported in the consultation response of Herts Ecology.

- 7.40 The highway compound is to be situated in an area of woodland and mown grassland, off Blenheim Way, which forms part of the Structural Open Space alongside the A602. A neighbour response raised a concern regarding nesting rooks in this area.
- 7.41 Rooks, and all wild birds (including their nests and their eggs), are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Countryside and Right of Way Act 2000. The nesting and breeding area of these birds can be protected through a Construction Management Plan, and required by condition. A further condition can require all trees which are to be retained to be protected in line with the details set out in the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment.
- 7.42 There is to be no impact on the ancient hedgerows of Aston Lane, Bragbury Lane or Watton Lane, as none of these hedgerows are to be removed. The proposed development area is distinct from the Stevenage Brook Marsh wildlife site, and has no impact on it.
- 7.43 The proposed development is therefore compliant with Local Plan Policies TW2, EN17, EN18 and EN21 and Emerging Local Plan Policy NH2, NH5 and SP12.

#### **Impact on residential amenity (e.g. noise, light, air quality)**

- 7.44 The Environmental Statement has considered the potential impact of sound, noise and vibration arising from both the construction and operational phases of the proposed development on residential and non-residential receptors within 300 metres of the proposed scheme, and consistent with the recommendations of BS5228-1:2009+A1:2014 Code of practice for noise and vibration control on construction and open sites: Part 1 Noise and Part 2 Vibration (British Standards Institution, 2014).
- 7.45 While there is likely to be significant noise or vibration effects during the construction phase of the proposed development, these are anticipated to be short term and taking a total of 26 weeks, with the only night-time operations relating to the 10 week surfacing work. In the longer term, due to the positioning of the realigned junction as compared to the existing junction, there is no significant change expected to the traffic flows and speeds that would trigger a noise level change threshold.
- 7.46 It will be possible to reduce the scale of the potential noise and vibration impacts by adopting the measures set out in BS5228 including, but not limited to, switching off engines when not in use, minimised drop heights of materials, the use of screening. These measures can be included the Construction Management Plan, which itself can be secured through a pre-commencement condition.
- 7.47 Elements of the wider A602 Improvement Scheme are likely to have a greater noise and vibration impact, given the closer proximity of residential properties to construction works. The Environmental

Statement concludes that those impacts can be effectively mitigated. The proposed development is therefore compliant with Local Plan Policy EN27 and Emerging Local Plan Policy FP7.

- 7.48 The existing lighting columns have already been upgraded to LED technology and are compliant with Hertfordshire County Council standards, minimising glare and light spillage. These columns will be repositioned to reflect the realigned junction, and therefore achieve compliance with Local Plan Policy EN29 and Emerging Plan Policies FP7 and GD1g.
- 7.49 The proposed scheme is not within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), and therefore this issue was not assessed further in the Environmental Statement.
- 7.50 However, the close proximity of the residential properties, which are classed as sensitive receptors means that there is a high sensitivity to dust which may be generated during the construction phase. This can be limited by adopted mitigation and control measures, in line with IAQM (Institute of Air Quality Management) guidance, and incorporated within a Construction Management Plan. The plan itself can be secured through a pre-commencement condition. The proposed development is therefore compliant with Emerging Local Plan Policy FP7.

### **Environmental Statement**

- 7.51 An Environmental Statement has been submitted to accompany the application. This is as the wider proposed scheme of development to improve the A602 between Stevenage and Ware falls within Category 10(f) Schedule 2 of the Environmental Regulations as the total development, outside of the highway boundary, is greater than the application threshold of one hectare.
- 7.52 The characteristics, location and potential impacts are determined to be potentially significant. The Non-Technical Summary is attached at Appendix 5.

### **Environmental Statement – Cultural Heritage**

- 7.53 A desk-based review of the historical information within 1 kilometre of the A602 was undertaken, with additional research within the footprint of the Ware Road re-alignment which forms part of the wider scheme.
- 7.54 There are 25 non designated cultural heritage assets within 1 kilometre of the central alignment of the Hertford Road junction. The specific works sought to improve the junction are to be carried out in an area already disturbed by the construction of the existing area, and would not impact on the 25 heritage assets.

### **Environmental Statement – Geology, Soils and Materials**

- 7.55 The Environmental Statement considers the impact of the wider proposed scheme on the geology, soils and materials of a study area defined as 500 metres either side of the proposed scheme central alignment. This was based on both the construction and operation phase.
- 7.56 It is found that by adopting mitigation measures, the risk from accidental spills and leaks, and earthworks can be reduced to negligible through adopting best practice techniques. There are no specific concerns in respect of the Hertford Road junction.
- 7.57 During the operation of the wider scheme, there is the potential for risk of accidental spills and leaks, in respect of road traffic accidents. The design of the scheme incorporates pollution interceptors, and a ground investigation can be secured through condition to ensure that an informed technical design protects against the potential for dissolution of chalk. There are no specific concerns in respect of the Hertford Road junction.

### **Environmental Statement – Community and Private Assets**

- 7.58 There are expected to be no significant adverse effects to the community services in and around the A602, as a result of the wider proposed scheme.
- 7.59 No buildings are affected by the proposed scheme.
- 7.60 The adjoining agricultural fields are of the best and most versatile for agricultural use, and are afforded protection under the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework. It is considered that any impacts can be managed through adopted a best practice approach and a soil resources plan. However, there are no private assets impacted by the Hertford Road junction improvements.

### **Environmental Statement – Road Drainage and the Water Environment**

- 7.61 A Construction Management Plan, secured by condition, can be adopted to regulate matters including but not limited to sediment control, controlled storage of materials, restricting the use of polluting materials near receptors and local flood control to reduce the potential for adverse impacts on the water environment.
- 7.62 It is considered that the proposed changes to the existing road network at Hertford Road junction would have a neutral impact, given that robust measures are already in place to protect the water environment. This can be further enhanced through a revised Plan, thereby offering additional protection to Stevenage Brook and maintaining the low flooding risk in this Flood Zone 1 location.



## **8 Conclusion**

- 8.1 This report has identified a number of impacts that could occur but which can be adequately managed by the imposition of appropriate conditions.
- 8.2 The proposed works in respect of the realignment of the Hertford Road junction are all contained within the highway boundary, and if considered in isolation, the applicant would not have had to seek express planning permission.
- 8.3 The highway improvements will allow the upgrading of a sub-standard primary route, and help to deliver more reliable journey times, meeting a legitimate planning need.
- 8.4 The development is compliant with principles of the National Planning Policy Framework, and the Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2031 in delivering highway improvements to deliver a safe and resilient transport system. While potential adverse impacts have been identified, the imposition of robust conditions can protect against harm to landscape, visual impact, ecology, biodiversity and residential amenity.

## **9 Conditions**

- 9.1 The recommendation to approve the proposed development is subject to conditions.
  1. Time limit for commencement
  2. Approved plans and documents
  3. Landscaping plan; including tree protection and habitat improvements
  4. Materials used in construction
  5. Drainage strategy
  6. Flood risk assessment
  7. Connection to sewer network
  8. Ground investigations
  9. Traffic management plan
  10. Construction management plan; including compound details, hours of construction and wheel/chassis cleaning
  11. Lighting
  12. Fencing/boundary treatment

**Background information used by the author in compiling this report**

Planning application reference 2/0372-16 including supporting documents and environmental statement

Consultee responses

Relevant policy documents:

