



TECHNICAL NOTE 1 – Post Submission Response

DATE:	25 February 2026	CONFIDENTIALITY:	Public
SUBJECT:	Post Application Transport Response		
PROJECT:	London Road, Hitchin	AUTHOR:	David Dixon
CHECKED:	Robbie Arnold	APPROVED:	David Dixon

INTRODUCTION

WSP has been appointed by Martin Grant Land to provide transport advice regarding an Outline Planning Application for up to 41 residential units on land at London Road, Hitchin. A planning application was submitted in November 2025 (reference 25/02885/OP) to North Hertfordshire Council.

Since the submission, Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) have provided written transport comments on the proposals with which this note looks to address which are contained within **Appendix A** of this note. It should be noted that following the comments from HCC, a meeting was held on the 30 January 2026 to discuss these comments and identify next steps.

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

HCC response set out 7 concerns with the transport proposals associated with the proposed development for which has been summarised below, alongside the WSP response.

Comment 1 - Redesign of Approved Access without supporting Stage 1/2 Road Safety Audit (RSA)

HCC has outlined several points under the headline comment, to which WSP offers the following responses.

Regarding the requirement for a Stage 1/2 Road Safety Audit (RSA) requirement, a Stage 1 RSA was submitted to HCC for review on January 21, 2026 alongside the Designers Response. As of the preparation of this note, no further comments have been provided by HCC.

The primary concern relates to the design of the proposed access, particularly its connection with the future roundabout at the Pound Farm site. It is understood that the highway authority believes a collaborative approach between developers would be both efficient and effective. The council prefers that the roundabout not be constructed in two separate phases and recommends pursuing a joint delivery strategy.

Whilst the applicants appreciate this position and recognise the benefits of a “joint and collaborative” approach to designing the Pound Farm Junction, and would be keen in principle to be involved with any such process, it is clear that HCC need to ensure that the junction layout for the Pound Farm scheme meets the tests of reg.122 of the CIL Regulations in relation to the Pound Farm Scheme in isolation.

It would not be reasonable for them to have to deliver a junction that has been considered appropriate by the highway authority to accommodate development traffic from our scheme which is not yet consented, and it would be unreasonable to hold their S278 agreement due to a scheme that is yet to be consented. This is especially the case given the Pound Farm site is allocated within the Local Plan, whereas this applications site is not and is at the outline stage.

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Importantly, HCC need to be sure that the Pound Farm Scheme can be accommodated on the local road network without our scheme, and it will fall on our proposals, as per the submission and this note to demonstrate that our traffic can be accommodated on the local road network with the Pound Farm Scheme in place, recognising that the costs of this will fall upon the applicant.

In regard to the policy test for the proposed planning application, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Paragraph 115(d) states: *"any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree through a vision-led approach."*

The term "vision-led approach" is defined in the glossary to the NPPF as "an approach to transport planning based on setting outcomes for a development based on achieving well-designed, sustainable and popular places, and providing the transport solutions to deliver those outcomes as opposed to predicting future demand to provide capacity (often referred to as 'predict and provide')."

Under Paragraph 116 of the NPPF: "Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios."

Reasonable future scenarios is defined in the glossary to the NPPF as: "a range of realistic transport scenarios tested in agreement with the local planning authority and other relevant bodies (including statutory consultees where appropriate), to assess potential impacts and determine the optimum transport infrastructure required to mitigate any adverse impacts, promote sustainable modes of travel and realise the vision for the site.

It is important that these are the tests that are applied when assessing and determining the planning application. We would expect any matters, such as the benefits of a 'joint and collaborative' approach is made clear as an element that should be pursued if possible, however are not relevant in terms of the NPPF and importantly would not justify a refusal on highway grounds.

As such, whilst the applicants will continue to engage with the developers at the Pound Farm Scheme to consider appropriate solutions, it is for HCC to consider the acceptability of the scheme put forward within this application.

The comments also requested a number of technical points including;

- footways along London Road to be increased north towards the future bus stops being delivered by the Pound Farm application
- pedestrian crossings should be located close to the bus stop for safe access

The above points were discussed at the meeting on the 30 January 2026 and have now been addressed and is included on WSP Drawing 70056409-SK-006 Rev P05 contained within the Stage 1 RSA Designers Response contained within Appendix B of this note.

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Comment 2 - Mill Lane Junction with London Road Stopping -Up

The HCC submission highlighted concerns regarding the proposed closure of Mill Lane and its potential implications. This matter was addressed during the meeting, where it was agreed that implementing a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to restrict vehicle access, while preserving pedestrian and cycle connectivity, would be a more suitable approach.

To assist the council, an additional drawing has been provided (WSP Drawing 70056409-SK-010 P02), illustrating the area requiring the TRO. The establishment of the TRO is intended to be a conditioned requirement within the planning application, with costs to be borne by the applicant.

