

GA2, Great Ashby, Stevenage – HCC Highways Pre Application Response

Introduction

The North Herts Council (NHC) residential allocation is located on Greenfields at the northern fringe of Great Ashby, Stevenage. The site is bound to the northwest by the rural Back Lane and the farm (Kiln Farm) which accesses onto Back Lane; to east by greenfields and to the southwest by the existing residential area of Great Ashby. It is proposed to establish upto 650homes, upto 500sqm commercial/ community development on the site and make provision for a 2FE Primary /4FE Secondary school. Consultant's for the applicant (Woods Hardwick Ltd) have submitted a pre application Highways Scoping Note (HSN) to HCC Highways DM (19244/HSN, 23 March 23) to outlay the scope of a Transport Assessment (TA) and this note responds to that on behalf of HCC Highways Development Management (DM).

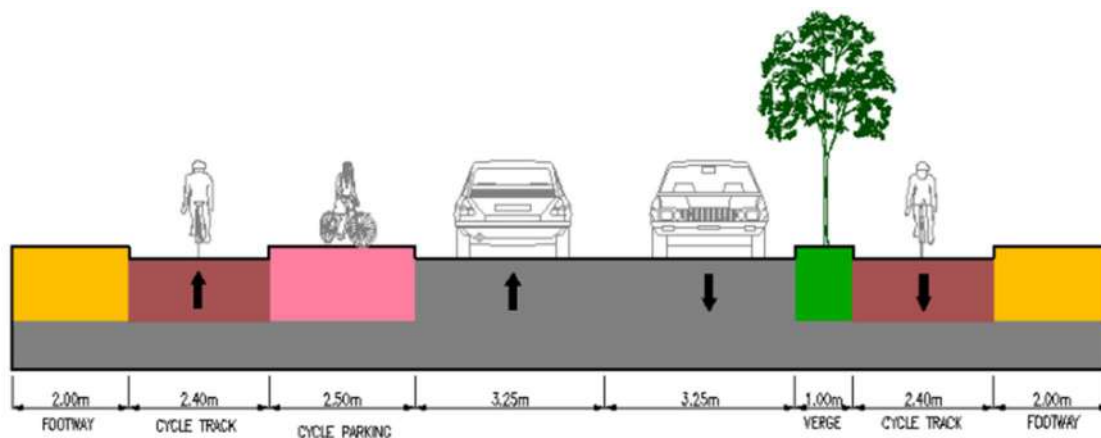
Sustainable Transport Access

In line with the Policies of LTP4, particularly Policies 1 (the Transport User Hierachy) and 5 (Development Management) it is essential given the declared climate emergency that the issue of sustainable access is considered first and the appropriate infrastructure provided to unlock a site sustainably.

Vehicle Access

Only subsequent to unlocking the site sustainably the vehicle access should be considered at the moment vehicle access is proposed to be via a 6.75m carriageway beneath the powerlines that lead to Mendip Way.

However, Chapter 8 (Part 3) of HCC's Emerging Place & Movement Planning and Design Guide (P&M PDG, 14 February 2023), which has been approved by the HCC cabinet and is currently subject to public consultation, specifies a 6.5m wide carriageway for a residential distributor road capable of supporting a bus service subject to a 30mph speed limit (or 6.2m wide when subject to a 20mph speed limit). Typically, the corridor will broadly be as follows:



<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/consultations/transport-and-highways/hertfordshire-place-and-movement-planning-design-guide.aspx>

Additionally, the applicant needs to confirm with National Grid/ UK Power Networks that the access road will be deliverable and demonstrate this to HCC Highways.

In addition to the main access, the applicant proposes a secondary emergency access onto Back Lane. This should be designed so as to be a sustainable transport only link capable of only being used by a motorised vehicle in the case of an emergency. Page 16 of Chapter 8 of the P&M PDG specifies Active Travel Links with emergency access.

HCC Highways accept these proposed access points given that they are designed to the P&M PDG.

Parking

The applicant proposes to provide parking according to the Stevenage Borough Council 'Parking Provision and Sustainable Development SPD' (Adopted 2020). However, HCC Highways must point out that Great Ashby in North Herts Council (NHC) and their standards should be referred to in the first instance (Vehicle Parking at New Development SPD, Sept 2011). However, it is noted that this document is dated and parking provision must be agreed with NHC on a case by case basis. Furthermore, the current UK Building regulations Part S1 (2021 Edition) with regards to Electric Vehicle (EV) charge points requires:

Requirement	
The erection of new residential buildings	
S1.	(1) A new residential building with associated parking must have access to electric vehicle charge points as provided for in paragraph (2). (2) The number of associated parking spaces which have access to electric vehicle charge points must be— (a) the total number of associated parking spaces, where there are fewer associated parking spaces than there are dwellings contained in the residential building; or (b) the number of associated parking spaces that is equal to the total number of dwellings contained in the residential building, where there are the same number of associated parking spaces as, or more associated parking spaces than, there are dwellings. (3) Cable routes for electric vehicle charge points must be installed in any associated parking spaces which do not, in accordance with paragraph (2), have an electric vehicle charge point where— (a) a new residential building has more than 10 associated parking spaces; and (b) there are more associated parking spaces than there are dwellings contained in the residential building.

S278

The Highway Authority will seek, wherever possible, to secure highway works via planning Condition and s278 agreement. This includes the site access and emergency junctions and any other possible off site connections identified to unlock this site sustainably.

Public Transport

To ensure the viability of the site the Public Transport Unit (PTU) has previously requested of the developer that it will be necessary for a new bus stop is provided within 400m of each home and services updated appropriately.