*National Planning Policy Framework 2012*

*Stevenage Local Plan (adopted 2004)*

*Emerging Stevenage Borough Plan 2011 - 2031*

*Hertfordshire County Council Local Transport Plan (2011 – 2031)*

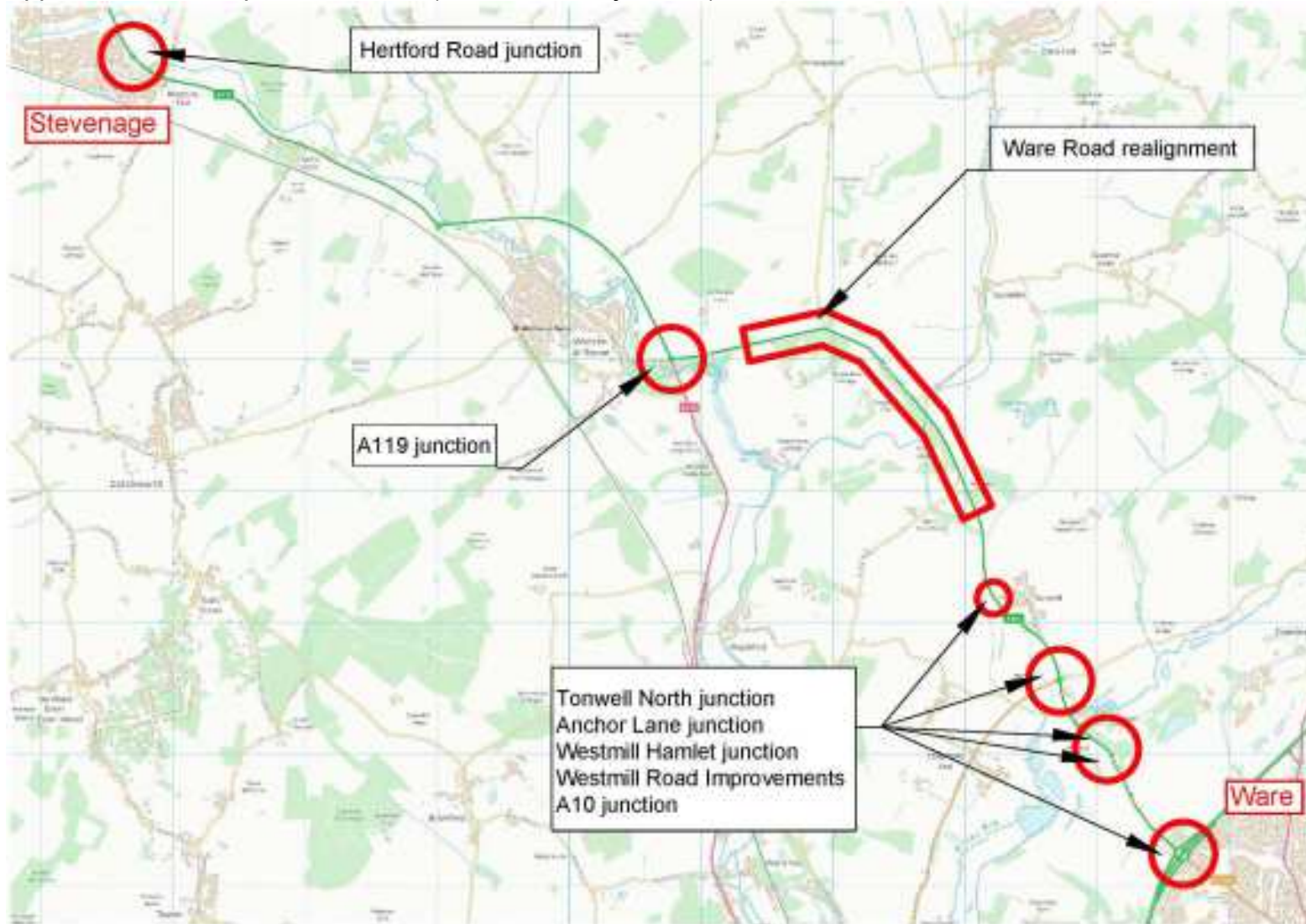
*Stevenage Urban Transport Plan 2010*

**Appendices**

1. General Arrangement
2. The Proposed Scheme (Hertford Road junction) within the wider area
3. Consultation response from Stevenage Borough Council
4. Consultation response from Hertfordshire County Council Landscape Officer
5. Environmental Statement: Volume 1 – Non-technical summary



Appendix 2 The Proposed Scheme (Hertford Road junction) within the wider area



Appendix 3  
Consultation response from Stevenage Borough Council

Dear Mr Owen,

**Planning application reference: SLUP/CM0996a PL\0794\16**

**RE: Proposed creation of a signalised junction to replace the existing roundabout, including associated extensions to subways and changes to verges, lighting, drainage, landscaping and associated engineering works at Hertford Road, south-east Stevenage, within area known as Bragbury End.**

**At: Junction of Hertford Road and Broadhall Way, Stevenage.**

I refer to your letter dated 26<sup>th</sup> May regarding the above.

Following a review of the application submission, I can advise that Stevenage Borough Council raises no objection to the proposed junction improvements works at Hertford Road/Broadhall Way. However, under Policy H04 (South East of Stevenage) of the Stevenage Borough Local Plan 2011-2031 Publication Draft 2011 - 2031 land as defined in the Council's Proposals Map is allocated for the development of 550 dwellings.

The site as identified by the aforementioned policy would be developed as two separate parcels:

- North of the A602 (150 dwellings); and
- South of the A602 (400 dwellings).

Given the above, the increase in the number of future dwellings could impact on this junction over the course and beyond the Council's Draft Local Plan period. Given this, it is recommended that these additional dwelling units should be taken into consideration in the traffic and junction modelling which has been undertaken as part of this proposal.

Separate to the above, I have been asked to refer you to a list of the adopted District Plan Policies (2004) against their respective replacement Policies which are contained within the Stevenage Borough Draft Local Plan (2016) in the table below:

Table 1: Schedule of policies contained within the adopted Local Plan (2004) to be read in conjunction with the policies contained with the respective replacement policies in the Draft Local Plan (2016).

<b>District Local Plan Second Review Policy</b>	<b>Replacement Policy contained within the Draft Stevenage Local Plan</b>
Policy TW1: Sustainable Development	Policy SP2: Sustainable Development in Stevenage
Policy TW2: Structural Open Space	Policy SP12: Green Infrastructure and the natural environment Policy NH1: Principal Open Spaces Policy NH6: General Protection for Open Space
Policy TW9: Quality in Design	Policy NH7: Open Space Standards Policy SP8: Good Design
Policy T6: Design Standards	Policy GD1: High Quality Design
Policy T13: Cycleways	Policy GD1: High Quality Design Policy IT5: Parking and Access Policy IT7: New and improved links for pedestrians and cyclists

Policy T14: Pedestrians

Policy IT5: Parking and Access

Policy IT7: New and improved links for pedestrians and cyclists

Policy EN12: Loss of Woodland

Policy NH5: Trees and Woodland.

Policy EN27: Noise Pollution

Policy FP7: Light and Noise Pollution

Policy EN13: Trees in development

Policy NH5: Trees and Woodland.

Policy EN17: Wildlife Sites and Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS)

Policy NH2: Wildlife Site

Policy EN29: Light Pollution

Policy FP7; Light and Noise Pollution

Policy EN36: Water Conservation

Policy FP1: Climate Change

Separately, it is noted that a number of trees and groups (partial groups) of trees as detailed on the Arboricultural Impact Assessment drawing: Arbtech AIA 01 (Sheet 1) Rev B are to be removed as part of the proposed development works (including a number of category B-trees). Following consultation with the Council's Arboricultural Officer, it is considered that the proposed removal of the tree identified in the Arbtech drawings are considered to be acceptable. However, it is recommended by Officers that suitable replacement planting should be provided to compensate for the loss of these trees. This should be secured through the imposition of a condition attached to any permission issued requiring replacement planting to be carried out as part of any agreed landscaping scheme. Further to this, it is also recommended that if planning permission was to be granted, a condition should be imposed requiring all trees which are to be retained should be protected in line with the details set out in the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss the content of this letter or seek any clarification. I trust the information contained in this letter is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely.

**Mr James Chettleburgh**

Senior Planning Officer

For and behalf of the HEAD OF PLANNING AND ENGINEERING

## Appendix 4

### Consultation response from Hertfordshire County Council Landscape Officer

<b>Landscape Report</b>	<b>11<sup>th</sup> August 2016</b>
<b>From:</b> HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL Landscape Officer, Natural Historic and Built Environment Advisory Team	<b>To:</b> HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL Planning Officer, Spatial Planning
<b>Application No.</b>	2/0372-16
<b>Location:</b>	Hertford Road, south-east Stevenage, within area known as Bragbury End
<b>Proposal:</b>	Application for the proposed creation of a signalised junction to replace the existing roundabout, including associated extensions to subways and changes to verges, lighting, drainage, landscaping and associated engineering works

### Landscape Policy & Guidelines<sup>3</sup>

#### National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF<sup>4</sup> promotes the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment and good design, ensuring that developments respond to local character and are visually attractive as a result of good landscape design.

### Landscape and Visual<sup>5</sup>

The site is located along a section of highway that marks the boundary between the urban edge of Stevenage to the west, and the open area of Stevenage golf club to the east. The proposal is for the conversion of an existing roundabout into a signalised junction, including the extension of an existing subway and the introduction of typical highways features such as verges, lighting, drainage and landscaping.

In determining landscape and visual effects consideration is given for the combined effects of the existing development and the proposed amendments, to ensure that together they conserve and enhance landscape character and visual amenity.

#### Construction

- From the submitted Environmental Statement (ES) it is understood that the construction of Hertford Road junction is currently due to commence in 2016 for a period of 26 weeks, with works lasting into 2017.
- With regards landscape and visual effects as a result of the construction stage, the findings of the ES are supported. Due to the relatively intrusive nature of the construction works, they are likely to result in some significant moderate to large adverse effects. However, based on the temporary and short term duration of the works, this is not deemed unacceptable.

<sup>3</sup> The policy and guidance listed is not exhaustive, refer to NPPF and relevant Local Plans

<sup>4</sup> National Planning Policy Framework (7 Requiring Good Design & 11 Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment)

<sup>5</sup> Comments are given in line with current best practice guidance "Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third edition, Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental management and Assessment." (GLVIA3)

## Operation

- With regards landscape and visual effects at the operational stage (the completed development with established landscape mitigation planting) the findings of the ES are again supported. The development is likely to result in some permanent neutral to slight beneficial effects, with one slight adverse visual effects identified for a residential receptor on Oakwell Close that is not deemed significant.
- Overall the proposal is for the amendment of an existing highway scheme, the principle of this type and scale of highways development within this context is therefore deemed acceptable.
- It is suggested that one of the most sensitive aspects of the scheme, in both landscape and visual terms, is the eastern site boundary with the open golf course.

