

Swindon Borough Council

Planning Committee

Tuesday, 11 July 2017

Council Chamber, Civic Offices

At 6.00 p.m.

Conservative Councillors

*Vera Tomlinson
Nick Martin
Alan Bishop
Kevin Parry
Timothy Swinyard
Gary Sumner
Eric Shaw*

Labour Councillors

*John Ballman
Peter Watts
Steph Exell
Derique Montaut
James Robbins*

Liberal Democrat Councillors

Stan Pajak

(Copy to all other Members of the Council – For Information)

Committee Officer: Iain Tucker (Telephone 01793 463605)
email: itucker@swindon.gov.uk

Swindon Borough Council can be contacted at the Civic Offices, Euclid Street,
Swindon, SN1 2JH (Telephone 01793 445500)

PLEASE NOTE: AN ADDITIONAL INFORMATION SHEET CONTAINING ANY INFORMATION RECEIVED AFTER PUBLICATION OF THIS AGENDA WILL BE PLACED IN COUNCILLORS' PIGEONHOLES FOR DELIVERY ON THE FRIDAY IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE MEETING.

PUBLIC COPIES OF THE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION SHEET WILL BE AVAILABLE ON THE COUNCIL'S WEBSITE AND FROM APPROXIMATELY 5.30 PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER.ON THE DAY OF THE MEETING

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded that at the start of the meeting they should declare any known interests in any matter to be considered, and also during the meeting if it becomes apparent that they have an interest in the matters being discussed.

3. Minutes (Pages 1 - 3)

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 13th June 2017

4. Public Question Time

See explanatory note below. Please phone the Committee Officer whose name and number appears at the top of this agenda if you need further guidance.

5. **Determination of Planning and Related Applications** (Pages 4 - 6)
6. **S/16/0505/IH Erection of new retail facilities, and provision of associated car parking, creation of new vehicular and pedestrian accesses, hard and soft landscaping and associated plant Land At Swindon Gateway North, Latham Road, Swindon.** (Pages 7 - 60)
7. **S/HOU/17/0576/IH Erection of detached garage (Retrospective). 6 Perry's Lane, Wroughton, Swindon** (Pages 61 - 69)
8. **S/RES/17/0324/RM Erection of 2no. dwellings (Reserved matters from previous permission S/OUT/16/0811). Land Adjacent To Haneneel, Sevenhampton Lane, Sevenhampton** (Pages 70 - 84)
9. **New Eastern Villages Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document (NEV GI SPD)** (Pages 85 - 207)

Date of Despatch: 29 June 2017

Key:

Officers:

HPRS&H - Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage

Public Question Time - Swindon Borough Council remains committed to increasing its accountability to the public and to promoting active citizenship. 15 minutes will be allowed at the start of all Council meetings for questions to the Chair from the public about the work of the Committee (except for confidential matters, and matters relating to planning and licensing applications). We will give priority to those who submit questions in writing at least two days before the meeting. Questions must be relevant, clear, and concise. You may not use Public Question Time as an opportunity to make speeches or statements.

Questions in writing should be sent to the Committee Officer whose contact details appear on the agenda above or to the Director of Law and Democratic Services, we will publish it, along with the answer, alongside the Minutes. The process associated with asking a public question is set out in the "Public Question Time at Council Meetings Protocol and Guidance" available on the Council's Website.

(<http://ww5.swindon.gov.uk/moderngov/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13338&path=0>) or from the Committee Officer named above.

Access Arrangements – *The Venue is wheelchair accessible and an infrared receiver hearing system is provided. If you would wish to attend the meeting but have any special requirement to enable you to do so please contact the Committee Officer above, as soon as possible prior to the date of the meeting.*

If you would like to receive any of the pages contained in this agenda in a larger print size please contact the Committee Officer whose name appears on the first page of this agenda.

WELCOME TO THE PLANNING COMMITTEE OF SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCIL

NEW GUIDELINES - PLEASE READ

IF YOU HAVE COME TO SPEAK ABOUT AN APPLICATION THAT INTERESTS YOU PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES. THEY EXPLAIN HOW THE COMMITTEE DEALS WITH EACH ITEM. THESE GUIDELINES ONLY APPLY TO APPLICATIONS LISTED ON THE MAIN SCHEDULE IN THE AGENDA

- 1. THE COMMITTEE CHAIR CALLS THE ITEM**
- 2. PLANNING OFFICER PRESENTS THE APPLICATION**
- 3. WARD COUNCILLORS MAY SPEAK**
- 4. APPLICANTS AND/OR AGENT (5 MINUTES MAXIMUM IN TOTAL) WHO HAVE NOTIFIED THEIR INTENTION TO SPEAK ON THE ITEM TO THE COMMITTEE CLERK BY 12 NOON THE DAY BEFORE THE MEETING.**
- 5. PUBLIC SPEAKERS (INCLUDING PARISH COUNCIL)- WHO HAVE NOTIFIED THEIR INTENTION TO SPEAK ON THE ITEM TO THE COMMITTEE CLERK BY 12 NOON THE DAY BEFORE THE MEETING.**

(MAXIMUM 5 MINUTES EACH UP TO 2 SPEAKERS, IF MORE THAN 2 THEN MAXIMUM 10 MINUTES TOTAL SPEAKING TIME FOR ALL SPEAKERS)
- 6. COUNCILLORS WHO HAVE DECLARED PERSONAL OR PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS MAY SPEAK**
- 7. MEMBER ONLY DISCUSSION, INCLUDING ANY FURTHER QUESTIONS TO OFFICERS OR ANYONE ELSE WHO HAS SPOKEN**
- 8. A PLANNING OFFICER WILL CLOSE THE ITEM BY COMMENTING ON ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS**
- 9. VOTE**
- 10. CHAIR BRIEFLY EXPLAINS DECISION IF NECESSARY**
- 11. NEXT BUSINESS**

THE 10 MINUTE MAXIMUM PUBLIC SPEAKING PERIOD WILL BE YOUR ONLY OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK, UNLESS MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE WISH TO ASK YOU QUESTIONS UNDER GUIDELINE 7.

SPEAKERS WHO MERELY REPEAT POINTS ALREADY MADE BY OTHERS MAY BE ASKED TO STAND DOWN.