Comment 3 – Swept Path Analysis

The council has expressed reservations about how the TRO may affect existing traffic manoeuvres, specifically those highlighted in the Stage 1 RSA, notably, access for refuse and emergency vehicles to residential properties on Mill Lane impacted by the proposed road realignment. The revised drawing included in the RSA Designers Response (WSP Drawing 70056409-SK-006 P05) incorporates additional vehicle tracking to demonstrate access for refuse vehicles to these properties.

Comment 4 - Stage 1/2 Road Safety Audit: A Stage 1/2 RSA is required

As mentioned in Comment 1, a Stage 1 RSA has been completed, and a Designers Response was submitted to HCC. Although a Stage 1/2 RSA was initially requested, a Stage 2 RSA is typically conducted after planning approval, once the design advances beyond its preliminary phase. The current proposals are developed to a suitable form for HCC to agree on the principle of access for an outline planning application. It should be noted that as the design progresses through further detailed phases, additional Road Safety Audits will be necessary.

Comment 5 – Right turn to Mill Lane

HCC has expressed concerns regarding the potential for conflicts between vehicles making right turns into Mill Lane from the new access road and those approaching from London Road. It should be noted, however, that the Stage 1 RSA did not identify this manoeuvre as a safety risk at the site.

Moreover, when evaluating the anticipated volume of traffic performing this manoeuvre, it is deemed to present minimal risk. Mill Lane is a narrow rural road serving only a limited number of properties; on-site observations indicate very low traffic flows along this route.

To assess the possibility of conflict, WSP reviewed the trip generation calculations detailed in the Transport Assessment (Table 5-2). Any potential issue would stem from drivers intending to turn right waiting for vehicles exiting the Proposed Development. The assessment indicates that the maximum hourly flow from the development occurs during the morning peak, comprising 16 movements, equivalent to a vehicle exiting every 3 minutes and 45 seconds. Given the low number of vehicles turning right into Mill Lane and exiting

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the Proposed Development, the probability of a vehicle waiting to turn right and obstructing the access road is considered low and does not constitute a significant or severe safety risk at this location.

Comment 6 – Highway Adoption

HCC has clarified that its current policy is not to enter into S38 agreements for the adoption of new estate roads. However, it should be noted that Mill Lane is an adopted road, and the proposed diversion onto the new access road will have implications for this status. Consequently, it is essential that both the access road and the diverted section of Mill Lane are brought up to an adoptable standard and formally adopted.

The applicants believe that this matter can be addressed through a Section 106 agreement or a planning obligation to ensure the road is constructed to an adoptable standard and that the land, together with its associated boundaries, is offered to the council for adoption.

To facilitate this, WSP has prepared an initial plan (WSP Drawing 70056409-SK-012 P01) outlining the area proposed for adoption, which could be included in any relevant agreement. This plan identifies the required land based on the layout submitted with the outline planning application; however, it is important to acknowledge that modifications to the layout may arise during the detailed design stage and that the wording of any obligation will need to make this allowance. HCC should have adequate clarity at this stage that an appropriate mechanism can ensure the land is offered for adoption.

Comment 7 – Provision of Cycle route / Footways

HCC commented on the need for adequate pedestrian connections, considering the effects of diverting Mill Lane, to create a well-designed active travel network. During the meeting, it was agreed that the updated drawing showing pedestrian links to the proposed bus stops on London Road, along with the decision that closing Mill Lane would apply only to vehicles (while keeping it accessible for pedestrians and cyclists), effectively addresses this concern. To clarify, these are shown on WSP Drawing 70056409-SK-006 Rev P05.

Summary

This technical note has been prepared to address concerns raised by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) regarding planning application reference 25/02885/OP, submitted in November 2025 to North Hertfordshire District Council. Several comments have been received concerning the proposed access arrangement onto London Road, which were thoroughly discussed during the meeting held on 30 January 2026 and are examined in detail within this summary note.

Subject to HCC's acceptance of the findings from the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit and acknowledging that the applicants will maintain ongoing engagement with the Pound Farm landowners, it is concluded that the proposed access arrangement is appropriate and in line with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) does not present a 'severe' highway or safety impact on the wider highway network.



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It is considered there is adequate information to allow the support for the current outline application, with further information provided as we enter the detailed design stage post determination.