With reference to the Environmental Mitigation Drawing contained within the Landscape Strategy, it is proposed to introduce new tree and hedgerow planting along the eastern boundary. This approach is fully supported and should help strengthen the line of the existing hedgerow and soften views of the development from within the golf course.

The location and quantity of replacement/new trees do not appear to be provided at this stage. With reference to the Arboricultural Report and associated plans it appears that a total of 17 trees are proposed for removal. Where the removal of any tree is unavoidable its loss should be compensated for with new tree planting. In general it is recommended that for each tree removed, two new replacement trees should be planted.

The native hedgerow and tree mix specified within section '3.1 Planting' of the Landscape Strategy is supported.

- The submitted Landscape Strategy is fully supported, in particular with regards the following aspects that should be reflected within the detailed design:
  - Planting of native species, of local provenance, consistent with existing site species
  - Fencing and signs, used only where necessary, to reduce visual clutter
  - Directional lighting to reduce light spill
  - Limited signage, only where necessary

## Conclusion

Overall the proposed development does not result in any unacceptable adverse landscape and visual effects.

The proposed amendments are typical of a highways scheme, and are viewed in context with the existing highway, helping reduce their overall effects on landscape character and visual amenity.

It is proposed to remove a total of 17 trees, a detailed landscape scheme should ensure that the loss of any planting is adequately mitigated and compensated for.



Hertfordshire County Council

**A602 Improvements  
(Stevenage to/from Ware)**

Environmental Statement:  
Volume I – Non-technical  
summary

236368-HCC-ZZ-ZZ-RP-YE-00011

Issue | 22 April 2016



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# 1. Introduction

Hertfordshire County Council is currently progressing plans for an improvement scheme to the A602 between Stevenage and Ware. The scheme will include a number of road realignments, junction improvements and roundabout enlargements in order to cut journey times, increase the capacity of specific junctions and to create a more reliable route along the A602.

The A602 is an important link in Hertfordshire’s primary road network. The road runs north westwards from the A10 junction at Ware to join the A1(M) at Stevenage and then through the centre of Stevenage towards Hitchin.

The road is currently dual carriageway throughout central Stevenage but the rest of the route is a rural single carriageway, as shown in Figure 1. The road is considered to be of low standard for a primary route and drivers experience visibility problems and high levels of congestion especially at peak times. Hertfordshire County Council has wanted to improve this part of the A602 since the 1990s but have been unable to provide funding until now. With the improvements in place, queuing times will be significantly reduced, and journey reliability during peak time will be improved.



**Figure 1 - A view of the single carriageway A602 in its rural setting**

A planning application package is being made to Hertfordshire County Council Planning Department as the planning authority for the County’s transport system. There are four engineering elements to the Proposed Scheme and a planning application will be submitted for each element.

These planning applications were considered to be a single improvement project which share the same base of evidence, which includes a single Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) reported in the form of an Environmental Statement (ES). The ES, prepared to support these applications describes the findings of the EIA for the scheme. This document provides a non-technical summary of the Environmental Statement.

## 2. The Area

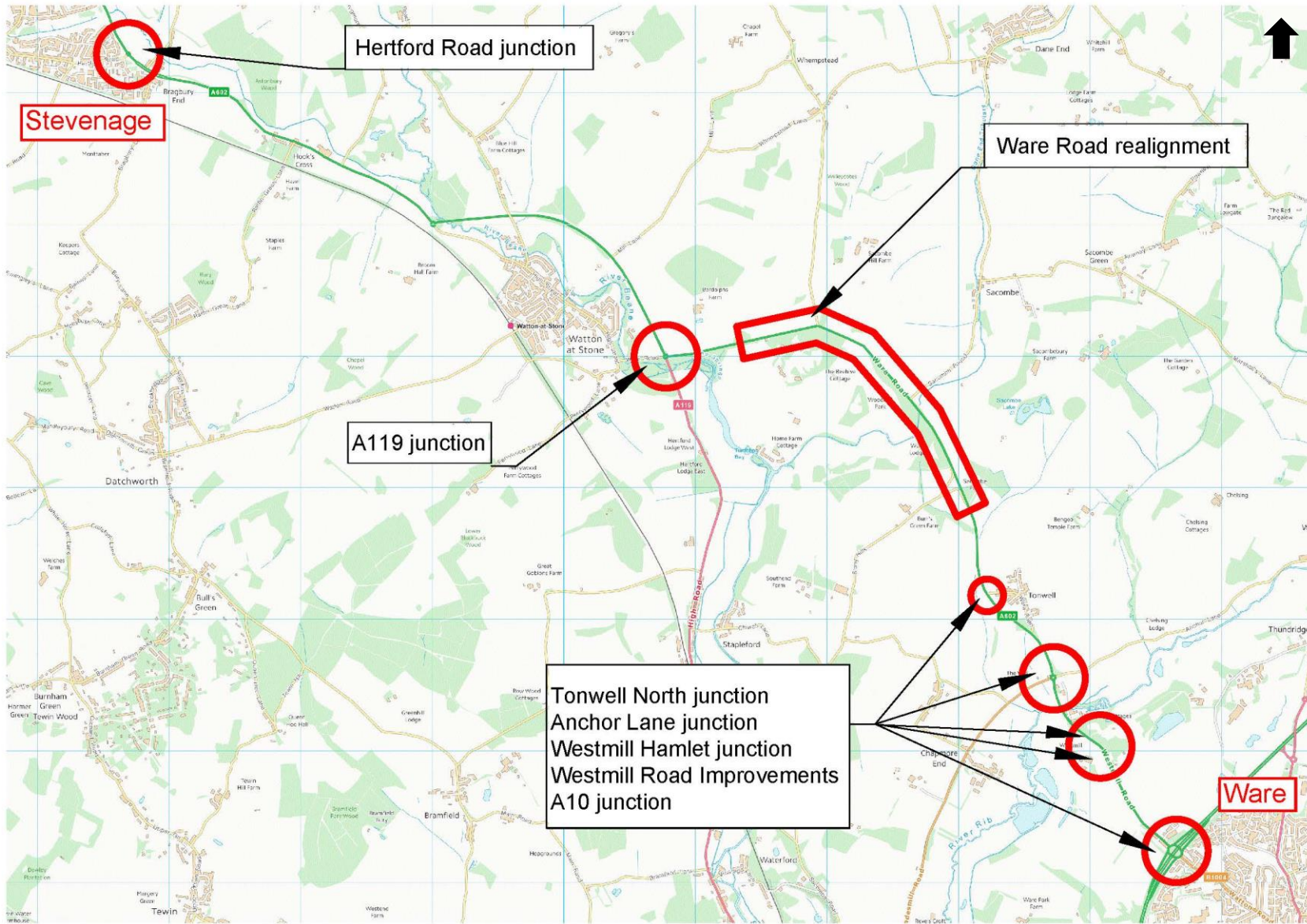
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The proposed improvements to the A602 are located within Hertfordshire, England, and for the most part within the district of East Hertfordshire, with one element located in the Borough of Stevenage. The section of the road where the improvements will be made mainly runs through open countryside and agricultural fields. The area is semi-rural in nature with a number of villages/hamlets located along the route including Watton-at-Stone, Tonwell and Westmill.

The scheme can be divided into three main sections in separate geographical areas. Where there is more than one improvement proposed the section is split out further as listed below:

- **Hertford Road junction**
- **Watton-at-Stone to/from Tonwell**
  - A119 junction
  - Ware Road realignment
  - Stony Hills junction
- **Tonwell to/from Ware**
  - Tonwell North junction
  - Anchor Lane junction
  - Westmill Hamlet junction
  - Westmill Road Improvements
  - A10 junction

Figure 2 shows the locations of each of these improvements.



**Figure 2- The Proposed Scheme within the wider area (Ordnance Survey license: 100019606)**

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## 2.1 Hertford Road junction

The Hertford Road junction (see Figure 3), is situated on the A602, 5km south-east of the centre of Stevenage, on the south-western edge of Stevenage Golf & Conference Centre. The A602 at this point is a single two-way carriageway meeting a three-armed roundabout (Hertford Road junction).

On the north-eastern side of the A602 lies Stevenage Golf Course & Conference Centre, on the western side is the residential area of Broadwater. Further to the south-west is Harwood Park Crematorium and to the east Astonbury Wood, where several public footpaths are available. Stevenage Brook runs from west of the A602, underneath the road to east of the A602, through the Stevenage Golf and Conference Centre and away to the south-east. Additionally, to the north-east and south-west of the A602 there are a number of agricultural fields.



**Figure 3 – Looking towards Hertford Road junction**

## 2.2 Watton-at-Stone to/from Tonwell

The western end of the Watton-at-Stone to/from Tonwell Section is situated around 1km south-east from the centre of Watton-at-Stone and runs eastwards on the A602 past the Woodhall Park Estate to the eastern end of the section situated 1km north-west of Tonwell.

Along this stretch the A602 is a two-way single carriageway meeting the four-armed A119 junction at the western end of the section. At the eastern end of the section is a junction on the A602 providing access to Stony Hills.