IF THERE IS MORE THAN ONE PERSON WISHING TO ADDRESS THE COMMITTEE EITHER AS AN OBJECTOR OR SUPPORTER, THEY ARE EXPECTED TO NOMINATE A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE SPEAKERS LISTED TO REPRESENT THEIR COLLECTIVE VIEWS.

THE CHAIR AND THE COMMITTEE HAVE THE DISCRETION TO DEPART FROM THESE GUIDELINES, BUT WILL IN MOST CASES EXPECT ALL PARTIES TO ABIDE BY THEM.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 13 JUNE 2017

PRESENT: - Councillors Kevin Parry (Chair), John Ballman, Alan Bishop, Steph Exell, Derique Montaut, Stan Pajak, James Robbins, Eric Shaw, Gary Sumner, Timothy Swinyard, Vera Tomlinson and Peter Watts.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Nick Martin.

1. Appointment of Vice-Chair

Resolved – That Councillor Swinyard be Vice-Chair of this Committee for the Municipal Year 2017/18.

2. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Bishop made a personal and prejudicial declaration of interest in respect of application numbered S/17/213 as he lives in the same road as the application and left the room during its discussion and voting thereon

3. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 9th May 2017, be confirmed and signed.

4. Public Question Time

Gary Llewellyn asked a question concerning the weight and status given to the Highworth Neighbourhood Plan in determining planning applications. The Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage responded at the meeting.

5. Determination of Planning and Related Applications

The Committee considered: -

- (a) Applications for permission to develop;
- (b) Recommendations of the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage;
- (c) The views of interested persons set out in the report circulated with the Committee Agenda;
- (d) The comments of Councillor Allsopp in respect of application numbered S/HOU/17/667
- (e) The comments of the following interested persons:-

<u>App No.</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Address/Organisation</u>
S/OUT/16/2034	Matthew Dawber Paul Smith	Agent 51 High Street Blunsdon
S/HOU/17/667	Neil Armstrong Gary Llewellyn	Agent On behalf of 69 Upham Road

S/17/213

Susan Williams
Keith Smith

Applicant
Highworth Town Council

Resolved – (1) That the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage be authorised to grant planning permission in respect of application numbered S/OUT/16/2034 subject to the conditions set out in the Committee report as amended below, together with any amended, additional or omitted conditions as may be appropriate and following the completion of a Section 106 agreement to secure the necessary mitigation – open space provision and affordable housing.

Amended conditions:

1. This approval shall be in respect of drawing number SK08 A and the Transport Statement, Design & Access Statement, Arboricultural Planning Statement, Ecology Report and Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment received by the Local Planning Authority on 13th December 2016 and drawing number SK07 C received on 12th April 2017.

Reason: To define the scope of the development hereby permitted, in accordance with section 72 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 And the reason for condition 10 be amended by inserting the words vehicular and pedestrian as shown below

10. No dwellings shall be occupied until full details of the road widening on High Street and hatching on Ermin Street have been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, implemented in accordance with the approved plans and opened to the public.

Reason: To reduce potential highway impact by ensuring that there is a satisfactory vehicular and pedestrian access to the development and at the commencement and duration of construction works in accordance with Policy TR2 of Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026.

(2) That permission be granted in respect of application numbered S/HOU/17/667 subject to the conditions listed in the Committee report.

(3) That permission be granted in respect of application numbered S/17/213 subject to the conditions listed in the Committee report as amended below:

Amended condition:

4. A maximum of three dogs (in connection with the business) shall be groomed each day.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of nearby occupiers.

6. New Eastern Villages (NEV) Island Bridge Vision Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

The Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage submitted a report summarising the comments received following public consultation on the New Eastern Villages (NEV) Island Bridge Vision Supplementary Planning Document

(SPD) and recommending adoption of the SPD by this Committee subject to a number of changes in response to comments received.

Resolved – That this Committee:

1. Adopts the New Eastern Villages (NEV) Island Bridge Vision Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and to make the SPD publically available in accordance with the arrangements as set out in paragraph 8.1 of the report.
2. Authorises the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage, in consultation with the Director of Law and Democratic Services to make minor amendments to the content of the document, if required, prior to publication.

Determination of Planning and related Applications

Planning Committee

Date: 11th July 2017

Author: Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage

Wards: All Wards

Parishes Affected: All Parish Area

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To determine the planning and related applications in the Committee reports that follow this report in the Committee Agenda, as may be amended by an additional information sheet circulated before the meeting

2. Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 2.1.1 determine the applications set out in the Committee agenda in accordance with the recommendations set out in the reports, including, where relevant, the additional information.

3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 The Committee could choose not to determine the Planning applications

4. Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 4.1 There would be financial implications if, following a refusal to grant planning permission or the grant of conditional permission, costs are awarded against the Council on appeal. However, this would only happen if the Council was adjudged to have acted unreasonably

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 4.2 There are no staffing implications. No comments have been received from relevant trade unions, unless specified in the attached schedule.
- 4.3 Human Rights considerations have been taken into account in compiling the reports. It is considered that the recommendations of the reports are compatible with Convention rights and that in accordance with the principle of proportionality any interference with the Convention rights of individuals is justified by the overall benefit to the community.

5. Appendices

- 5.1 Appendix 1 - Documents which may be relied on in the preparation of the application reports

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Iain Tucker, Direct Dial Telephone Number, (01793) 463605, itucker@swindon.gov.uk.