Mark Youngman
Development Management Group Manager
Hertfordshire County Council
Postal Point CHN115
Farnham House
Six Hills Way
Stevenage
SG1 2ST

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

Director of Planning

North Hertfordshire Council
Council Offices
Gernon Road
Letchworth Garden City
Hertfordshire
SG6 3JF

District ref: 25/02885/OP
HCC ref: NH/27315/2025
HCC received: 26 November 2025
Area manager: Manjinder Sehmi
Case officer: Shamsul Huda

Location

Land At Mill Lane, London Road, St Ippolyts, Hitchin, SG4 7NN

Application type

Outline

Proposal

Outline Application : Erection of up to 41 dwellings with associated infrastructure and open space (all matters reserved except means of access).

Recommendation

Notice is given under article 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 that Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority recommends that permission be refused for the following reasons:

There is insufficient information provided with this application to enable the Highway Authority to reach a recommendation. In the absence of the necessary details, the Highway Authority recommends refusal due to concerns over potential implications for highway safety and convenience.

The proposed access arrangement, as indicated on drawing (Ref: 70056409-SK-006, Rev P03), is not acceptable for the following reasons:

1. Redesign of Approved Access without supporting Stage 1/2 Road Safety Audit (RSA).
2. Lack of details on Mill Lane junction stopping-up measures.
3. No swept path analysis for Refuse Collection Vehicles (RCV) and emergency vehicles.
4. No Stage 1/2 RSA for access arrangement and Mill Lane realignment.
5. Potential right-turn conflict into Mill Lane.
6. No information on future road adoption and maintenance.
7. Inadequate provision and connectivity of cycle routes and footways

COMMENTS:

The Highway Authority acknowledges that this is an outline application where the means of access is under consideration only. Following a review of the proposed access arrangements, the Highway Authority considers that access, stopping up, vehicle movement related issues should be addressed at this stage rather than deferred to a later phase of the planning process.

1 Re-design of Approved Access:

The proposed redesign of the pre-approved roundabout associated with Pound Farm raises concerns regarding vehicular conflicts, pedestrian safety, and connectivity.

The proposed footways along London Road should be increased towards north and connected to the future bus stop delivered by Pound Farm Development.

Pedestrian crossings should be located close to the bus stop for safe access.

Dimensions of the pre-approved three-arm roundabout appear significantly altered, creating delivery challenges for highways.

The applicant must redesign this 4-armed roundabout in collaboration with Pound Farm Development's (Ref: 21/00434/HYA) designers and in accordance with HCC's Place & Movement Planning Design Guide (P&MPDG), Part 3, Chapter 9. Provision of tactile crossings on the new road connecting Mill Lane is also required.

It is important to note that the pre-approved three-armed roundabout associated with the Pound Farm Development is currently undergoing a design review. The highway authority considers that adopting a joint approach to redesign this roundabout into a four-armed configuration would be more efficient, convenient, and effective. This approach also would be less time consuming and economical.

2 Mill Lane Junction with London Road Stopping -Up

The Transport Statement (Para 4.2.4) indicates stopping up Mill Lane at London Road but fails to provide details on extent, method, and measures.

Provide full details of stopping-up measures, including TRO (Traffic Regulation Order), and address how access for residents and refuse collection will be maintained for dwellings in the east. Consider a modal filter to retain Mill Lane as an active travel link.

3 Swept Path Analysis: No swept path analysis is submitted for Refuse Collection Vehicles (RCV) and Emergency Vehicles -like ambulance & fire service. The applicant is advised to submit swept path analysis for all movements, considering standing car at all junctions for a 12.2m long RCV

The dimensions and layout of a junction shall cater for the swept path of all vehicles likely to be encountered, which will include those used for emergency services and refuse collection

4 Stage 1/2 Road Safety Audit: A Stage 1/2 RSA is required to assess safety of:

New access arrangement

Mill Lane realignment

Vehicle movements

The applicant must conduct RSA in accordance with GG 119 (DMRB)

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5 Right Turn to Mill Lane: It has been observed that the proposed layout may result in a potential conflict between vehicles making a right turn into Mill Lane and incoming traffic on the main access road. This raises significant safety concerns, particularly during peak traffic periods, and could lead to increased risk of collisions

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The applicant is strongly advised to review this junction arrangement and consider appropriate mitigation measures to address the identified conflict. In addition, the applicant should support the revised design with a Road Safety Audit (RSA) in accordance with GG 119 (Design Manual for Roads and Bridges) to ensure that all safety implications have been thoroughly assessed and addressed.

6 HIGHWAY ADOPTION:

The proposed alignment of Mill Lane, as shown on drawing (Ref: 70056409-SK-006, Rev P03) indicates that the diverted section of the road would pass through the application site, which is currently private land. It is noted that the applicant has not addressed the provision for the future maintenance of this diverted road.

The applicant has advised that it is no longer common practice for the County Council, as Highway Authority, to enter into agreements under Section 38 of the Highways Act 1980 to adopt all estate roads as highways maintainable at public expense, particularly where such roads provide no wider public benefit. This position is acknowledged; however, in this instance, Mill Lane will become a no-through route for vehicular movements only, and its future status must be clarified.