To the west of the section is Watton-at-Stone, a small town consisting of residential and commercial land uses. To the north of the site land use consists primarily of agricultural fields and woodland, with sparsely dispersed residential units. To the south of the site lies Woodhall Park (see Figure 4), a Grade II\* Registered Park and Garden and privately owned estate consisting of residential and commercial property, Heath Mount School with playing fields, large open spaces used for amenity / recreation, wooded areas and the River Beane and the Dane End tributary. The Dane End tributary runs from the east under the A602 at the Sacombe Arches and joins the River Beane within Woodhall Park.



**Figure 4 – Looking towards Woodhall Park**

## 2.3 Tonwell to/from Ware

The A10 junction (see Figure 5) is situated at the southern end of the A602 around 1.5km north-west of the centre of Ware, at the intersection between the A602, A10 and B1004. The Westmill Road section of the A602 is situated 0.9km north-west along the A602 from the A10 junction, the Westmill Hamlet junction specifically provides access for residents at Westmill Hamlet, just off the A602. Anchor Lane Roundabout is further north-west (1.5km from the A10 junction) along the A602, and allows an intersection between the A602, B158 and Anchor Lane. Tonwell North junction sits a further 850m north-west of Anchor Lane Roundabout, providing access off the main A602 into the village of Tonwell.

The A602, between the A10 junction and Tonwell North junction, is a single two-way carriageway meeting a four-armed roundabout at the A10 junction. There is a short section of carriageway that includes a crawler lane in the northbound direction, north of the Anchor Lane junction.

agricultural fields and sections of woodland, including Westmill Plantation. The River Rib, which passes underneath the A602 200m south of Anchor Lane junction, has a number of associated tributaries, drains and man-made lakes, at their closest 100m from the A602. Westmill Farm is 100m to the west of the Westmill Road section and there are other sparsely distributed residential properties along the A10 junction to Anchor Lane junction stretch.



**Figure 5 – Looking towards the A10 junction**

To the south-east of this section is the town of Ware consisting of largely residential, commercial and employment uses, such as Ermine Point Business Park at the A10 junction. Further up the A602, on the Westmill Road section, there is a large gravel extraction works on both the east and west sides of the A602. There are also

### 3. Alternatives Considered

Options to improve traffic in the area have been considered for several years. The proposals taken forward were made in consideration with the Government's key objectives for transport. These include:

- Safety;
- Environment;
- Economy;
- Integration; and
- Accessibility.

A number of high level options were considered for the scheme including:

1. Construction of an alternative off-line route;
2. Widening the existing A602 to dual carriageway standard;
3. Junction and alignment improvements including a Hook's Cross bypass; and
4. Junction and alignment improvements only.

Of the above only Option 4 (junction and alignment improvements only) was taken forward as this represented the only feasible solution within available funding resources and the time constraints in which the scheme must be completed.

Following transport and economic surveys of Option 4, a preliminary Business Case was prepared and submitted in 2014 identifying a series of improvements that could be undertaken along the corridor. Following acceptance of the Business Case, the following improvements were considered for further analysis:

- **Hertford Road junction** – The Business Case proposed an enlarged roundabout to improve the capacity of the junction. As a result of further assessment it was decided a signalised T-junction was a better solution than the enlarged roundabout originally proposed. This is because it was better able to cater for the main north-south traffic flow, along the A602. It also allows for Hertford Road to have a dedicated traffic signal, to exit the junction.
- **A119 junction** – The signalised junction proposed in the Business Case was ruled out as it was not in keeping with the rural nature of the area. An enlarged roundabout solution was reassessed and taken forward as the preferred solution.
- **Ware Road realignment** – Several options for the realignment works of the A602 to remove the bends at Whempstead Road and Sacombe Pound were considered. The selected option provides a gap between the existing A602 and the realigned A602. This has helped to reduce disruption to the travelling public during construction as traffic management measures such as temporary traffic lights are minimised and lengthy road closures are avoided.
- **Side roads** – Works to the side roads to improve the layout for certain accesses including Heath Mount School, Whempstead Road, Garden House and Beehive Cottages, Sacombe Hill Farm, Sacombe Pound and Stony Hills have all been designed to connect into the option chosen for the Ware Road realignment. The alterations have also taken account of the issues raised at public consultation by incorporating single lane dual carriageway at Sacombe Pound, and the incorporation of a space for cyclists to stop while waiting to cross the live traffic at Sacombe Pound and Stony Hills.



- **Stony Hills** – The business case required significant land take for the realignment of the northern arm of Stony Hills to create a T-junction with the A602. This has now been refined and the environmental impact and land take has been reduced.
- **Anchor Lane junction** – Improvements proposed in the Business Case to Anchor Lane junction have generally not been changed with only minor amendments to improve the flow of traffic.
- **A10 junction** – The segregated left-turn lane that was planned to link Ware and the A10 has been ruled out as too many residential properties and a number of utility cables were affected. The preferred option now includes the installation of part-time traffic signals.

The final proposals for the scheme have come as a result of refining the above options, environmental considerations identified through the EIA, and through consultation with the general public. The proposals that make up the Proposed Scheme included in the planning application are discussed in the next section.

## 4. The Proposals

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The Proposed Scheme involves eight key road improvements along the A602. These will lead to reductions in queuing times, delay and improved journey reliability.

### ***Hertford Road junction***

#### 1. Hertford Road junction

The existing roundabout will be replaced with a traffic signal T-junction. The traffic signals would be in operation full time. The road will be widened at the junction to two lanes in each direction, and a third lane added for right turning vehicles in the southbound direction. The existing subways will be widened and the footway/cycleway facilities will be retained. A small number of trees will need to be removed to accommodate the works.

### ***Watton-at-Stone to/from Tonwell***

#### 2. A119 junction

The A119 junction will be widened to two lanes on each approach, and a segregated (allowing free flow of traffic rather than waiting at the junction) left-turn lane in the direction of Stevenage to Ware will be provided. The footway along the A119 will remain where it is and the footway from the roundabout towards Watton-at-Stone will be extended. An uncontrolled pedestrian crossing will be provided at the A119 traffic island.

#### 3. Ware Road re-alignment

##### a. Ware Road

The A602 (Ware Road) will be realigned by a maximum of 80m to the north (see Figure 6). This new section of road will be single carriageway. Due to the existing undulating landscape, the road will be in cutting for parts of the route and be on embankments for others. A bridge crossing will be provided over the Dane End tributary.

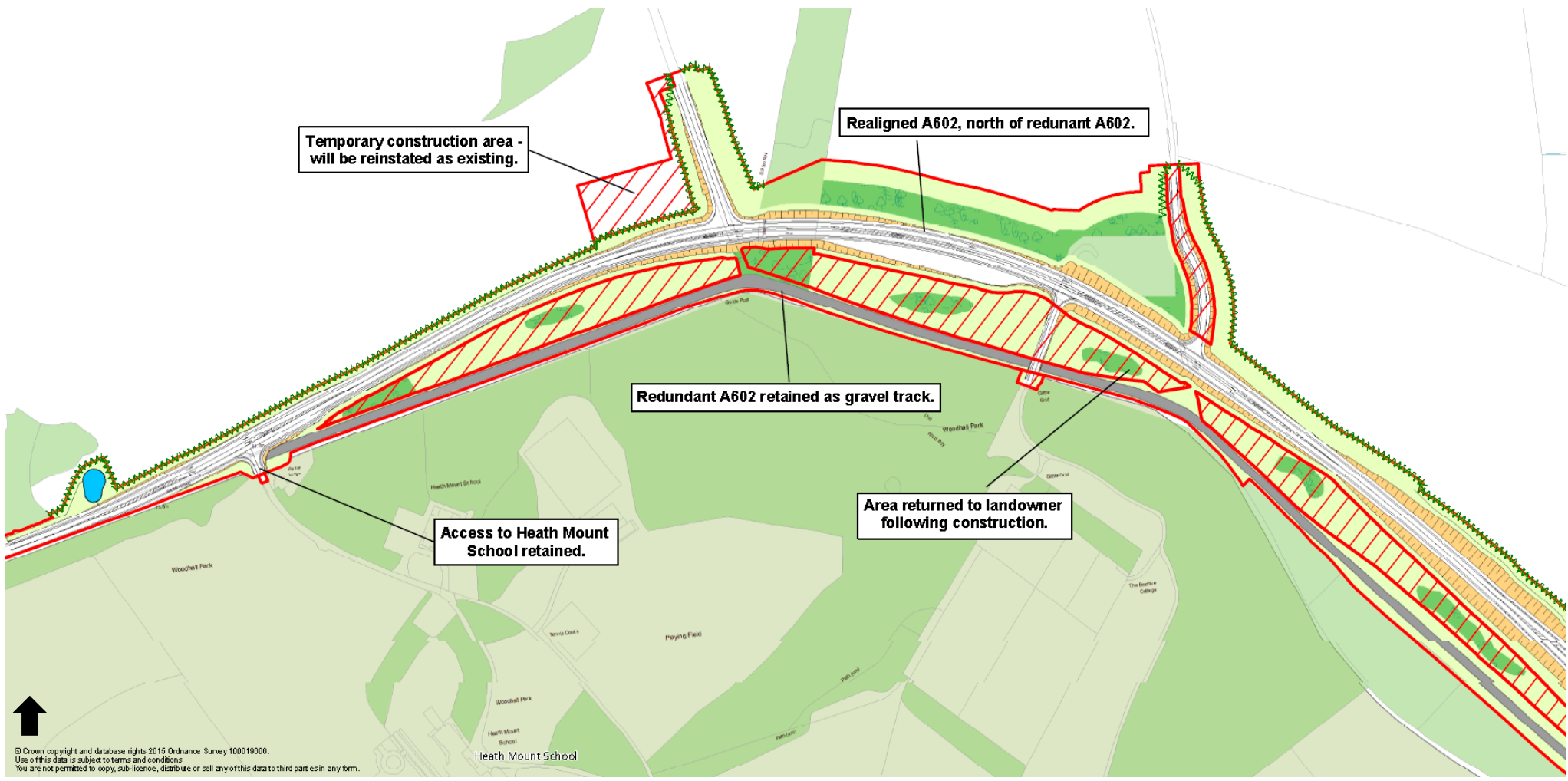
The realignment also requires localised widening to incorporate right-turn lanes at each of the following side roads:

- Access to Heath Mount School;
- Whempstead Road;
- Access to Garden House and Beehive Cottage;
- Sacombe Hill Farm access;
- Sacombe Pound; and
- Stony Hills realigned north junction.