Determination of Planning and related Applications

Planning Committee

Date: 11th July 2017

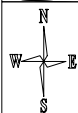
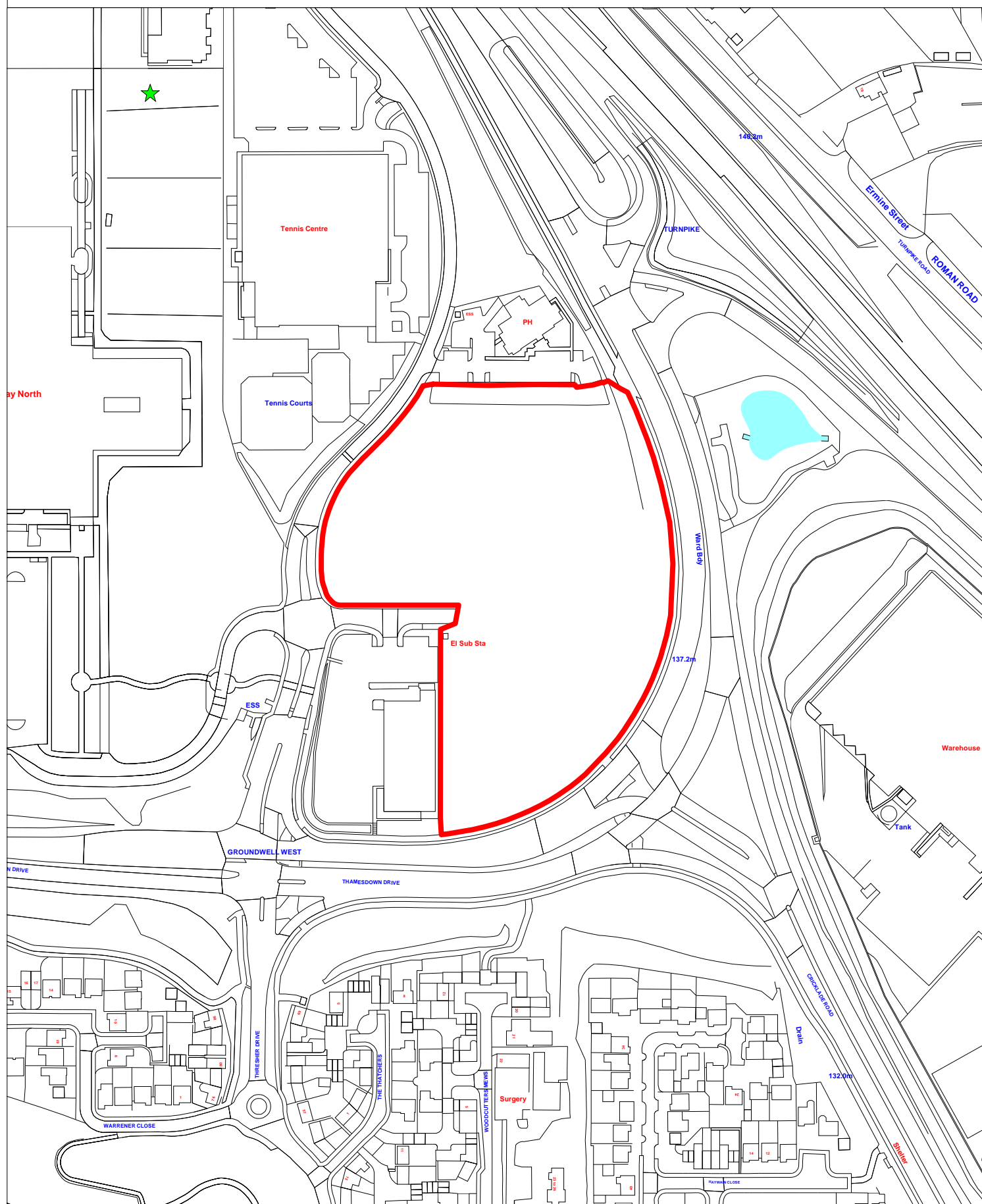
5.2 Planning and related applications reported to this Committee for the first time.

APPENDIX 1

DOCUMENTS WHICH MAY BE RELIED ON IN THE PREPARATION OF THE APPLICATION REPORTS

1. The approved Development Plan, consisting of
 - Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026, (2015), and the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 Policies Map (2015)
 - Wiltshire and Swindon Minerals Core Strategy, (2009)
 - Wiltshire and Swindon Minerals Development Control Policies DPD (2009)
 - Wiltshire and Swindon Aggregate Minerals Site Allocations Local Plan, (2013)
 - Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Core Strategy, (2009)
 - Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Development Control Policies DPD, (2009)
 - Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Site Allocations Local Plan, (2013)
 - Swindon Central Area Action Plan, (2009)
 - Wroughton Neighbourhood Plan (2016): for applications in Wroughton Parish
2. Adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes, Supplementary Planning Documents and Development Control Guidance Notes
3. The National Planning Policy Framework, (2012); and policy statements, guidance and DCLG circulars that support the National Planning Policy Framework
4. Ministerial Statements and other guidance material to the consideration of applications
5. Relevant appeal decisions and case law
6. Relevant planning history, case files and related correspondence including the views of statutory consultees
7. Any emerging relevant Development Plan Documents

Erection of new retail facilities and provision of associated car parking,
creation of new vehicular and pedestrian accesses, hard and soft landscaping and associated plant.
Swindon Gateway North Latham Road Swindon SN25 4DL



This Plan is for illustrative purposes only and is not intended to provide accurate representation of the development.
In all cases references should be made to the submitted plans.

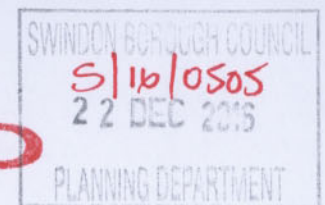
Erection of new retail facilities and provision of associated car parking,
creation of new vehicular and pedestrian accesses, hard and soft landscaping and associated plant.
Swindon Gateway North Latham Road Swindon SN25 4DL



This Plan is for illustrative purposes only and is not intended to provide accurate representation of the development.
In all cases references should be made to the submitted plans.



REVISED





REVISED

SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCIL
S11610505
22 DEC 2016
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

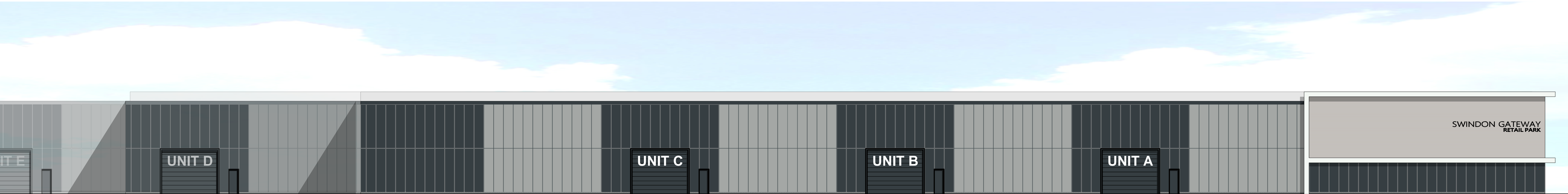


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SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCIL
S116/0505
22 DEC 2013
PLANNING DEPARTMENT



