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Response to Planning application from Hertfordshire County Council (T and CP GDP Order 2015)

Director of Planning

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council
The Campus
Welwyn Garden City
Hertfordshire
AL8 6AW

District ref: S6/2015/1342/PP
HCC ref: WH/168/2015
HCC received: 7 July 2021
Area manager: Matthew Armstrong
Case officer: Matthew Armstrong

Location

King George V Playing Fields Northaw Road East Welwyn Garden City

Application type

Outline

Proposal

AMENDED PROPOSAL

Outline Planning Application for residential development of up to 121 dwellings, associated infrastructure and a change of use from agricultural land to an extension of the King George V playing field

Decision

Notice is given under article 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 that the Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority does not wish to restrict the grant of permission subject to the following conditions:

Vehicle Access

1) Before first occupation of the development, additional plans must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Highway Authority, which show the detailed engineering designs and construction of the Northaw Road East access and associated highway works, as shown indicatively on drawing number 141386/A/35 revision D and 141386/A/29 revision B. These works shall be constructed to the specification of the Highway Authority and Local Planning Authority's satisfaction, and completed before first occupation of the development. This shall include the permanent provision of the visibility splays as shown on these plans: 2.4m x 120m to the north-east and 2.4 x 215m to the south-west, within which there shall be no obstruction to visibility between 600mm and 2 metres above the carriageway level.

Reason: To ensure the provision of a vehicle access which is safe, suitable, and sustainable for all highway users.

Wider Highway Works:

2) Before first occupation of the development, additional plans must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Highway Authority, which show the detailed engineering designs and construction of the highway improvement works to Northaw Road East, as shown indicatively on drawing number 141386/A/56 revision A. This includes:

- Upgrade of the two existing bus stops closest to the site, to include raised Kassel kerbing and Real Time Information displays at both stops, and a shelter at the northbound stop.
- A pedestrian dropped kerb / tactile paved crossing point along Northaw Road East between the two bus stops.

These works shall be constructed to the specification of the Highway Authority and Local Planning Authority's satisfaction, and completed before first occupation.

Reason: To ensure users of the development can travel safely, freely, and sustainably to Hertford town centre and other key destinations.

3) Before first occupation of the development, additional plans must be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, in consultation with the Highway Authority, which show the detailed engineering designs and construction of improvement works to the Theobalds Road route, from the site to the village centre. This includes the provision of pedestrian dropped kerbs and tactile paving over side road junctions, as shown indicatively on drawing number 141386/A/57 revision A. These works shall be constructed to the specification of the Highway Authority and Local Planning Authority's satisfaction, and completed before first occupation.

Reason: To ensure users of the development can travel safely, freely, and sustainably to and from Cuffley village centre and other key destinations.

Construction:

4) Before commencement of the development, a 'Construction Traffic Management Plan' shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. Thereafter the construction of the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved Plan. The 'Construction Traffic Management Plan' must set out:

- the phasing of construction and proposed construction programme.
- the methods for accessing the site, including wider construction vehicle routing.
- the numbers of daily construction vehicles including details of their sizes, at each phase of the development.
- the hours of operation and construction vehicle movements.
- details of any highway works necessary to enable construction to take place.
- details of construction vehicle parking, turning and loading/unloading arrangements clear of the public highway.
- details of any hoardings.
- details of how the safety of existing public highway users and existing public right of way users will be maintained.
- management of traffic to reduce congestion.
- control of dirt and dust on the public highway, including details of the location and methods to wash construction vehicle wheels.
- the provision for addressing any abnormal wear and tear to the highway.
- the details of consultation with local businesses or neighbours.
- the details of any other Construction Sites in the local area.
- waste management proposals.

Reason: To minimise the impact of the construction process on the on local environment and local highway network.