To ensure long-term maintenance and public accessibility, the applicant must offer to dedicate the land required for the diverted Mill Lane for Highway adoption under s38. This will provide certainty regarding its future management and prevent potential issues relating to access and upkeep. Failure to secure appropriate arrangements for adoption or maintenance would render the proposal contrary to best practice and could result in significant operational and legal complications post-development.

7 Provision of Cycle route/ Footways:

A provision for a cycleway has been indicated on the northern side of the proposed new access road. While this is a positive step towards promoting sustainable travel, it is noted that the proposed pedestrian and cycle facilities do not appear to integrate with the wider active travel network. This lack of connectivity significantly limits the effectiveness of the provision and does not fully support the principles of sustainable transport.

In accordance with Local Transport Note (LTN) 1/20 and Hertfordshire County Council's Place and Movement Planning Design Guide (P&MPDG), March 2024, developments should provide safe, direct, and convenient routes for pedestrians and cyclists that connect to existing infrastructure and key destinations. This includes ensuring continuity of routes beyond the site boundary to encourage active travel and reduce reliance on private vehicles.

The applicant is therefore strongly advised to review and revise the proposed layout to incorporate well-connected footways and cycleways to and from the development site. These connections should link to the wider active travel network and comply with the design standards set out in the above guidance documents. Failure to address these issues may result in the development being considered contrary to national and local policy objectives for sustainable transport.

Summary

The proposed site access arrangement and Mill Lane diversion, as shown on drawing (Ref: 70056409-SK-006, Rev P03), raise several significant highway safety concerns that need to be addressed immediately rather than at a later stage.

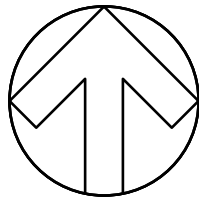
Therefore, the highway authority considers the current access and access road design to be substandard and contrary to paragraph 115 of the NPPF (December 2024) and is recommending refusal of the development in its present form.

The highway authority strongly advises the applicant to redesign the access arrangement in collaboration with the Pound Farm Development. However, I am willing to reconsider the application if the above-mentioned issues are resolved satisfactorily or have a meeting to discuss it further