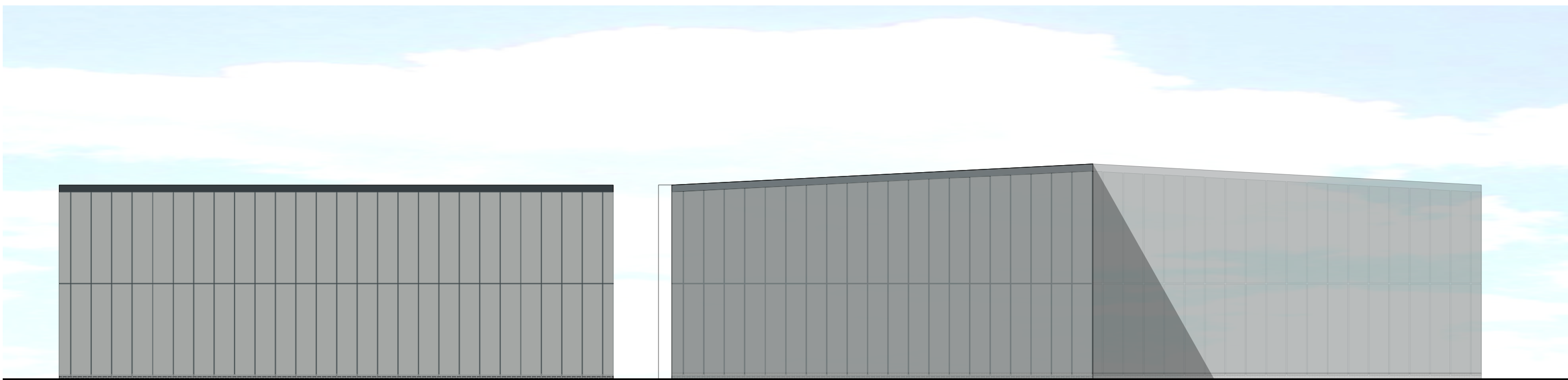
1 WEST ELEVATION



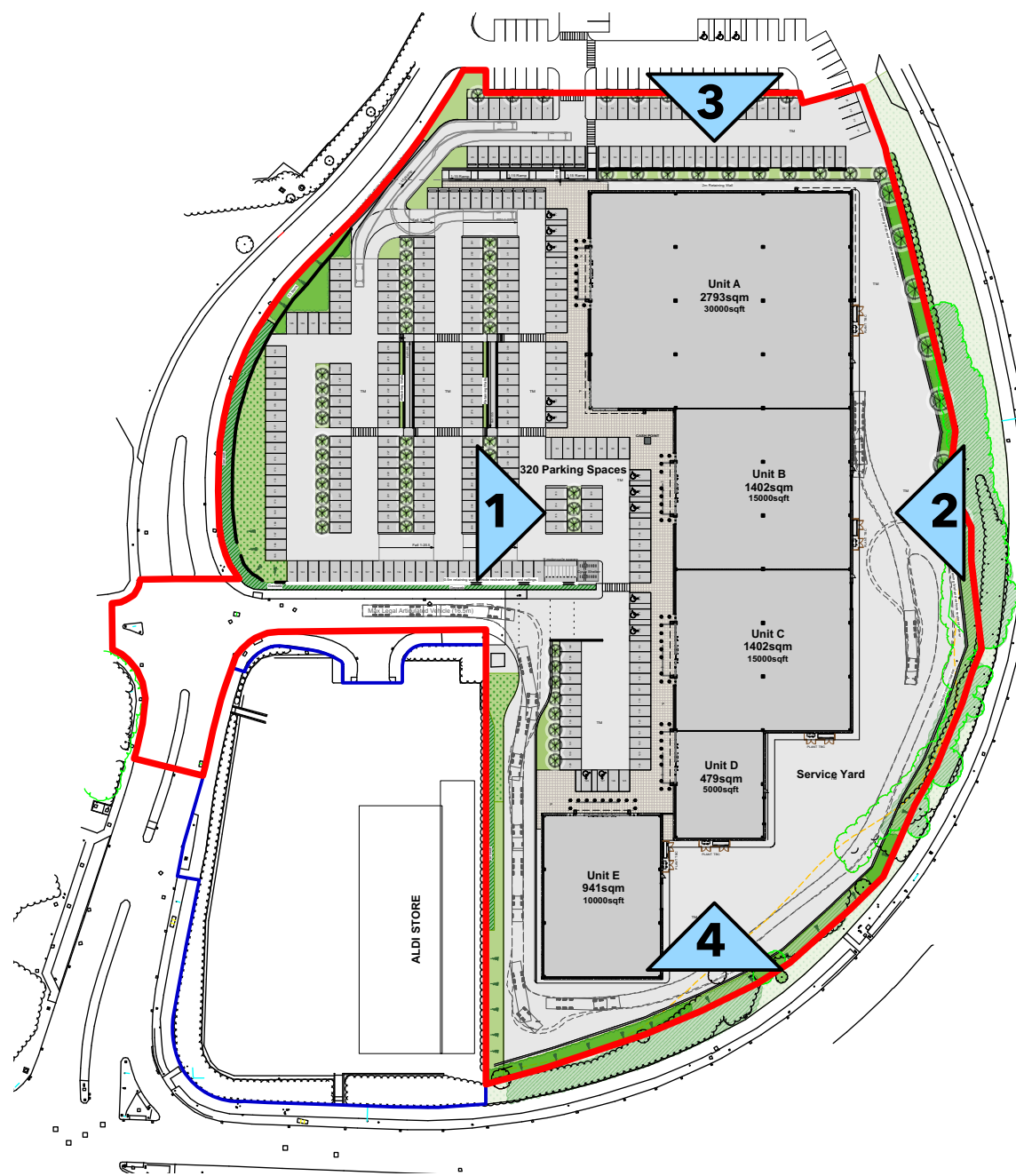
2 EAST ELEVATION



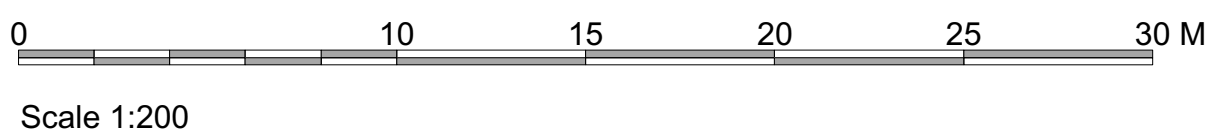
3 NORTH ELEVATION




4 SOUTH ELEVATION



KEY PLAN (SCALE 1:1500)