The road will be widened at each of the above side road locations to allow space for vehicles to wait to turn into them without interrupting traffic flow.

#### b. Stony Hills junction

The northern arm of Stony Hills junction will be realigned to provide a T-junction with the A602. The existing southern section of the junction will be closed to traffic and converted into a Bridleway.



**Figure 6 – Realigned Ware Road (A602), north of existing.**

## ***Tonwell to/from Ware***

### 4. Tonwell North junction

A deceleration lane will be added at Tonwell North junction, allowing traffic slowing down to turn left into the junction and move out of the way of traffic on the A602.

### 5. Anchor Lane junction

The junction at Anchor Lane will be increased in size to allow more vehicles to flow through it. Each entry and exit at the junction will be two lanes. The current footway along the A602 will remain and will be extended south to join the Public Right of Way.

### 6. Westmill Hamlet

Trees in the vicinity of the Westmill Hamlet junction will be trimmed back to allow for better sight lines for drivers waiting to turn out of the junction. The proposals include for a right turn ban into Westmill Hamlet. This would ensure that the traffic is not delayed by vehicles wanting to turn right into Westmill Hamlet. Vehicles wishing to access Westmill Hamlet would still be able to U-turn at the Anchor Lane roundabout and then turn left into Westmill Hamlet. A deceleration taper (specialised road markings) will be added to allow traffic slowing to turn left into the junction to move out of the way of traffic on the A602.

### 7. Westmill Road Improvements

The sharp bend on the A602 will be removed. A deceleration lane into the household waste recycling centre will be provided. The deceleration lane will allow extra space for vehicles queuing to enter the household waste recycling centre to move out of the way of A602 traffic.

### 8. A10 junction

Part-time traffic lights will be installed at the junction at the top of the slip roads. On the eastern approach to the roundabout an extra lane will be added. Some of the grass verge will be removed to accommodate this widening. On the north side of the A10 junction a combined footway/cycleway will be added. Uncontrolled pedestrian crossing points will be provided at all road crossings.

## 4.1 Construction Timescales

Construction is due to start in late 2016, provided the required planning permissions are granted. It is anticipated that construction will be finished by 2019, as this is a requirement of the funding.

Section	Anticipated construction period
<b>Hertford Road junction</b>	<p>The construction of Hertford Road junction is currently due commence in 2016 with a duration of 26 weeks, with works lasting into 2017.</p> <p>Works will also require 2 months of site preparation before work starts on site, and 3 months of inspection and handovers prior to opening.</p>
<b>Watton-at-Stone to/from Tonwell</b>	<p>The construction of the A119 roundabout is currently due to commence in 2018 with a duration of 20 weeks. These works will be followed by the Ware Road works lasting 52 weeks.</p> <p>Works will also require 3 months of site preparation before work starts on site, and 3 months of inspection and handovers prior to opening.</p>
<b>Tonwell to/from Ware</b>	<p>The Tonwell North junction, Anchor Lane, Westmill Hamlet, Westmill Road and A10 works are currently due to be constructed following the Hertford Road junction works, with works commencing in 2017 and lasting for 26 weeks.</p> <p>Two months of site preparation are required before work starts on site, and 3 months of inspection and handovers prior to opening.</p>

## 5. Consultation Process

Throughout the development of the Proposed Scheme a consultation programme has been undertaken to understand the views of local public, non-statutory and statutory stakeholders regarding the potential environmental impacts and to incorporate environmental design and mitigation into the proposals.

### 5.1 Business Case Consultation

The Local Transport Body (LTB) consulted on the Business Case for the Proposed Scheme during 2014, to consider if there was a sound strategic, financial and economic case for the project. As part of the Business Case, an Environmental Appraisal was undertaken, in line with the Department of Transport's Transport Analysis Guidance. Outcomes of this consultation fed into the decision by the LTB to agree funding in principle for the Proposed Scheme.

### 5.2 Pre-planning Application Consultation

Consultation on the Proposed Scheme and planning applications took place from May 2015 until 14<sup>th</sup> June 2015. The aim of the consultation was to gather public views and consider these as part of the refinement of the Proposed Scheme and the EIA prior to submitting the planning application. This process involved:

- Meetings with directly affected landowners;
- Public exhibitions in Stevenage, Watton-at-Stone and at Westmill Farm, which included display panels, technical experts and design team members on hand to discuss the Proposed Scheme;

- Exhibition panels on public view throughout the consultation period at County Hall;
- Feedback forms and information leaflets available from Parish Councils; and
- An online consultation portal which included links to the information available at the public exhibitions and a place to provide comments.

### 5.3 Scoping Opinion

A formal Scoping Report for the scheme was submitted in May 2015. The Scoping Report provided key statutory and non-statutory consultees and the public with an overview of the Proposed Scheme and set out the existing environmental conditions, a brief summary of likely effects and proposed assessment methodologies that will be followed within the EIA. Comments were invited back from Hertfordshire County Council and a number of other statutory and non-statutory stakeholders to ensure the scope of assessment was agreed between all parties. Responses received were considered and taken into account in on-going work on the EIA.

## 6. EIA findings

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The EIA has been undertaken in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (EIA) Regulations 2011 as amended and with reference to the standards and guidance published by the Highways Agency (now Highways England) titled the '*Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Volume 11: Environmental Assessment*'.

The purpose of the EIA has been to identify potential environmental effects<sup>1</sup>, both positive and negative, of the proposed road scheme.

The assessment has considered the following aspects of the environment:

- Air Quality;
- Cultural Heritage;
- Landscape;
- Nature Conservation;
- Geology, Soils and Materials;
- Noise and Vibration;
- Effects on all Travellers (Pedestrians, Equestrians, Cyclists, Drivers);
- Community and Private Assets (Agricultural Land);
- Road Drainage and the Water Environment; and
- Cumulative effects (Effects that combine with one another to generate a larger effect).

The findings of the EIA are as detailed below. Key receptors identified in the findings below can be seen on Figure 7.