Other:

5) The detailed plans submitted in connection with approval of reserved matters shall show, to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority:

- The details of all hardsurfaced areas within the site. This includes, but is not limited to, all roads, footways, forecourts, driveways, parking and turning areas, and foul and surface water drainage.
- The level of footway and carriageway visibility from each individual vehicle access, and the level of visibility from and around each main junction within the site, within which there shall be no obstruction to visibility between 600mm and 2 m above the carriageway level.
- That service vehicles, including refuse and emergency vehicles, can safely and conveniently access and route through the site, to include the provision of sufficient turning and operating areas.
- The provision of sufficient facilities for cycle storage.

All these features shall be provided before first occupation and maintained in perpetuity.

Reason: To provide adequate visibility for drivers within the site, to promote alternative modes of travel, and for the overall free and safe flow of all site users.

HIGHWAY INFORMATIVES:

The Highway Authority recommends inclusion of the following Advisory Notes (ANs) to ensure that any works as part of this development are carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Highways Act 1980 and other relevant processes.

AN1) Storage of materials: The applicant is advised that the storage of materials associated with the construction of this development should be provided within the site on land which is not public highway, and the use of such areas must not interfere with the public highway. If this is not possible, authorisation should be sought from the Highway Authority before construction works commence.

Further information is available via the website

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/highways-roads-and-pavements.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

AN2) Obstruction of public highway land: It is an offence under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 for any person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way to wilfully obstruct the free passage along a highway or public right of way. If this development is likely to result in the public highway or public right of way network becoming routinely blocked (fully or partly) the applicant must contact the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements before construction works commence.

Further information is available via the website

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/highways-roads-and-pavements.aspx> telephoning 0300 1234047.

AN3) Road Deposits: 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. Further information is available via the website

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/highways-roads-and-pavements.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

AN4) Construction standards for works within the highway. The applicant is advised that in order to comply with this permission it will be necessary for the developer of the site to enter into an agreement with Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 to ensure the satisfactory completion of the access and associated road improvements. The construction of such works must be undertaken to the satisfaction and specification of the Highway Authority, and by a contractor who is authorised to work in the public

highway. 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 <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/highways-roads-and-pavements.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

AN5) Highway to remain private: The applicant is advised that all new highway routes within the development site are likely to remain unadopted and the developer should put in place a permanent arrangement for long term maintenance. At the entrance of the new estate the road name plate should indicate that it is a private road to inform purchasers of their future maintenance liabilities. Further information is available via the website <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/highways-roads-and-pavements/highways-roads-and-pavements.aspx> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

AN6) Section 106 Agreement: Planning permission granted subject to the completion of a Section 106 Agreement between the applicants, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, and Hertfordshire County Council to secure the following:

A) A Sustainable Transport & Highway Accessibility Contribution of £333,500, index linked by SPONS to May 2016 towards pooled improvement measures along Station Road in Cuffley and/or other public highway and right of way routes within Cuffley and its immediate vicinity, and/or transport infrastructure/service improvements within Cuffley and its immediate vicinity. This includes (but is not limited to) those measures and schemes outlined in the South-East Growth & Transport Plan under packages 36 to 38, with the intention of increasing sustainable travel opportunities and/or improving accessibility for all users of the highway and right of way networks.

B) Highway Works clause: For the Owner to undertake reasonable endeavours to deliver a hard-surfaced shared Footway/Cycleway link of at least 3 metres width before occupation of the 30th unit, from the Application site to the public highway section of South Drive, as shown indicatively on drawing number 141386/A/51 revision A. In the event reasonable endeavours fail to deliver this, the Owner shall submit plans of a Highway Improvement Scheme to the Highway Authority's satisfaction along Northaw Road East before occupation of the 30th unit, from the Application site entrance to the Theobald's Road entrance, to safely and suitably accommodate pedestrians and cyclists to Cuffley village centre. The Owner covenants to ensure the Highway Improvement Scheme is mindful of LTN1/20 (or any subsequent guidance) and embraces the design principles therein, to more safely and conveniently accommodate pedestrians and cyclist of all abilities, and the County Council as Highway Authority covenants to respect the constraints of available public highway land widths in any final designs, agreeing to a reasonable departure from standards as a result. The Highway Improvement Scheme shall be implemented in full before occupation of the 61st unit.