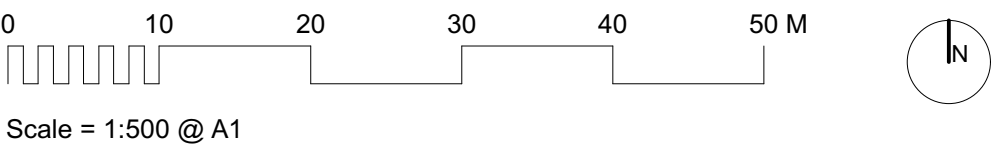


 Chartered Architects Chartered Building Surveyors Interior Designers CDM Services	Project Swindon Gateway North		Drawing Title Proposed Context Elevations (Units A,B,C & D)	
	Client Icon Two Ltd		Project Number 150585 P(1)14 C	
	Scale 1:200		Drawing Date 26/1/16	
	Paper Size A1		Drawing Status PN	
Glenworth Court, Lime Kiln Close Stoke Gifford, Bristol BS34 8SR +44 (0)117 931 2062 www.kendallkingscott.co.uk		Planner 150585 Planning.vwx		Status JB PLANNING
© Copyright		Do not scale this drawing		Check all dimensions and levels on site



KEY:

TM	New Tarmacadam Surfacing to Car Park (TM)	Banking
Permeable Paving	Existing trees/group	Proposed trees
Paving	Trees removed (Please see arboricultural report for full details)	Proposed Level
Surface finish with soft landscaping		Application Boundary
Proposed timber faced masonry retaining wall		
Low wall with vehicle restraint barrier		
Vehicle restraint barrier and railings		



This drawing is based on Anthony Brookes topographical survey carried out in December 2015

- Harvester
- Harvester car park
- Pedestrian link from Harvester
- Existing Highways Landscaping
- 3m wide supplemental landscaping zone
- Vehicle restraint barrier to service yard
- Terraced parking with ramps broken up by tree planting
- Proposed cash point
- Geoweb banks to retain and provide landscaping to the boundaries
- Existing trees cut back
- Existing sub station
- Service access
- Vehicle restraint barrier to service yard
- Geoweb banks to retain and provide landscaping to the boundaries
- Existing Aldi store

Kendall Kingscott

Chartered Architects
Chartered Building Surveyors
Interior Designers
CDM Services

Glentworth Court, Lime Kiln Close
Stoke Gifford, Bristol BS34 8SR
+44 (0)117 931 2062
www.kendallkingscott.co.uk

Project
Swindon Gateway

Client
Icon two ltd

Scale 1:500
Paper Size A1
Filename Site Master Plan.vwx

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- E 26/4/17 AS JB Additional disabled spaces added to total 19, with overall parking figures reduced to 317.
- D 10/4/17 AS JB Cash point added. Unit F removed and parking added.
- C 8/3/17 AS JB Bollards reduced. Landscaping added next to unit E
- B 25/11/16 AS JB Labelling amended, retaining walls added to pedestrian ramps.
- A 11/11/16 AS JB Floor plans updated. Motorcycle parking moved with car parking adjusted to 305 spaces. Site boundary amended.

Rev Date By Ap Note

Drawing Title
Proposed Site plan

Project Number
150585 P(1)04 E

Date 15/3/16
Drawn JB
Checked SW
Status PLANNING

Only to be used on the site for which designed. The electronic transmission of design information contained in this drawing is carried out entirely at the User's risk and Kendall Kingscott Ltd. shall have no liability for any errors or inaccuracies arising therefrom. The production of amended or updated information from the said design information by the User is entirely the responsibility of the User and Kendall Kingscott Ltd. shall have no responsibility in respect thereof whatsoever.

COMMITTEE REPORT

Item Number: 6

Application Number: S/16/0505/IH

Ward: St Andrews

Parish: St Andrews

Proposal: Erection of new retail facilities, and provision of associated car parking, creation of new vehicular and pedestrian accesses, hard and soft landscaping and associated plant.

Site Location: Land At Swindon Gateway North, Latham Road, Swindon

Case Officer: Mr Ian Halsall

Contact Details: E-mail: ihalsall@swindon.gov.uk | Tel.: 01793 466033

Agent:

Mr David Wetherill
Turley
The Pinnacle
20 Tudor Road
Reading
RG1 1NH

Applicant:

Icon Two Ltd
C/O Agent

Officers Report

Background:

i This application was validated by the Local Planning Authority on the 5th April 2016. Following a period of consultation and a subsequent meeting between the applicants, officers and the ward members on the 7th July last year, the applicant was asked to provide further evidence to support their application in policy terms.

ii In addition, the applicant was required to undertake further work in order to address outstanding highway concerns which had led to Highways England serving of a "Direction of Non-Approval" for a three-month period on the 4th May 2016. This Direction was renewed on three consecutive occasions but has now been lifted with their concerns having been overcome. Furthermore, the applicant was asked to make changes to the proposed buildings, layout and landscaping to address design quality and landscaping concerns.

iii Officers had been concerned that the proposed retail development, which proposed up to 70 per cent comparison retail and 30 per cent convenience retail would be contrary to national planning guidance and Development Plan policy. Officers were of the view that the proposed retail development would not satisfy sustainable development principles, could undermine the regeneration of Swindon's Central Area and would harm the vitality

and viability of existing centres. There were also considered to be sequentially preferable sites to accommodate this particular type of additional retail floor space within the Borough.

iv A revised application comprising a new design for the buildings and additional supporting evidence was received by the Local Planning Authority on the 21st December 2016 with consultation taking place for a further minimum fourteen-day period from the 4th January 2017. Further non-material amendments to the site layout and building design were received on the 16th March with additional highway information having been received on the 24th February. A final amendment to the application was received on the 27th April which has now seen the removal of the five smaller retail units that were originally proposed, the inclusion of a free standing automatic telling machine (ATM) and the acceptance by the applicant of the conditionality of a legal agreement that will restrict the types of retail goods that will be sold from the site in order to overcome concerns about the principle of development and its likely impact on existing centres including the Town Centre.