### ***Air Quality***

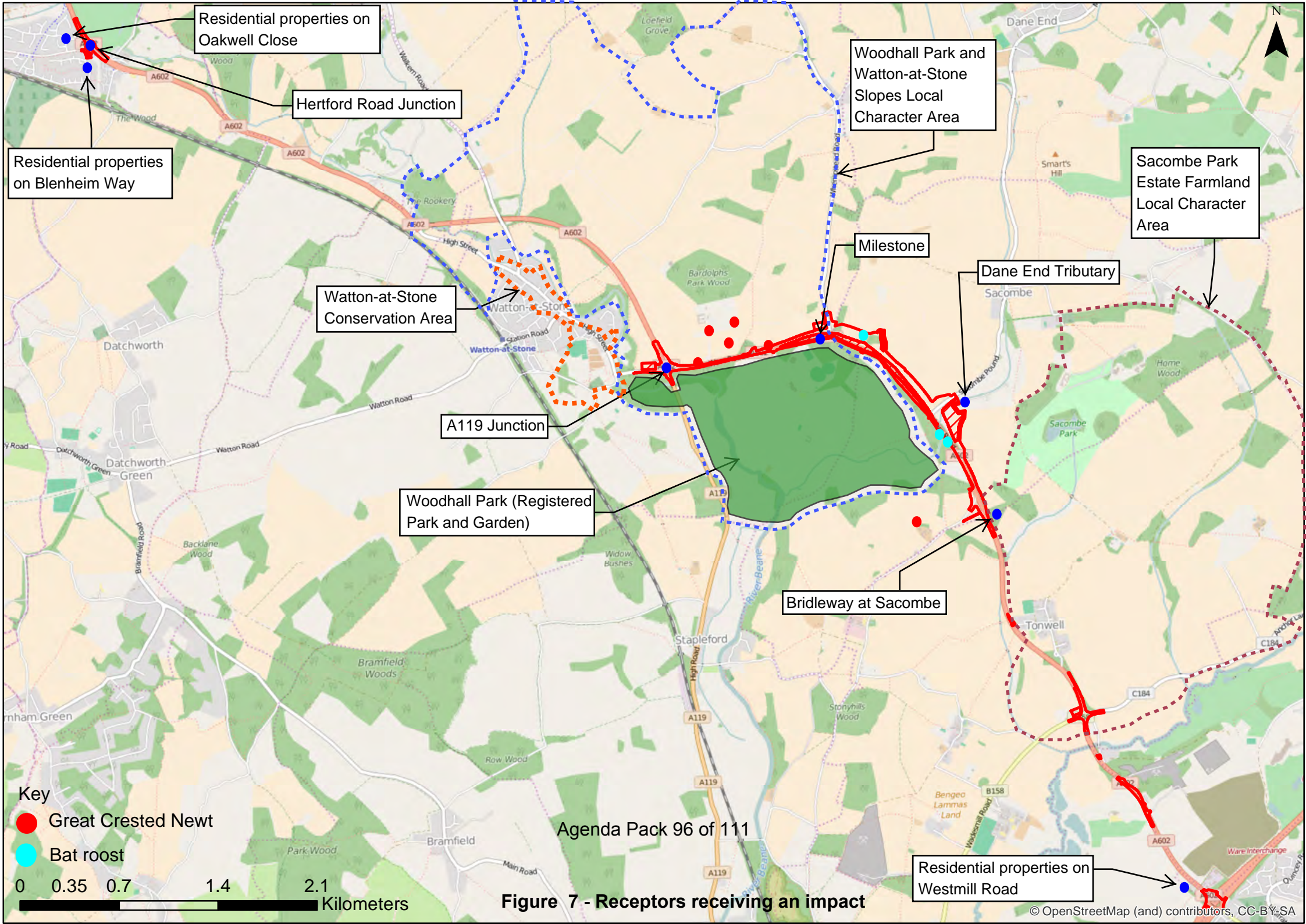
Following the DMRB screening methodology as described in the Scoping Report, the minimal change in traffic flow and realignment that would result from the Proposed Scheme, meant that impacts on air quality from traffic were considered insignificant, and no modelling or further assessment was required.

Following implementation of best practice dust management on the site suggests that there would be no significant negative effects during construction. Best practice dust management measures are outlined in a Construction Environmental Management Plan which the contractor who builds the scheme, will be required to follow in order to minimise emissions to air.

There are no significant negative effects anticipated during operation and therefore no mitigation is required.

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<sup>1</sup> A change in the current situation which is a result of the Proposed Scheme. **Agenda Pack 95 of 111**



Residential properties on Oakwell Close

Hertford Road Junction

Woodhall Park and Watton-at-Stone Slopes Local Character Area

Sacombe Park Estate Farmland Local Character Area

Residential properties on Blenheim Way

Watton-at-Stone Conservation Area

Milestone

Dane End Tributary

A119 Junction

Woodhall Park (Registered Park and Garden)

Bridleway at Sacombe

- Key
- Great Crested Newt
  - Bat roost

0 0.35 0.7 1.4 2.1 Kilometers

Agenda Pack 96 of 111

**Figure 7 - Receptors receiving an impact**

Residential properties on Westmill Road



## **Cultural Heritage**

A desk-based review of existing historical information within 1km of the A602, geophysical survey and trial trenching have been undertaken within the footprint of the Ware Road re-alignment.

The surveys identified some areas of archaeological potential. Archaeological remains within the proposed footprint of the works may experience slight to moderate adverse effects during construction due to ground disturbance caused by machinery. An archaeologist will be present on site to record any finds during construction. There are no negative effects caused to the Watton-at-Stone Conservation Area. There may be a slight negative effect on a milestone which will need to be relocated as a result of the Proposed Scheme.

During operation of the Proposed Scheme there would be no direct negative effect upon heritage assets.

The Proposed Scheme would move away from the Woodhall Park Registered Park and Garden and this is assessed as a slight positive effect.

## **Landscape**

A desk-based review of landscape character areas and a number of site visits by a landscape architect have been undertaken to understand the landscape context within the area.

The Proposed Scheme will have a significant negative effect on the Woodhall Park (Figure 8) and Watton-at-Stone Slope Local Character Area (LCA) during construction as the Ware Road section of the route and associated construction site will cut into this LCA changing the rural land use of the area.

During construction there is also likely to be significant negative effects upon residential dwellings on Blenheim Way, to the north-east edge of Bragbury End, at properties at Oakwell Close on the eastern edge of Bragbury End residential area and at residential properties to the north-west of Ware on Westmill Road, due to views towards construction works. The Bridleway at Sacombe, three public rights of way, and road users at Hertford Road junction and A119 junction, will also have significant negative temporary effects due to views towards construction works affecting those that use the facilities.

The maturing of proposed mitigation planting over the 15 year period from scheme opening will offset negative effects and provide localised benefits, see Figure 9 for an example of this.



**Figure 8 - Woodhall Park**



Figure 9 - Maturing planting, example from the Dane End Tributary crossing

## **Nature Conservation**

Extensive habitat and protected species surveys have been undertaken between April 2014 and July 2015 for the majority of the central Watton-at-Stone to/from Tonwell section. All other sections are largely within the highway boundary and would require minimal land take in areas of low ecological value, as identified in initial surveys, therefore no further surveys were required in those sections. Surveys included:

- Phase 1 Habitat;
- Amphibians;
- Bats;
- Badgers;
- Reptiles;
- Otter and Water vole;
- White Clawed Cray Fish; and
- Hedgerows.

Potential negative effects have been identified for Local Wildlife Sites, great crested newts, barn owls and bats, as a result of the Proposed Scheme. Mitigation and enhancement measures will be provided as part of the scheme, including:

- Replanting of grassland and wildflowers on areas cleared for construction;
- Design of the new Dane End tributary to match that of the existing in terms of dimensions, with protection against erosion put in place while habitat establishes. Once vegetation has established, the channel will closely reflect the existing channel;
- Planting of 4.2km of species rich hedgerow, matching the composition of the existing hedgerows, and linking into sections of woodland to facilitate the movement of wildlife across the landscape;

- The installation of a tunnel to allow badgers to pass safely under the new road;
- Review of lighting proposals to prevent light spill affecting bats as they commute between their roosting and feeding sites;
- The installation of bat roost boxes near to lost roosting features such as trees;
- Amphibian exclusion fencing during construction and vegetative cover along Ware Road; and
- Sowing severed strips of land between the new and existing A602 with a wildflower seed mix rather than returning them to arable land, thereby increasing foraging habitat for Roman snail.

The incorporation of the above measures into the scheme design are predicted to result in no significant adverse effects on Nature Conservation.

A significant beneficial impact is predicted, as a result of:

- Provision of 4.2km of new hedgerow to replace that lost and enhance existing provision. A net gain of 2km of hedgerow will result from the Proposed Scheme.
- Provision of Roman snail habitat within all of the severed strips of land between the new and existing A602, positively benefiting the conservation of the species.

## **Geology, Soils and Materials**

Baseline surveys have been used to inform the geology, soils and materials assessment. Potential receptors that may be impacted by the scheme include human health, biodiversity, groundwater and surface waters, and the built environment.

A Ground Investigation (GI) will be carried out prior to construction to obtain further information on the physical and

chemical properties of the ground beneath and around the site and inform the final design of the scheme. Appropriate action will be taken if unexpected contamination is found during the GI.

The scheme will include pollution prevention measures along the route. As a result, the impact of operation of the Proposed Scheme on human health and the built environment is not considered to cause any significant adverse effects.

### **Noise and Vibration**

Following DMRB screening methods, the minimal change in traffic flows and re-alignment of the Ware Road are not expected to result in significant noise effects, therefore, no surveys or modelling of operational impacts was required.

Potential noise and vibration impacts during construction have been identified. Measures to minimise and manage these impacts are described in a Construction Environmental Management Plan which, the appointed contractor who will build the Proposed Scheme will be required to follow during construction. Further detailed assessment will be carried out ahead of construction as part of further planning documentation (Section 61 – Development Orders) preparation. This will help to determine the appropriate compaction methods and avoid any likely significant adverse effects during construction.

### **Effects on all Travellers (Pedestrians, Equestrians, Cyclists, Drivers)**

Desk-based study, site visits and consultation to understand non-motorised user (Pedestrians, Equestrians and Cyclists) and driver activity in the area have been undertaken to inform the design and assessment.

During construction, the A602 will remain open and travellers will only be affected during short periods of time. With the implementation of diversions and traffic management

journey times may increase. However, this will be temporary and drivers on this route already experience long delays and so the effect is not considered significant.

During operation all existing rights of way and crossings will be maintained. The Proposed Scheme will reduce journey times and congestion and so driver stress is expected to be reduced leading to a significant beneficial effect.

### **Community**

A desk-based study and public consultation were undertaken in order to examine the existing community provision.

Most of the facilities serving the area are within the nearby settlements of Stevenage, Broadwater, Watton-at-Stone, Tonwell and Ware. There are expected to be no significant adverse effects to these services.

It is considered that all possible measures to reduce any effects of the Proposed Scheme on the community have been included in the scheme design. Therefore, no further mitigation is proposed.