C) Travel Plan:

i) An approved Travel Plan at least 3 months before first occupation, consisting of a written agreement with the County Council which sets out a scheme to encourage, regulate, and promote sustainable travel measures for owners, occupiers, and visitors to the Development in accordance with the provisions of the County Council's Travel Plan Guidance (March 2020) or any subsequent replacement guidance.

ii) The Travel Plan is subject to an 'Evaluation and Support Contribution' totalling £6,000 (index linked by RPI from March 2014), payable before first occupation of the development. This contribution is to cover the County Council's costs of administering and monitoring the objectives of the Travel Plan and engaging in any Travel Plan Review. The applicant's attention is drawn to Hertfordshire County Council's guidance on Travel Plans in this respect.

iii) A Travel Plan Remedial Measures Notice clause within the Legal Agreement, enabling the County Council to serve notice in writing on the Owner via the Travel Plan Co-ordinator where the Owner has failed to meet one or more of the targets identified in the Travel Plan, and specifying the remedial measures and/or actions required to be taken by the Owner to remedy the failed implementation towards the agreed targets with a reasonable time provision.

D) A Permissive Path Agreement clause within the Legal Agreement, ensuring the Owner enters into a Permissive Path Licence to formally secure permissive paths along the routes shown on drawing numbers 2130.19/09B and 2271-A-1101-B, specifically the construction of suitable routes to provide a connection between the Application Site at a point lying between points C and D on the Permissive Path Plan at one end, and Northaw Road East at a point lying between points A and B on the Permissive Path Plan at the other end.

E) A Right of Way Improvement Contribution of £8,000, index linked by SPONS to May 2016 towards improvement works to the full length of the right of way route Northaw Footpath 006. This may include:

- Cutting back of all tree branches, scrub and overhanging vegetation to the boundaries.
- Scraping of the leaf matter from the surface to a minimum width of 2 metres.
- Redressing the surface to a minimum width of 2 metres with granite fines.

The contribution is necessary to ensure users of the development can travel safely, freely, and sustainably across the public right of way network towards Crews Hill, Cheshunt, Waltham Cross, and Goffs Oak.

COMMENTS:

1.0 BACKGROUND AND DECISION

This is an amended proposal to the original 2015 submission, which seeks outline planning permission with all matters reserved except for access, for 121 dwellings.

Over the past 6 years there have been a number of significant national and local changes to planning policy and guidance relating to transport and highway matters. In particular, there is now a much greater emphasis placed on sustainable travel and accessibility. The applicant acknowledges this in parts of the revised Transport Assessment (TA) that has been submitted, alongside an updated Travel Plan. The TA also updates traffic flow figures and the capacity impact of the development on the surrounding highway network.

However, the Highway Authority's initial assessment of the revised TA and updated Travel Plan showed that the proposal falls short of current key sustainable travel policies, in particular paragraphs 110 – 112 of the NPPF (2021) and our Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) policy 1. These shortfalls were communicated directly to the applicant and LPA 1 earlier this year. The applicant has since submitted a Technical Note (July 2021) and further additional information which now successfully addresses each of the concerns raised by the Highway Authority. As such, this report confirms that subject to the above conditions and s106 contributions outlined above, the Highway Authority has no objection.

2.0 OVERVIEW

2.1 Existing Highway and Right of Way Network

The development site is located to the south of Cuffley, on the eastern side of Northaw Road East / B156. Northaw Road East is a B classified secondary distributor road subject to a speed limit of 30 mph (alongside the site and into Cuffley itself), but rises to a derestricted limit slightly further south.

In terms of the rights of way network, Northaw 006 footpath runs along the southern boundary of the site, and this leads to a network other right of way routes to the north, south, and east.

2.2 Accident Analysis

The accident assessment in the TA includes the public highway in the vicinity of the site, covering the period 2015 to 2020. Whilst any accident is regrettable, the assessment does not show the number of

accidents to be disproportionate to the amount of traffic routing through the study area, neither does it suggest any obvious trends which could otherwise point to highway design issues.