v As required under policy EC3 (The Role of the Centres and Main Town Centre Uses) of the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026, as the proposed retail floor space exceeds 600 square metres the application is accompanied by a Retail Impact Assessment, including a Retail Health Check and Sequential Test, which has been subject to the scrutiny of a third party retail consultant. In addition, given the scale and nature of the proposal, a Transport Statement has been submitted to accord with Policy TR2 (Transport and Development). Since revising the application in April, a Retail Briefing Note has been submitted to reflect and respond to those changes.

vi In light of advising that officers were initially to recommend refusal of the application, Councillors Friend and Tomlinson requested that the application be brought before the Planning Committee as they considered the proposal to be of significant importance to the St. Andrews ward. Following the changes to the application, your officers are now in a position to recommend approval of the application. However the proposal continues raise important issues that affect the Borough as a whole and the Council's Vision for Swindon which includes future investment and regeneration opportunities within Swindon Town Centre.

Summary of Recommendation:

1 That the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage be authorised to GRANT planning permission subject to conditions and to amend, add or omit conditions as necessary, and subject to the satisfactory completion of a legal agreement in order to restrict the sale of items to bulky goods only, with ancillary non-bulky goods and to secure a travel plan for the site.

The Proposal:

2 A planning application has been submitted for the development of a new retail facility comprising approximately 7000 square metres (75,000 square feet) of new gross internal floor space comprising five main retail units. This consists of one large unit of 2,793

square metres (30,000 square feet) identified as Unit A; two medium sized units of 1,402 square metres (15,000 square feet) identified as Units B and C respectively; one smaller unit of 479 square metres (5,000 square feet) identified as Unit D; and a third medium sized unit of 941 square metres (10,000 square feet) identified as Unit E. These five units will form a cohesive block to form a modern style retail park enclosing the eastern side of a car park comprising some 317 parking spaces including 19 disabled parking spaces. The car park will mainly form a single level surface although additional spaces to be shared with the adjacent Harvester public house and restaurant will be located up a ramp on an elevated parcel of land to the north.

3 The main block comprises a terraced form containing units A to D and orientated with the customer entrances and associated retail signage to face west over the car park. The eastern elevations will form the rear of the retail park and will contain the delivery entrances and emergency exits. The buildings are of modular flat roof construction comprising brick plinths, flat and louvre panelling and aluminium powder coated fascia trims and will be approximately 9.5 metres high to make provision for the retail floor space and associated plant, heating and air conditioning systems within a high ceiling void. No indication has been given as to whether the units would be adaptable for the installation of internal mezzanines, which in any case would require planning permission if the area exceeded a certain threshold.

4 Unit A is a deeper unit and slightly taller than its neighbours and will act as an anchor unit projecting westwards beyond the front building lines of Units B, C and D. Unit D will be shorter in depth in order to provide clearance at the rear for the other units to be accessed via a service yard. Unit E is slightly detached from its neighbours with its retail frontage facing northwards towards the car park with the delivery and emergency accesses on its eastern facing elevation.

6 The main car park will be accessed at point of entry from an existing highway access off Latham Road to the west which will be shared with an existing Aldi store but there will be a secondary access at the existing Harvester entrance off Latham Road further north. Latham Road itself connects with Thamesdown Drive to the south west via a signal controlled junction. The service yard will be accessed from a designated lane shortly before the main vehicular entrance to the car park and will pass the western and southern ends of Unit E before arriving in the yard. The yard runs parallel with the Thamesdown Drive and Cricklade Road highway corridors, and will be segregated from them by a landscaped bund.

The Site and Surroundings:

7 The proposed retail park is located on a site now known as Swindon Gateway North. The site is located on the north western side of the Blunsdon Turnpike Junction and bordered by Thamesdown Drive to the south and the A4311 Cricklade Road to the east. The A419 trunk road runs parallel in part with the A4311 where it is accessed by a signalised slip road junction to the north east. The former Motorola site, now V Park is located to the west with the David Lloyd Leisure centre to the northwest and the Harvester restaurant and pub to the north. The existing Aldi store is located to the south and west of the proposed retail park. The residential district of Groundwell West is located to the south and south west whilst the Groundwell Industrial Estate is located to the south east.

Representations:

8 The application was subject to consultation in April 2016 and January 2017 following revisions and the submission of additional retail evidence. A further third period of consultation was undertaken in May 2017 following the applicant's decision to proceed with the application on the basis of an agreed legal obligation with the Council to restrict the sale of items to bulky goods with ancillary non-bulky items. Summaries of representations from parish councils in the vicinity, neighbours, external consultees and third party representations; mainly from town centre retailers and their planning consultants are set out from the following paragraphs:

- April 2016 consultation – from paragraph 9;
- January 2017 re-consultation – from paragraph 25;
- May 2017 re-consultation – from paragraph 38.

Representations Made on Original Submission (April 2016):

Parish Council

9 **Blunsdon St. Andrew Parish Council** (incumbent parish council at the time of consultation) objected to the application owing to the poor design of the development which they considered to be inappropriate for what would be a prominent gateway location, that the proposed materials would give a lacklustre appearance when it warranted high quality design and materials. Furthermore, it was considered that the proposed access would not cope with the anticipated traffic flows and that a separate in and out, one way system would be required.

Neighbours

10 **Aldi** supports the application as it will complement their retail offering in this location which has been left undeveloped for many years. They consider the development will significantly enhance the appearance of the local area, together with the landscaping and feel that the contemporary design will benefit the gateway location of the site. Aldi does not consider that the development will act as a rival destination to the town centre but will complement the mix of uses in the locality and serve a local catchment. The lack of available, suitable and viable town centre sites is also considered to be another reason to support the proposal in planning policy terms.

11 **David Lloyd Leisure** fully supports the application as it will increase footfall and be beneficial to the area.