### **Private Assets**

No buildings are affected by the Proposed Scheme. A desk-based study was undertaken to establish the likelihood of high quality agricultural land being present along the Proposed Scheme.

The land use of up to 21.2 hectares of agricultural fields, of Grade 2 and 3a quality (considered best and most versatile for agricultural use), will be changed during construction of the Proposed Scheme. However, the implementation of good practice and a soil resources plan will ensure that the soil resource is able to retain its agricultural functions and quality where construction sites are returned to agricultural use (approximately 6.4 hectares), and its other ecosystem functions where land is returned to tree and shrub planting.

No significant adverse effect is therefore expected to Private Assets as a result of the Proposed Scheme.

### ***Road Drainage and the Water Environment***

A desk-based study and drainage survey was undertaken in order to inform the design and assessment.

A Construction Environmental Management Plan will be followed by the contractor who constructs the scheme. Measures included within the plan, such as: sediment control; controlled storage of materials; restricting the use of polluting materials near receptors; and local flood control, reduce the potential for adverse impacts on the water environment. Effects are therefore not considered to be significant.

During operation, mitigation measures will be put in place to reduce the impact of flooding. These include providing additional landscaped areas to control and manage water at three locations along the A602. Floodplain compensation has been provided a Dane End tributary to ensure any change in flood levels is kept low as possible, resulting in a no significant adverse effect being predicted.

### ***Cumulative Effects***

Potential cumulative effects arise from the interaction between the various different environmental effects, as described above, as well as from interaction between the construction of the Proposed Scheme and other development projects. As there are currently no other committed developments in the area the cumulative assessment will only focus on the interaction between environmental effects. The following effects are envisaged:

- Significant negative adverse effect on public rights of way due to the combination of visual effects and the temporary diversions during construction. However, it should be noted that these effects would be temporary, localised at the diversion points and not affect eng

routes. There will be no cumulative effects caused during operation as all public rights of way will be maintained.

- Significant adverse effect on the landscape and habitats during construction to Woodhall Park & Watton-at-Stone Slopes and Sacombe Park Estate Farmland as a result of hedgerow removal and the incorporation of manmade features. However, the maturing of proposed mitigation planting, including additional hedgerow, over the 15 year period from scheme opening would offset adverse effects and provide localised benefits. Additionally, a significant beneficial effect would result from the provision of additional habitat, such as 1.8km of extra hedgerow and specific great crested newt and Roman snail habitats, benefiting the wildlife in the local area.
- Residential properties may experience non-significant adverse individual effects as a result of air, noise, vibration, visual and accessibility impacts. However, due to appropriate techniques being implemented through construction, these effects will be managed appropriately, and as a result a combination of effects is not expected to result in a significant adverse effect on any residential receptor.

## 7. Mitigation

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### 7.1 Design Measures

Throughout the design stage, where feasible, measures to prevent, reduce or minimise potential impacts upon the environment were incorporated into the developing design. Further mitigation measures are recommended and details are provided in the ES. These measures will be required as part of the delivery of the project.

A tunnel is provided for badgers, and hedgerows will be replanted for terrestrial habitat. Mitigation planting is proposed to provide links between severed habitats and to reduce visual impact. Further mitigation, such as bat roost boxes, is also being provided.

All existing footpaths will be retained and there will be improvements made at pedestrian crossing points.

It may be necessary to temporarily close or divert footpaths to allow the construction works and/or ensure sufficient separation between the works and the public; however, it should be noted that these effects would be temporary and localised.

### 7.2 Construction and Environmental Management Plan

When the scheme enters into the construction stage the appointed contractor will produce a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) based on recommendations from the Environmental Statement including a draft CEMP. This will describe methods by which they will meet environmental requirements. Implementation of the plan will be monitored by the relevant authorities.

The proposed CEMP will cover:

- Defining responsibilities for the environment;
- Protection measures for nature conservation and biodiversity;
- Noise control and hours of working;
- Traffic management;
- Materials and waste management;
- Air quality protection such as dust management;
- Management of complaints and corrective action processes; and
- Monitoring and reporting processes.

## 8. Next stage

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After the planning application is submitted, the Planning Authority will undertake a period of statutory consultation within the 16 week statutory decision period. During this time the public can provide further comment on the application and the Environmental Statement to influence the decision making process.

## 9. Contact Information

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The Environmental Statement and other supporting planning documents can be viewed at the planning offices for Hertfordshire County Council. They can also be downloaded via their online tool at:

[www.hertsdirect.org/planning](http://www.hertsdirect.org/planning)

If a hard copy of the Environmental Statement is required this can be requested, at cost (reflecting printing and distribution costs), from the address below.

Any comments on the application should be made directly to Hertfordshire County Council either via their online tool (link provided above), or at the address below:

A602 Improvements (Stevenage to/from Ware)  
Planning Department  
Hertfordshire County Council  
County Hall  
Pegs Lane  
Hertford  
Hertfordshire  
SG13 8DQ

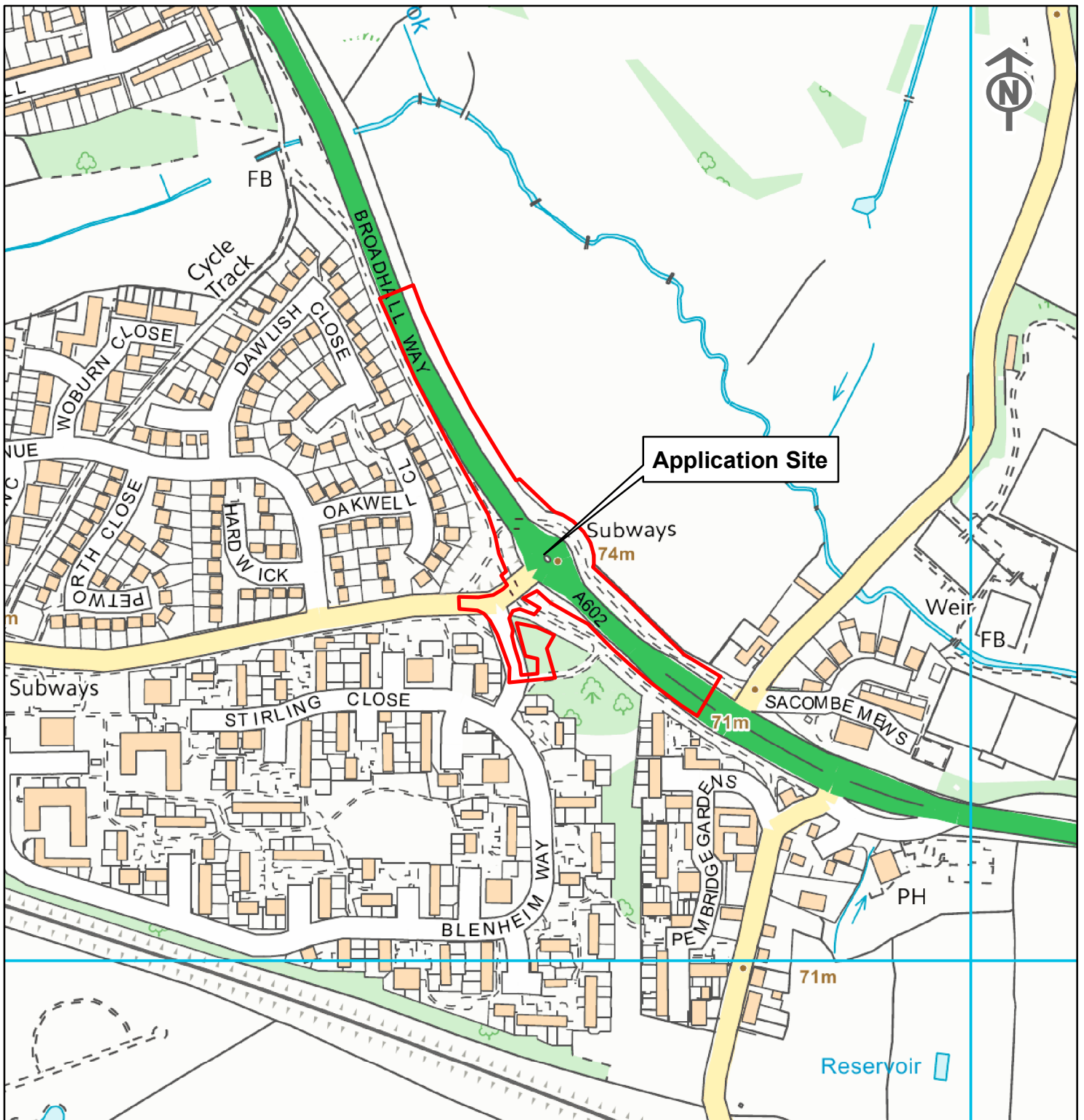
If you have any queries please email:

[A602@hertfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:A602@hertfordshire.gov.uk)

Alternatively you may call:

0300 123 4040

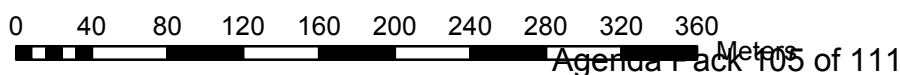




**DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE**  
 Date: Thursday 22nd September 2016

Proposed creation of a signalised junction to replace the existing roundabout, including associated extensions to subways and changes to verges, lighting, drainage, landscaping and associated engineering works

At: Hertford Road, south-east Stevenage, within area known as Bragbury End



# Minutes



To: All Members of the  
Development Control  
Committee, Chief Officers, All  
officers named for 'actions'

From: Legal, Democratic & Statutory Services  
Ask for: Michelle Diprose  
Ext: 25566

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## DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

22 SEPTEMBER 2016

### ATTENDANCE

### MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

J R Barfoot (Substitute for D J Barnard), G R Churchard, D S Drury, M J Cook, J Lloyd, M D M Muir, S Quilty, I M Reay (Chairman), A D Williams

Upon consideration of the agenda for the Development Control Committee meeting on 22 September 2016 as circulated, copy annexed, conclusions were reached and are recorded below:

*Note: Steve Drury declared an interest as recorded at minute 1.*

### CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (i) If a Member wished their particular view on an item of business to be recorded in the Minutes, it would be recorded on request by that Member.
- (ii) Members were reminded of their obligation to declare interests at the start of the meeting.