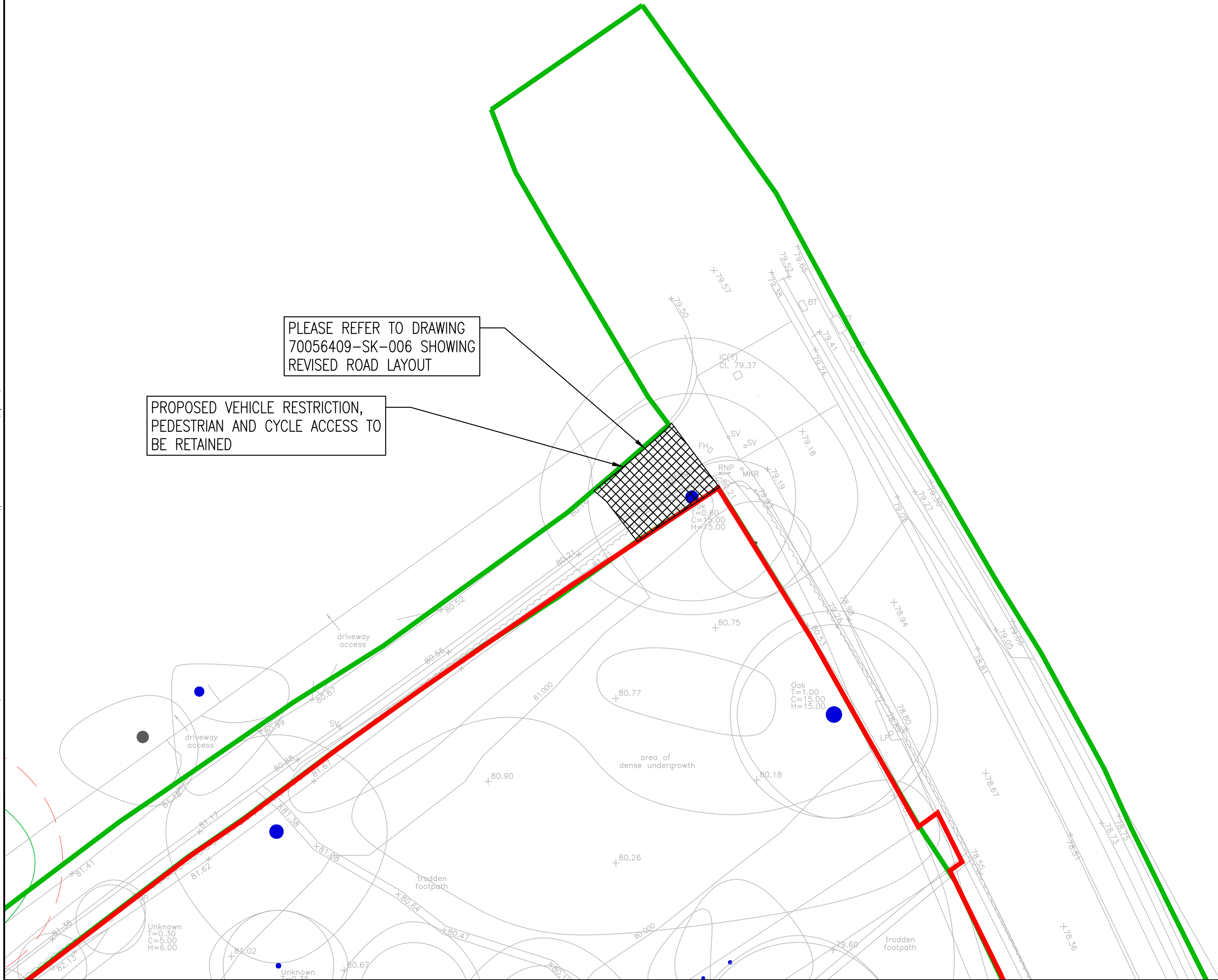
Signed

Shamsul Huda

17 December 2025



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REV	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	CHK	APP

DRAWING STATUS:	S2 - FOR INFORMATION
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Matrix House, Basing View, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG21 4FF
T+ 44 (0) 1256 318 800, F+ 44 (0) 1256 318 700
wsp.com

CLIENT:	MARTIN GRANT LAND
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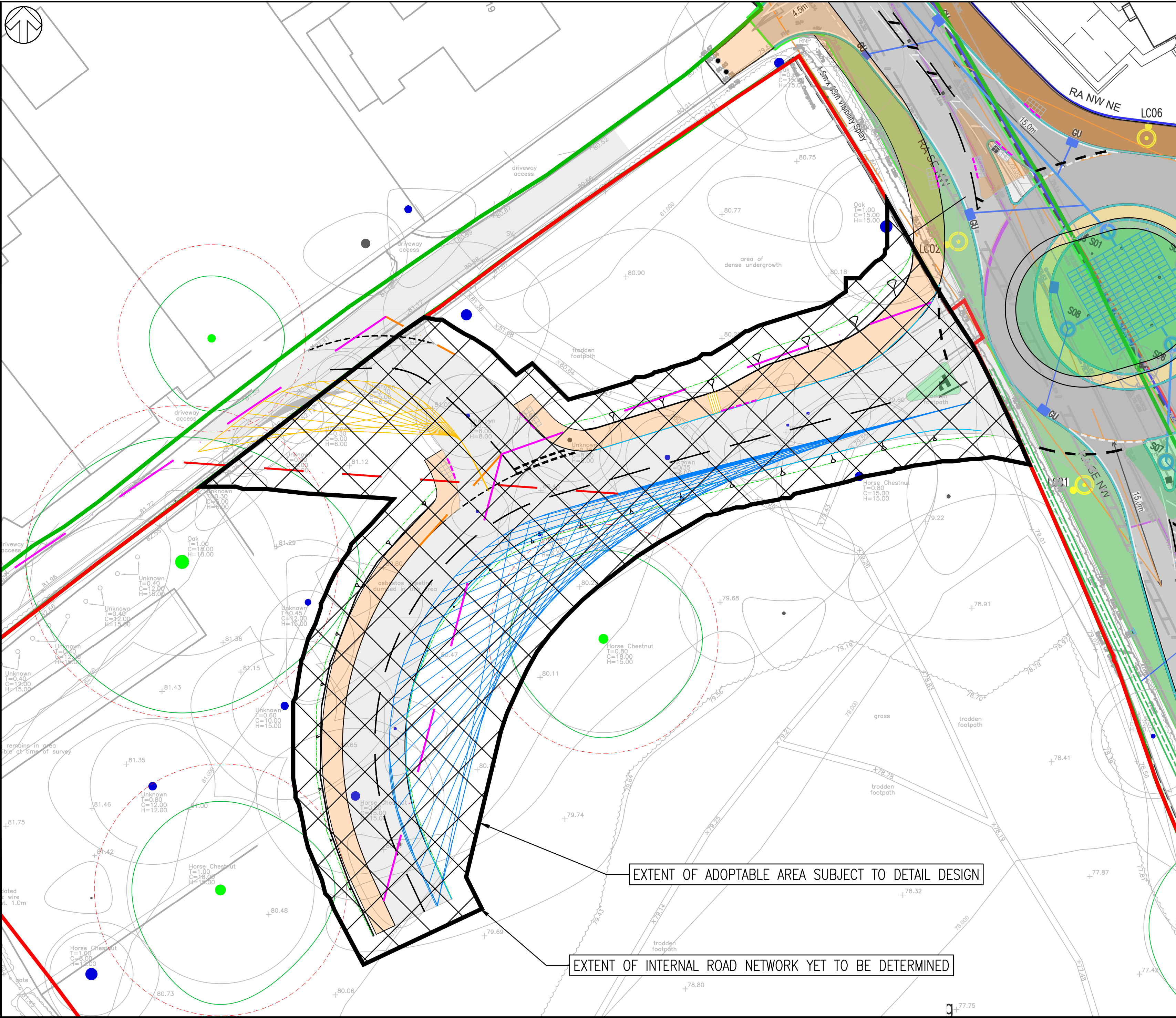
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PROJECT:	MILL LANE, HITCHIN
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TITLE:	MILL LANE TRO PROPOSAL
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PROJECT No:	70056409	DESIGNED:	AM	DRAWN:	AM
				DATE:	March 26
DRAWING No:	70056409-SK-010	REV:	P01		