Third Party Representations

12 **In-Swindon Business Improvement District:** Two separate representations have been received from the Manager and Non-Executive Director of In-Swindon BID Company objecting to the proposal for the following reasons:

- The town centre is already affected by existing out of town retail with reduced footfall. Another out of town development will cause further detriment.
- With the Council's "town centre first" policy and ongoing strategy and collaboration with In-Swindon and partners to address the problem of empty units, the town centre already has numerous vacant retail units which need to be let before new units are developed. To grant permission to develop at least ten new retail units on this site will undermine these efforts.
- Many residents in North Swindon do not come to the town centre because of the offer that the Orbital centre provides, particularly with free parking. This development will only add to the attraction and take further life from the town centre.
- In-Swindon is working hard to provide residents and visitors with a safe, carefree and good shopping experience and seeking to attract high end retailers with the aim of providing a greater variety of products and services and draw people in to bring economic growth and more kudos to Swindon.
- The Council has often said publically that the town centre needs improvement and want a town centre to be proud of. This cannot happen without supporting and encouraging those who are already working in and for the town.
- All centres are struggling owing to internet shopping so endorsing more out of town shopping will only add to these pressures and will send a very negative message to those who are working to improve it and make it attractive for residents and people from other locations.

13 GVA Grimley on behalf of UK Commercial Property Trust (owners of The Parade Shopping Centre and Regent Circus) – received on the 6th May 2016:

- Concerns over the quality and robustness of the applicant's Planning and Retail Statement and considers that the development is likely to have a significant adverse impact upon the health of and investment within Swindon town centre.
- This is a speculative development whereby the occupiers are as yet unknown and the nature of retail goods that are intended to be sold are very flexible and wide in nature.
- Although no more than 30% of any one unit is intended to be used for the sale of convenience goods, there is no restriction in terms of the range of comparison goods which could be sold. This could enable any combination of goods which is not covered in the assessment. It is an unlikely scenario that 30% convenience goods will be achieved, thus increasing the comparison offer even further and the potential impacts of providing more than 3,642 square metres (39,200 square feet) is ignored by the assessment.
- With a policy requirement to identify whether there are any suitable and available sequentially preferable alternative sites to accommodate the proposal, the applicants have failed to consider edge of centre or more accessible and better connected out of centre sites.
- Applicants and local planning authorities are expected to be flexible in terms of the scale and format of new retail development. Whilst the Planning and Retail Statement does mention flexibility it does not explain the parameters of flexibility that have been employed. This is particularly important as there has been no justification as to why there is a need for 7,432 square metres of Class A1 retail

floorspace, why specific sizes are required for each of the ten units, which types of retail business would accommodate the units, and the proposed split between convenience and comparison goods. It can only be concluded that the development could be built in phases and implemented on a piecemeal basis.

- The assessment of alternative town centre locations including Granville Street car park, Sandford Street and the Upper Bridge Street / Fleet Street areas is desk based without any contemporary research including contacting the Council and owners of the sites as to their availability and redevelopment potential. This is unsatisfactory as all three sites form a key part of the Council's strategy to improve the health and attractiveness of the town centre and provide new modern retail floorspace.
- The applicant has concentrated on the financial impact of the proposed retail park but not trade overlap and the potential for store closures and relocations. The assessment of the impact of the proposal on town centre investment has only attempted to consider planned and committed investment and not existing investment.
- Whilst a survey of household shopping patterns is welcomed, there needs to be a more detailed breakdown of expenditure levels for the different categories of convenience and comparison goods shopping which could be sold from the development in determining their overall market share.
- Projected retail expenditure levels for comparison and convenience goods has been exaggerated and using past trends to model future changes in comparison goods shopping, bearing in mind the significant growth over the last few decades is simply not going to be repeated in the future short term and internet shopping which will result in a slower growth has not been taken fully into account.
- The applicant has significantly under-estimated the comparison goods turnover of the proposed development suggesting a 70/30 split against convenience when an 80/20 split in retail parks is more common. The potential for a higher amount of comparison goods sales at the expense of convenience goods is of greater concern for the future health of the town centre, given that the key sector supporting the health of the centre is comparison goods shopping.
- The Planning and Retail Statement indicates that only 27% of the comparison goods turnover will come from the town centre, 13% will be delivered from the Orbital district centre with a further 25% coming from existing edge and out of centre retail warehouses. 5% would be diverted from locations outside the area. 22% is expected from existing internet shopping. This is not reasonable as the town centre is by far the most popular comparison goods shopping destination particularly for non-bulky goods with a wide selection of national multiples and local independent traders. The trade diversion will be much higher.
- Diversion from the Orbital will be disproportionate. It does accommodate large and attractive retailers but does not accommodate the amount of floorspace and retail choice to justify a trade diversion. It is nonsensical to suggest that trade transferred back from internet shopping to just under the amount transferred from the town centre given historic and current trends showing continued growth.
- There will be a materially higher financial impact upon the town centre's comparison goods sector well in excess of projected figures. Financial impact is only one element and the health of town centre which is clearly vulnerable to small levels of impact which must be taken into account. This is demonstrated by a high number of vacancies (83 vacancies as of July 2015, which is equivalent of 18% of all rental units and above the national average of 12%).

14 Additional Comments from GVA received on the 7th September 2016 following receipt of a Supplementary Retail Report by the applicant on the 7th July:

- A Secretary of State decision on an out-of-town retail proposal in Exeter stated that whilst on site car parking would be required, when considering sequentially preferable town or city centre sites, this element does not need to be included where there is existing provision. A similar approach should be taken when applying the sequential test at Swindon.
- A High Court decision over an out-of-town proposal in Mansfield is also relevant to the application of the sequential test in that in relation to the consideration of the suitability of alternative sites this should relate to *“the broad type of development which is proposed”*, and *“excluding, generally, the identity and persona of corporate attitudes of an individual retailer. The area and sites covered by the sequential test should not vary from applicant to applicant according to their identity”*.
- No evidence is provided in the updated assessment of individual alternative sites that show the attempts that the applicant has made to establish whether these sites are actually available for redevelopment, but it is acknowledged that the applicant concedes that a number of the identified town centre sites can accommodate the proposed development.
- With regards the impact of the development, the applicant relies on an individual percentage impact figure insolation to justify why the impact of the proposal is acceptable when instead a range of other factors need to be taken into account including:
 - A proper understanding of the potential mix of retail occupiers.
 - The current health of Swindon Town Centre as a 5.8% impact could affect a poor performing or vulnerable centre more than others.
 - The severity of the impact by the significant trading overlap between the proposed development and town centre in respect of non-bulky and bulky comparison goods, which play a particularly important role in attracting customers to the town centre.
 - That the proposal could encourage existing retailers in the town centre to relocated and encourage new retailers to Swindon to locate in this out of centre location when they would otherwise have located to the town centre.