Residential Travel Plan

HCC's Active & Safer Travel Team have indicated that a full plan will be required for the site to be in place 5 years post full occupation. A £1,200 per annum Evaluation and Support Fee should be secured by section 106 agreement in accordance with Hertfordshire County Council's Travel Plan Guidance. This should incorporate measures to promote sustainable transport, an appointed travel plan co-ordinator and an appropriate monitoring programme. Residential developments are also required to provide Residential Travel Vouchers for each unit (£100 per house/£50 per flat) to

encourage the take up of sustainable modes. A separate School Travel Plan will be required 3 months prior to opening. For this stage in the planning process however, a Framework Travel Plan covering both the Residential and Educational aspects is required only.

Full guidance is available at: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/highways/development-management/travel-plan-guidance.pdf>, or for more guidance contact: travelplan@hertfordshire.gov.uk.

Road Traffic Collisions (RTC) Analysis

The HSN indicates that a Road safety – review of road safety in the study area based on highway accident data obtained for the latest 5-year period from Crash Map. Whilst from HCC Highways DM's initial review the number of RTC's in the vicinity of Great Ashby is limited, use of CrashMap is unacceptable and full causation data should be obtained for both Great Ashby Way and Mendip Way. RTC data can be obtained from Anthea.Nott@hertfordshire.gov.uk

Swept Path Analysis

HCC Highways DM and requires that it can be demonstrated through vehicle tracking that a NHDC refuse vehicle, 7.5t delivery vehicle and a fire tender can efficiently access the site and exit in forward gear.

The current refuse vehicle used by NHDC is a 12.205m x 2.89m Mercedes Econic.

Growth

Whilst HCC agrees with the process suggested in the HSN as to growth due to committed development and use of Temproware, the council would request that Temproware v8.0 is utilised as it reflects the most accurate UK growth prediction subsequent to the world pandemic

Trip Gen, Mode Split Distribution and Assignment

The 2014 trip generation presented in the HSN for the residential element of the site are considered dated. A subsequent people trip generation by HCC Highways using the most recent TRICS Multi Modal sites in England and Wales (outside Greater London) cross referenced to Journey to Work data from the 2011 census (QS701EW) Super Output areas E01033024, E01033025 & E01033027, Great Ashby, to reflect travel opportunities suggested higher vehicle trip rates in the AM peak and slightly lower rates in the PM peak. Furthermore, impact on all modes is required.

Person Trip Rate	In	Out	Total
AM	0.212	0.754	0.966
PM	0.567	0.267	0.834

Mode Split	
WfH	5.12%
Walk	2.07%
Cycle	1.02%
Bus	2.82%
Rail	11.52%
Mororbike	0.49%
Passenger	3.92%
Driver	72.70%
Other	0.34%
	100.00%

Vehicle Trip Rates	In	Out	Total
AM	0.154	0.548	0.702
PM	0.412	0.194	0.606

Residential Veh Numbers	In	Out	Total
AM	100	356	456
PM	268	126	394

HCC Highways DM agrees with the presented educational trip rates presented in the HSN.

The residential trips should be distributed according to the Journey to Work Origin Destination data observed in the 2011 Census (Table WU03EW). Due to limitations on the datasets and geographical areas it is considered that trips originating in the Great Ashby South MSOA Stevenage 002 will provide the most accurate proxy for GA2. Subsequently an on-line journey planner should be used to route traffic through individual junctions.

Traffic Impact

The TA should in the first instance assess the immediate development impact through the use of Macro Models of:

- The Site Access
- The roundabouts on Great Ashby Way between St Martins Way (x11)
- The Back Lane/GAW Priority Junction
- The Cartwright Drive/GAW Priority Junction

For Macro Modelling purposes HCC Highway would look to the opening year and 5 years after that for analysis.

The wider impacts of the proposals must be assessed by commissioning a run of HCC's most recent Comet Model which accounts for the most likely growth and transport infrastructure proposals and will look at the longer term situation. The NTEM constrained version of the Comet model contains those developments that are committed. A further sensitivity test considering all local plan site is also requested. Attached to this note are the proforma to request runs of the model and a Comet FAQ.

Mitigation/ Developer Contributions

HCC Highways operate two levels of mitigation agreements (Strand 1 and Strand 2). Strand 1 mitigation works being works that are directly required to unlock the development and solely the responsibility of the development. Strand 2 mitigation works being works that address the wider cumulative impact of the development for which the development isn't solely responsible for but does derive benefit from.

In the first instance (Strand 1) HCC would envisage that the agreed site access junction and necessary sustainable transport improvements (both on and off site) are delivered through a S278 agreement and travel plan contributions are contained in a s106 agreement.

In the second instance (Strand 2) HCC calculate an appropriate headline figure based on the findings of HCC's adopted Developers Planning Obligation Toolkit (2021). Strand 2 contributions should address the cumulative impacts of all development, large and small, facilitating delivery and enhancement of the necessary active and sustainable transport networks. These local sustainable networks must be provided in their entirety to provide the sustainable connections to the key trip generators, as such contributions will be pooled to fund these networks within the local area subject to any legislative restrictions), as supported by National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

This second strand contribution is intended to help implement broader transport measures in the catchments of new development from which contributions are secured. The need for second strand contributions will be balanced against the level of first strand contributions and any other relevant planning matters.

For a development of 650 homes the Toolkit calculates a headline contribution figure of £4,436,900. The employment and school aspect of this development has been discounted for this calculation. The contribution however, if the development were to proceed this figure would be adjusted accordingly to take the cost of the sustainable transport infrastructure required to unlock this site sustainably. The finalised strand 2 contribution would be allocated to packages identified in the North Central Growth and Transport Plan (May 2022) which accompanies LTP4.

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/media-library/documents/highways/north-central-gtp/ncgtp-interventions-paper-final-acc..pdf>