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 - PROTECTED CLASS A TREE ROOT PROTECTION ZONES
 - NON PROTECTED TREES
 - TITLE BOUNDARY
 - HIGHWAY LAND BOUNDARY
 - INDICATIVE PROPOSED GROUNDWORK EXTENTS FOR WESTERN ARM
 - INDICATIVE PROPOSED HIGHWAY EXTENTS FOR WESTERN ARM
 - PROPOSED FOOTWAY
 - EXISTING FOOTWAY
 - PROPOSED CARRIAGEWAY
 - PROPOSED VEHICLE OVER-RUN
 - PROPOSED CARRIAGEWAY VISIBILITY SPY FOR 30 MPH
 - PROPOSED CARRIAGEWAY VISIBILITY SPY FOR 20 MPH
 - PROPOSED DROPPED KERB
 - PROPOSED CORDUROY TACTILE PAVING
 - REFUSE VEHICLE FORWARD VISIBILITY SPY
 - 2.4m x 43m (MFS) VISIBILITY SPY
 - 2.4m x 12m TANGENTIAL VISIBILITY
 - PROPOSED AREA TO BE ADOPTED

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T+ 44 (0) 1256 318 800, F+ 44 (0) 1256 318 700
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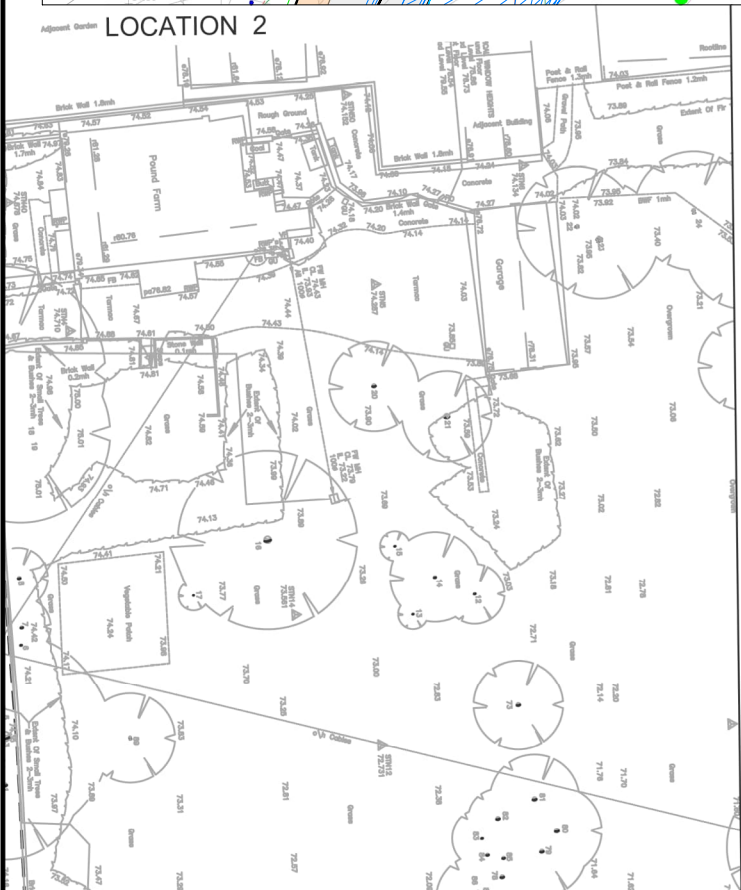
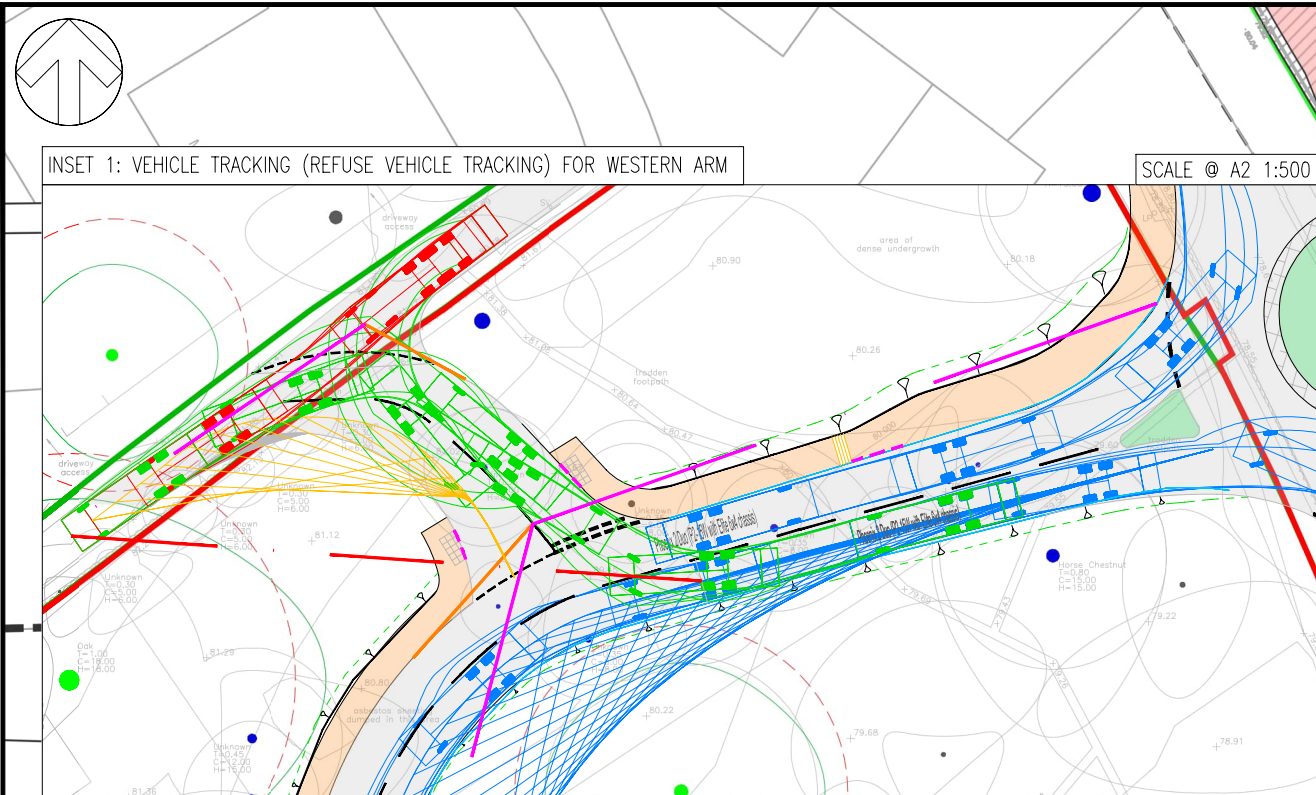
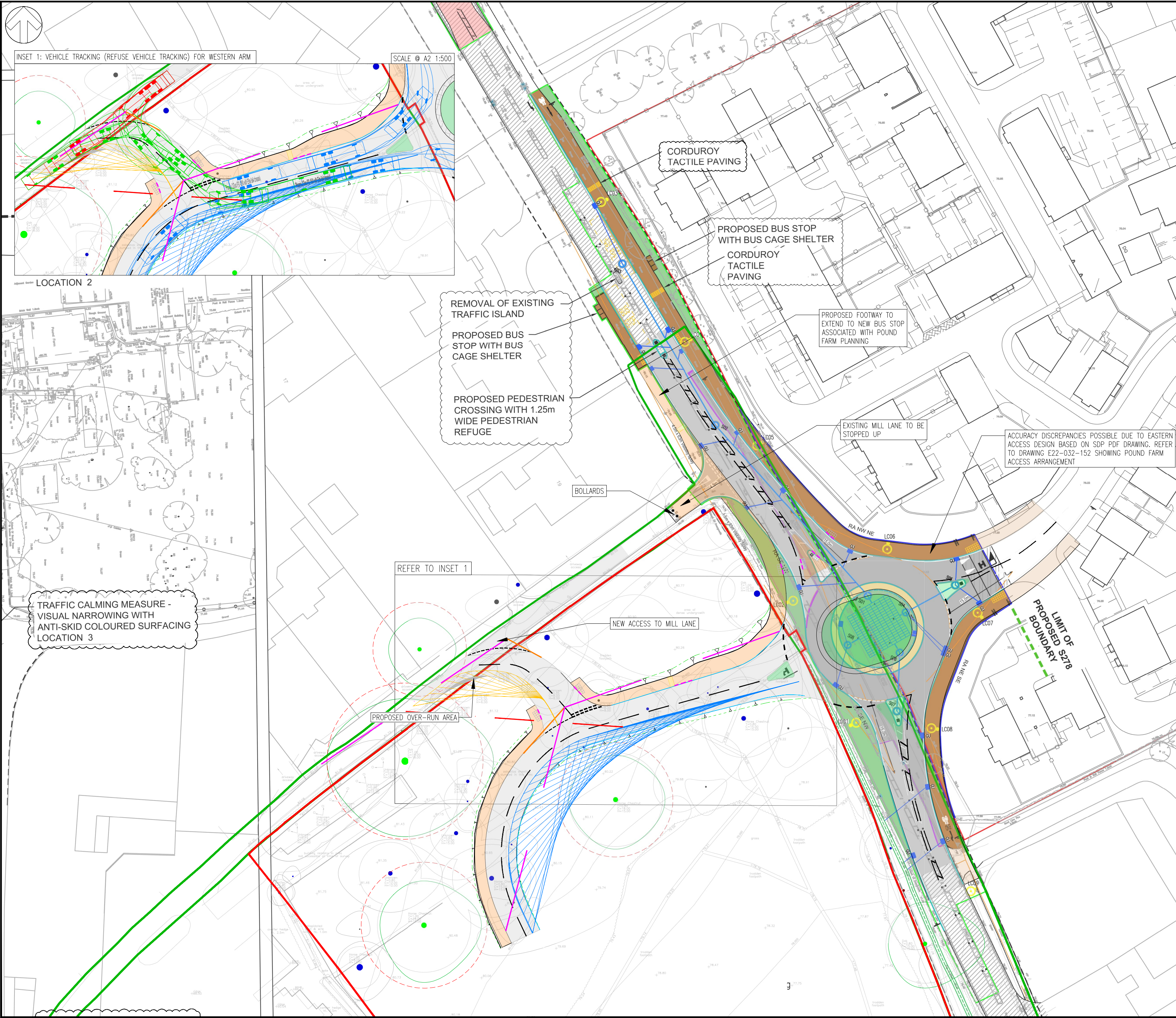
PROJECT: MILL LANE, HITCHIN