2.3 Application Details

The site is currently agricultural land. The proposal is for up to 121 dwellings, in outline except for access for which full permission is being sought now. As such, the exact housing mix, internal layout, parking levels, etc will all be dealt with by way of future reserved matters application should permission be granted.

2.4 Policy Framework and Technical Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) requires all developments that generate significant amounts of movement to be supported by a Transport Assessment (TA) or Transport Statement (TS). The applicant has submitted both a TA and a Travel Plan (TP) in accordance with Department for Transport guidance.

These documents have been assessed against the transport elements of the following national/local policies and technical guidance documents:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021
- Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) 2018
- Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan
- South East Hertfordshire Growth & Transport Plan
- Design Manual for Roads and Bridges
- Manual for Streets and Manual for Streets 2
- Hertfordshire County Council's Planning Obligations Toolkit

It should be noted that the latest NPPF and Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan 4 both place greater emphasis on the importance of sustainable travel compared to their predecessors. This is considered in more detail under section 8.

3.0 PROPOSED ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

Vehicle access to the development site will be taken from the B156 / Northaw Road East. It is shown on drawing number 141386/A/35 A in the TA as simple T-junction, with standard kerb radii and 2 metre wide footways on both sides. However, this plan has been superseded by 141386/A/35 revision D following discussion with the Highway Authority. The Highway Authority would prefer footways directly alongside the kerb radii of the new bellmouth, whereas the masterplan of the site shows the footways set back with a grass verge in between. The latter would be subject to commuted sums to account for the additional maintenance burden of grass verges, but the exact decision and design details in this respect can reasonably be left to the detailed s278 stage, and this is indicated on the latest plan.

Visibility splays from the access are to be provided on the basis of measured vehicle speeds. The north-east bound 85th percentile speed is 39.5mph and south-west bound 85th percentile speed is 36.5mph. The visibility splays shown are 2.4m x 120m to the north-east and 2.4 x 215m to the south-west. The north-east splay meets DMRB technical standards for 40mph (which exceeds the Manual for Streets 30mph standard), and the south-west splay meets DMRB technical standards for 60mph. The Highway Authority queried vertical visibility due to the gradient of Northaw Road East on approach to the site from the south, but the applicant has now provided vertical visibility plans in Appendix C of the Technical Note, and these are acceptable.

A stage 1 Road Safety Audit has been undertaken by the applicant and found no fundamental concerns. It should be noted though that the access and associated highway works will be subject to a stage 2 Road Safety Audit at the s278 / Implementation stage.

Pedestrian dropped kerbs and tactile paving have been added either side of the new access in the interest of accommodating more vulnerable highway users. Vehicle tracking diagrams submitted in the TA showed some body overhang onto footways for refuse vehicle turn in and out movements. The later Technical Note rectifies this concern. The applicant also now accepts that some of the existing speed humps along Northaw Road East may need to be relocated slightly to better accommodate larger vehicle turn-in-and-out movements at the access. Again, the finer detail of this can be dealt with the s278 / Implementation stage.

4.0 TRIP GENERATION

Chapter 6 of the TA outlines the trip generation calculations that have been applied to the proposed development. These have been checked with the TRICS database and are accepted. The development will generate around 83 vehicle trips in morning peak hour (8-9am) and 76 in the evening peak hour (5-6pm). Table 6.2 shows the expected trip levels by other modes of travel, and it is anticipated these will proportionally increase as a result of the sustainable travel / accessibility works secured by the developer.

5.0 TRIP DISTRIBUTION / TRAFFIC ASSIGNMENT:

The applicant has established trip distribution on the highway network by making use of Census 2011 'travel to work mode' statistics. The raw data behind the routing assumptions have led to table 6.3 in the TA. When combined, this shows that 62% of development traffic can be expected to travel to/from the south-west of the site access, and 38% can be expected to travel to/from the north-east (i.e. to/from Cuffley itself).