### PART I ('OPEN') BUSINESS

#### MINUTES

The minutes of the Committee meeting held on 22 June 2016 were confirmed as a correct record

#### PUBLIC PETITIONS

There were no public petitions.

#### ACTION

Michelle  
Diprose

**1. PLANNING APPLICATION (5 /1180-16 CM0964) FOR PROPOSED IMPORTATION OF 47,000 CUBIC METRES OF RECOVERED MATERIALS TO CHANGE THE LANDSCAPED FORM OF THE EXISTING GOLF COURSE AROUND HOLES 12,13 AND 14 WITH THE AIM TO IMPROVE SAFETY, PLAYABILITY, MAINTENANCE AND DRAINAGE AT HARPENDEN COMMON GOLF CLUB, EAST COMMON, HARPENDEN HERTFORDSHIRE AL5 1BL**

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[Officer Contact: Felicity J Hart Tel: 01992 556256]

- 1.1 Steve Drury declared a non-pecuniary interest as his brother-in-law was a member of the golf club. He remained in the meeting, participated in debate and voted on the item.
  - 1.2 The Committee considered planning application reference 5/1180-16 (CM0964) for the importation of 47,000 cubic meters of soils to landscape the western section of an existing golf club course at Harpenden Common. Members noted the proposed works utilised recovered soils for landscaping and would be delivered to the site within a time period of 13 weeks, with a further 4 weeks for the completion of landscaping, seeding and sculpting.
  - 1.3 Prior to questions and debate the Committee were addressed by Stuart Downs, from Woodland Environmental, speaking in support of the application.
  - 1.4 The Committee raised concerns regarding the volume of HGV's travelling on the proposed routing plan to enter the site and the potential build-up of HGV's waiting on the highway to gain access the site. Members were advised that the passing bay on Ayres End Lane would alleviate HGV's having to wait on the highway, and although the County Council specified the route into the site, it could not be enforced.
  - 1.5 Following debate on the concerns detailed at 1.4 above, the following motion was proposed and duly seconded:  
  
That a Section 106 Agreement shall be entered into in relation to the specified routing plan.  
  
5 Members supported the proposal, 3 were against the proposal. The motion was carried.
- CONCLUSION**
- 1.6 The Chief Executive and Director of Environment be authorised to grant planning permission, as amended by 1.5 above, subject to

referral to the secretary of State, and his not wishing to call the application in, and the following conditions,

- 1) Time limit for commencement
- 2) Approved plans and documents
- 3) Commencement of importation
- 4) Importation timescale
- 5) Ayres End Lane Condition Survey
- 6) Construction of temporary passing bay on Ayres End lane
- 7) Reinstatement of passing bay
- 8) Lorry movements
- 9) Wheel cleaning
- 10) Signage at exit from site
- 11) Landscaping
- 12) Tree survey
- 13) Flood risk assessment
- 14) Design of swale and basins
- 15) Construction management plan
- 16) Air quality
- 17) Details of site compound
- 18) Working hours
- 19) Section 106 Agreement

2. **PROPOSED APPLICATION FOR ENHANCEMENT TO THE RESTORATION OF 31 HECTARES AT GREAT WESTWOOD QUARRY THROUGH THE IMPORTATION OF INERT MATERIALS WITH COMPLETION OF ALL OPERATIONS WITHIN 24 MONTHS TO DELIVER LANDSCAPE, DRAINAGE, ECOLOGICAL, COMMUNITY AND LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT ENEFITS AT GREAT WESTWOOD QUARRY, FIR TREE HILL, CHANDLERS CROSS, WATFORD, HERTS, WD3 4LY**

[Officer Contact: Christopher Martin Tel: 01992 556308]

- 2.1 The Committee considered planning application reference 8/0780-16 (CM0122) for the proposed enhancement to the restoration of 31 hectares at Great Westwood Quarry through the importation of inert materials with completion of all operations within 24 months to deliver landscape, drainage, ecological, community and long-term management benefits at Great Westwood Quarry.
- 2.2 In support of the application Members were addressed for ten minutes cumulatively by Karen Hearnshaw, Cemex UK Operations and Roger Gagan, St Pauls Church of England School.
- 2.3 Members noted the site currently had already received previous permission to import inert material under permission 8/0825-15. The application being considered today would allow for an

increased time limit for restoration to be completed and an amendment to the final restoration contours, as detailed at 2.5 of the report.

- 2.4 Although the Committee raised some concerns on the previous application not being completed on time and noted the operational problems CEMEX had experienced, Members did agree there were significant positive changes to support the revised application.

## **CONCLUSION**

- 2.5 That the Chief Executive and Director of Environment be authorised to grant planning permission subject to referral to the Secretary of State and him not wishing to call the application in, signing and completion of the legal agreement (as set out in the report) and the following conditions:

- 1) Accordance
- 2) Date for completion
- 3) Inert waste only
- 4) Final contours
- 5) Hours of operation
- 6) Vehicle movements
- 7) Traffic direction
- 8) Noise from operations
- 9) Noise from vehicles
- 10) Mud on the highway
- 11) Haul road maintenance
- 12) Haul road maintenance
- 13) Scheme of working
- 14) Dust suppression scheme
- 15) Car park details
- 16) Surface water management scheme
- 17) Surface water management scheme
- 18) Soil handling
- 19) Soil layer composition
- 20) Commencement of soil placement
- 21) Topsoil
- 22) Aftercare
- 23) Aftercare
- 24) Aftercare
- 25) Annual Report
- 26) Annual aftercare meeting
- 27) Removal of hardstanding areas
- 28) Removal of permitted development rights
- 29) Storage of liquid fuel, oil or chemicals
- 30) Groundwater protection
- 31) Water resources and groundwater protections

**3. APPLICATION FOR THE CREATION OF A SIGNALISED JUNCTION TO REPLACE THE EXISTING ROUNDABOUT, INCLUDING ASSOCIATED EXTENSIONS AT HERTFORD ROAD, SOUTH-EAST STEVENAGE, WITHIN THE AREA KNOWN AS BRAGBURY END, HERTFORDSHIRE**

[Officer Contact: Sharon Threlfall Tel: 01992 556270]

- 3.1 The Development Control Committee considered planning application 2/0372-16 for highway works at Hertford Road, South-East Stevenage, within the area known as Bragbury End.
- 3.2 Prior to questions and debate the Committee were addressed by, Richard Boutal, Hertfordshire County Council, Group Manager for special projects, speaking in support of the application and gave an overview of the impacts and benefits of the scheme.
- 3.3 The Committee were informed the application sought planning permission for the creation of a signalised junction to replace the existing roundabout which included associated extensions at Hertford Road. Members were informed this planning application related to a wider scheme for improvements for the A602 between Stevenage and Ware and noted a second application for other areas of the A602 improvements would be presented to a future meeting of the Committee.
- 3.4 In response to concerns over traffic, especially HGV's merging from two lanes into one on the A602 and double white lining, Members were informed any change would be subject to a safety audit and white lining would be altered to assist with road safety, although it was not deemed a safety issue at present.
- 3.5 In response to a Member question, it was noted that the footpaths and cycleway run parallel to the existing roundabout and links into the subway underneath the A602, and therefore a pedestrian phase would not be included in the signalised junction improvements for the A602.

**CONCLUSION**

- 3.7 That the Chief Executive and Director of Environment be authorised to grant planning permission subject to the following 12 conditions:
  - 1) Time limit for commencement
  - 2) Approved plans and documents
  - 3) Landscaping plan; including tree protection and habitat improvements

- 4) Materials used in construction
- 5) Drainage strategy
- 6) Flood risk assessment
- 7) Connection to sewer network
- 8) Ground investigations
- 9) Traffic management plan
- 10) Construction management plan; including compound details, hours of construction and wheel/chassis cleaning
- 11) Lighting
- 12) Fencing and boundary treatment

**KATHRYN PETTITT**  
**CHIEF LEGAL OFFICER**

**CHAIRMAN** \_\_\_\_\_

**CHAIRMAN'S**  
**INITIALS**

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