TITLE: INDICATIVE HIGHWAY ADOPTION PLAN

SCALE @ A2:	1:250	CHECKED:	DDD	APPROVED:	DDD
PROJECT No:	70056409	DESIGNED:	AM	DRAWN:	AM
DRAWING No:	70056409-SK-0012	DATE:	March 26	REV:	P01

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- PROPOSED DROPPED KERB
- PROPOSED CORDUROY TACTILE PAVING
- REFUSE VEHICLE FORWARD VISIBILITY SPAY
- 2.4m x 4.5m (M5) VISIBILITY SPAY
- 2.4m x 12m TANGENTIAL VISIBILITY
- COMMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH SDP
- DRAWING E22-032-152 POUND FARM ACCESS ARRANGEMENT

Phosphate 2 Day Recycler (P2-15W with Elite feed chopper)
Overall Length: 11.000m
Overall Width: 2.500m
Overall Height: 0.500m
Min Body Ground Clearance: 0.300m
Track Width: 2.000m
Lock to Lock: 11.000m
Kerb to Kerb Turning Radius: 11.000m

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REV	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	CHK	APP
P05	09/01/2026	AM	AMENDMENTS FOR RSA	DDD	DDD
P04	19/11/2025	CW	AMENDMENTS FOR RSA	DDD	DDD
P03	30/07/2025	CW	MINOR AMENDMENTS	DDD	DDD
P02	24/07/2025	PG	COMMENTS ADDRESSED	PG	DDD
P01	04/07/2025	PG	FIRST ISSUE	AFG	DDD

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Matrix House, Basing View, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG21 4FF
T+ 44 (0) 1256 318 800, F+ 44 (0) 1256 318 700
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CLIENT: MARTIN GRANT LAND

ARCHITECT:

PROJECT: MILL LANE, HITCHIN

TITLE: PROPOSED SITE ACCESS ROUNDABOUT - OPTION 2

SCALE @ A2:	CHECKED:	APPROVED:
1:500	DDD	DDD

PROJECT No:	DESIGNED:	DRAWN:	DATE:
70056409	AM	AM	January 26

DRAWING No:	REV:
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