6.0 HIGHWAY CAPACITY / IMPACT ON NETWORK

The applicant has undertaken a capacity model of the site access, which is considered in detail further below. They have undertaken a more basic capacity assessment of the Station Road / Plough Hill / Northaw Road East junction and the Cattlegate Road / Northaw Road East junction. This shows an increase of 2% and 3% in vehicle traffic respectively in the busiest peak hour. Historic government guidance in this respect suggests an increase of more than 3% justifies detailed highway capacity modelling, but more recent government guidance encourages a more pragmatic approach in making this decision based on specific local environmental circumstances.

In this case, these junctions have already been modelled by Hertfordshire County Council in a wider / strategic context (i.e. a SATURN model which considers all the planned and possible developments coming forward in this area and the whole county over future years). This SATURN modelling shows that on the basis highway improvement schemes are delivered along these sections of highway in a cumulative context, the impact of additional traffic arising from all future developments (including this one) will be mitigated. As such, it is important that this current development makes an appropriate pooled financial contribution towards such schemes, and the details of this is outlined in Highway Informative Note 6 above. However, this needs to be understood with the caveat that Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority now places a heavy focus on sustainable travel and modal shift away from the private motorcar. This ethos is clear in our LTP4 and recently revised government planning policies and guidance. As such, any highway schemes delivered by the County Council from pooled financial contributions need to be designed to respect this approach.

In terms of the site access itself, the applicant's modelling shows a minor impact, with minimal effect on the free flow of traffic along this section of Northaw Road East. This model has been checked and found to be broadly robust.

The modelling is based on a 2025 future year scenario with TEMPRO growth factors applied from 2014. Under normal circumstances the Highway Authority would expect more recent traffic surveys to be undertaken and a shorter TEMPRO growth period applied, but the coronavirus pandemic has legitimately precluded this.

Finally, it should be noted that table 8.1 of the TA shows a very small increase in traffic as a result of the development to M25 junctions 24 and 25, but this lies outside the remit of the Highway Authority, as the motorway and trunk road networks are managed by Highways England.

7.0 SITE LAYOUT

The internal site layout will be dealt with by future reserved matters planning applications. The applicant should note that the Highway Authority no longer adopts new roads unless a clear wider public benefit can be demonstrated.

The internal layout should be highly permeable and accessible, catering for sustainable travel and users with protected characteristics under the Equality Act. Reference should be made to the government's new Design Code.

Parking levels will need to be balanced: Too much does little to encourage sustainable travel; too little may result in overspill parking onto the public highway.

Emergency / service / refuse vehicles will need to be tracked internally. Visibility at internal junctions and individual dwelling accesses will need to be considered, and forward visibility at points. Details of drainage across the site will need to be considered.

All this is covered under condition 6 above.

8.0 SUSTAINBLE TRAVEL & ACCESSIBILITY

8.1 Policy Context and Key Guidance

There is been a very significant shift towards increasing focus on sustainable travel and highly accessible developments since 2018, when the NPPF was fundamentally revised, and Hertfordshire County Council's new LTP4 was introduced. Since that time, additional government guidance has been published to reinforce this approach, and the County Council has declared a climate emergency. As such, all new development must now accord with this.

Paragraph 110 of the NPPF (2021) states that developments should ensure "safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for *all* users", and that "appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up". It references the new National Model Design Code, of which key quotes include: "New development should contribute to the creation of well-lit, direct and overlooked pedestrian and cycle routes" and "all streets should be accessible to all members of the community" (paragraph 59 part 1); plus "walking and cycling should be the first choice for short local journeys, particularly those of 5 miles or less" (paragraph 33 part 2).

Paragraph 112 of the NPPF 2021 goes on to states that "development should give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas"... "address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport"... and

"create places that are safe, secure and attractive, which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles".

Hertfordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan 4 (2018) echoes this, placing a much greater emphasis on the importance of sustainability/accessibility than its predecessors. Policy 1 for example states that the first step to consider is that "opportunities to reduce travel demand and the need to travel" are identified. After that, the needs of vulnerable road users (such as pedestrians and cyclists), then passenger transport users, must come ahead of those who use motorised forms of travel. This user hierarchy should be at the heart of all new development proposals, and each user is considered in turn below.

8.1 Pedestrian and Cycle Routes

Northaw Road East has footways on both sides of the road leading north towards Cuffley, and on one side of the road down to the Cattlegate Road junction. These footways are slightly substandard in width at places. There is a zebra crossing around 170 metres to the north of the new site access, but the side roads to this, and beyond to Cuffley, generally do not benefit from pedestrian dropped kerbs and tactile paving.

The TA submitted by the applicant proposed some valuable pedestrian infrastructure measures, including a new pedestrian link from the development onto South Drive (as shown on drawing number 141386/A/51 revision A), and various pedestrian links to the Playing Field to the south. A pedestrian link to South Drive will ensure easy access to the adjacent primary school, as well as a much quieter and more pleasant route to Cuffley centre / Station Road for both pedestrians and cyclists.

However, the applicant did not propose any improvements beyond this point along South Drive / Theobald's Road, and the Highway Authority queried this with the applicant. The applicant has subsequently submitted a plan which shows upgrades to the Theobald's Road route to the village centre, in the form of new pedestrian dropped kerbs and tactile paving crossing points over side junctions. These will ensure a much better and continuous pedestrian route is provided for highway users with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, such as those in wheelchairs, with sight impairment, parents with buggies, etc. The proposed works in this respect are shown in drawing number 141386/A/57 revision A, and has been conditioned above (note that a tactile crossing point over the Cuffley School access is not possible as the southern side of the bellmouth footway lies outside the highway land boundary).

The applicant has confirmed that it has access rights over the private/third party land from the site to South Drive and intends to pursue the delivery of a surfaced scheme for pedestrians. If, for any reason, such a scheme is not delivered this raises concerns as there is currently a grass verge here, which may become muddy and unattractive to use for pedestrians and cyclists to travel over it, from the site onto South Drive. This potentially compromises the connection to the Theobalds Road route to the village centre for sustainable users, unless the alternative route via Northaw Road East is improved.

Therefore, it was considered prudent to see a clause included in any s106 Agreement requiring the applicant to implement a Highway Improvement Scheme to Northaw Road East, from the site access up to and including the junction with Theobald's Road, if the South Drive link cannot be surfaced for pedestrians and cyclists. This will then act as the alternative main sustainable travel route to the town centre. The applicant should be mindful of the design principles contained within LTN1/20 for cyclists, but the Highway Authority acknowledges that the extent of public highway land may prevent an entirely LTN1/20 compliant scheme being implemented. As such, the Highway Authority will be open to accepting a reasonable departure from standards, but the principle of the need to improve the full length of Northaw Road East from the site access to Theobald's Road to better accommodate

pedestrians and cyclists in the event the South Drive link cannot be delivered should be agreed by all parties.

Moving onto other matters, the lack of a pedestrian crossing point between the two closest bus stops on Northaw Road East was also raised as a concern by the Highway Authority. The applicant has now submitted a revised plan which includes a simple pedestrian dropped kerb / tactile paved crossing point between the two bus stops. Given the nature of the highway environment here and an existing zebra slightly further north, this is considered sufficient, and visibility for pedestrians at these crossing points exceeds standards.

Condition 4 above is recommended for inclusion in any grant of consent, to ensure that the Northaw 006 right of way route is improved before first occupation.

In addition, it is proposed to provide permissive paths around the fields to the south of the site and the applicant has agreed to the principle of this, Full details of this are included in Highway Informative Note 6D above.

8.2 Bus

The two closest bus stops to the site are located along Northaw Road East, around 70 metres from the site access. The stops mainly serve the 242 service, which has reduced in frequency since the 2015 application. Of this service in the weekday, there are three hourly early morning buses and 1 bus in the afternoon.

The southbound stop has a shelter whereas the northbound stop has a simple flag/pole. The applicant has agreed to upgrade these stops to include raised Kassel kerbing at both, and the addition of a shelter at the northbound stop. As mentioned above, an informal crossing point is to be provided between them. This is shown on drawing number 141386/A/56 revision A and has been conditioned. Real time information displays at both would also be justified.

8.3 Rail Access

The closest rail station is in Cuffley, around 850 metres from the site. There are typically trains every half an hour (with greater frequency in the peak hours), to Stevenage northbound and Finsbury Park and Moorgate southbound.

8.4 Travel Plan

The original Travel Plan submitted as part of the amendment was considered to be substandard by our Travel Plan team. The applicant has since revised this, and the latest Travel Plan is sufficient for planning purposes, albeit some minor additions will need to be made in the final version. These include:

- The details of a Travel Plan Co-Ordinator (TPC) should be communicated to HCC, prior to their appointment.
- The details of a secondary contact need to be provided to HCC, once a TPC has been appointed.
- Baseline modal shift targets to be updated following baseline survey (at 75% occupation level).
- The text needs to be altered to reflect that surveys should be repeated annually for five years post full occupation – at present, the TP states that surveys will be conducted "annually for 5 years post submission of the initial monitoring survey".

Highway Informative note 6C covers this aspect, and the TP will be included within the s106 Agreement.

8.5 Wider Highway / Sustainable Travel and Accessibility Works

When the application was first submitted in 2015, the Highway Authority agreed with the applicant a Highways Contribution of £333,500 towards highway improvement works in the village centre / Station Road, and the Northaw Road East / Plough Hill / Station Road junction, primarily to better accommodate sustainable travel users and improve the overall flow of highway users.

Since that time, the Highway Authority has developed a South-East Growth & Transport Plan (GTP). This considers the key problems and opportunities that currently exist or may occur in the future on the transport network in this area, and identifies what types of interventions are needed to improve the transport network. For Cuffley, some of the key schemes listed under Packages 36 to 38 in the South-East GTP are:

- SM240 = Reduced speed limits - Goff's Oak and Cuffley. Reduce speed limits to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists (IC21).
- PR241 = Cycle parking - Cuffley - Improve cycle parking provision at key locations in Cuffley to promote cycling uptake. Key locations include the station, town centre, activity centres and large employment sites.
- PR242 = Wayfinding – Cuffley. Improve the wayfinding between key locations in Cuffley, particularly for walking, cycling and public transport routes (IC23).
- PR244 = Cuffley station crossing improvements - Improve pedestrian crossing facilities around Cuffley railway station (IC22).
- SM245 - Cuffley station bus service enhancement. Improve bus services to Cuffley railway station (IC18) SM246.
- SM249 = Electric vehicle charging points - Cuffley. Help enable the improved provision of electric vehicle charging points at key locations in Cuffley to promote an uptake in electric vehicle use.
- PR250 = Promote available sustainable travel options in Cuffley. Promote the available public transport services and active travel routes in Cuffley to encourage an uptake in sustainable travel.
- SM251 Parking management in Cuffley. Work with operators and local authorities to manage car parking provision at key locations in Cuffley through paid parking, parking limitations and other measures with the aim to shift people toward sustainable travel. Key locations include car parks, the station, town centre, activity centres and large employment sites.

In addition, it is recognised that the Station Road / Northaw Road East / Plough Hill junction could be improved to better accommodate the free flow of highway users, in particular sustainable travel users.

The £333,500 figure remains appropriate in scale and context, but should have SPONS indexation applied from May 2016 (the date of the previous draft s106 Agreement) to the date payment is made. This contribution will be pooled towards one or more of the above measures or other similar CIL compliant measures, with further details outlined in Highway Informative Note 6A.

9.0 CONCLUSION

The Highway Authority can confirm that subject to the conditions and measures outlined in Highway Informative note 6 to be included within an s106 Agreement, there is no objection to this proposal.

Signed

Matthew Armstrong

8 December 2021