15 DPP Planning on behalf of FI Real Estate Management (managers of the Brunel of the Brunel Shopping Centre) received on the 4th July 2016:

- The fact the owners/managers of the town centre’s two shopping centres consider it necessary to object to the application highlights the significance of the scheme and its expected impact.
- The proposal will draw trade away from the town centre and will reduce footfall with another out of centre one-stop retail destination providing further competition for the town centre.
- The size and type of units are entirely inappropriate for the location and does not accord with the Council’s policy to seek sustainable development and enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre.
- Swindon town centre is vulnerable to additional competition with the centre suffering from a high proportion of vacancies, limited occupier interest and low levels of footfall. The proposal will have a significantly adverse impact.

- The Planning and Retail Statement fails to properly consider the impact of the proposal on the town centre as a result of overinflated expenditure growth, underestimation of the proposed development's turnover and an unjustifiable approach to trade draw.
- The assumption that 30% of each retail unit will be for the sale of convenience goods is highly unlikely and the majority of units will be occupied by comparison goods retailers. This under estimation is critical to the assessment of the impact on the town centre as the higher the comparison goods turnover of the development the greater the impact of the town centre.
- It is suggested that it may take three to four years for the site to become established by which the assessment of the trade diversion is calculated. This suggests that the impact is being watered down when it is more realistic that units could become established much sooner.
- Expenditure growth in convenience and comparison goods retailing up to 2021 has been significantly over estimated and cannot be relied upon to demonstrate the need for the development.
- The Planning and Retail Statement fails to consider matters necessary in order to assess the vitality and viability of Swindon town centre with regards customer views and behaviours, intentions to change retail representations, pedestrian flows, perception of safety and occurrence of crime, and the state of town centre's environmental quality.
- The proposed trade draw from the town centre has been underestimated and the potential claw back that the retail park could gain from existing rates off internet shopping of comparison retail is questionable as it is not considered a new retail park will change existing and growing internet shopping habits.
- The sequential test assessment gives little consideration to edge of centre sites and a general lack of detail in respect of each in centre site identified. There has been a failure to consider the impact of the proposed development on planned investment as detailed in the Swindon Central Area Action Plan.
- Some of the proposed units are at a scale which is more typical of a town centre site rather than a retail park and therefore could draw retailers away from the town centre, particularly if there is no restriction on goods.
- Swindon is suffering from high vacancy levels which at 18% are well above the national average of 11.3% and official figures do not tally with those set out in the Planning and Retail Statement.
- Whilst there have been signs of improvement in the town centre, particularly at Regent Circus this is well below those seen nationally and vacant units and limited occupier demand remains a concern particularly where there are enticing offers to retailers and customers at other sites in Swindon.
- The town centre is vulnerable from added competition within its primary catchment and even a very modest trade diversion may lead to a significant adverse impact. Such vulnerability is recognised by policy EC3 of the Local Plan which requires proposals providing more than 600 square metres of floor space to provide a Retail Impact Assessment, well below the National Planning Policy Framework threshold of 2,500 square metres. Indeed, the Local Plan states that there is a strong presumption against new out-of-town developments.
- The proposal will draw a significant amount of footfall away from the town centre through trade draw. The under estimated suggestion that a £6.12 million trade draw

will occur, on an assumption of shopping trips equating to twenty per person will result in the loss of over 306,000 trips to the town centre per annum.

16 Business in Market Street, Swindon:

- Swindon is already over served by numerous out of town retail areas offering free parking.
- There is a larger number of vacant retail units in the town centre which need to be successfully let before any further development should be considered.
- The development will result in more town centre vacancies.
- Housing should have been considered on this site rather than retail.

17 Resident in Medway Road, Haydon Wick:

- The development will be a further nail in the coffin for an already flagging town centre.
- The architecture, materials and a complete lack of active frontages makes the development resemble warehouses and is a poor aesthetic for a gateway site which should be of a much higher standard.

18 Resident in The Planks, Old Town: An impartial observation has been made welcoming the provision of cycle parking facilities. It is noted that the development is adjacent to existing provision in the Swindon Cycle Network but the existing cycle path should be extended to provide a continuous link to the cycle parking and a new section of cycle path on the west of the development should be constructed to link with existing provision in the north. The access points to the site should be remodelled to enable cyclist to use.

19 Swindon Borough Council Strategic Commissioner – Growth and Regeneration:

The work of the Council's economy team is to grow the Swindon economy in accordance with the Swindon strategy and masterplan for the town centre. Providing an additional retail offer would provide out of town shopping which would directly contrast with the Council's policy of town centre first for retail. This provision would directly compete with the town centre and make it difficult to deliver that vision.

20 Swindon Borough Council - New Eastern Villages Team: 80,000 square feet of retail will have a serious impact on the prospects for establishing the New Eastern Villages District Centre. North Swindon is established and has a very large district centre and a network of local centres. Adding a large retail element in this very accessible location and only four minutes up the A419 from the New Eastern Villages will seriously prejudice the establishment of that allocated district centre.

External Consultees

21 Highways England: Following a review of the initial Transport Statement there were concerns about the operation and safety of the A419 Blunsdon Turnpike Junction which is already known to experience congestion during peak hour periods. Whilst additional information was submitted to address the concerns raised, this is still ongoing. Delays in accessing the Swindon SATURN model [Simulation and Assignment of Traffic to Urban Road Network] had prevented this work being undertaken in the previously suggested

timescales. The Transport consultants have now submitted base and forecast LinSig assessments [a recognised traffic modelling software tool], however the 2016 base model has not been validated so it is not possible to determine whether the base model accurately replicated existing junction operation. Junction queue length surveys are needed in order to validate the LinSig models to determine the impact on the Strategic Road Network. Dialogue continues however a further three-month direction of non-approval remains in place until the 3rd May 2017 or unless Highways England's outstanding concerns are overcome.

22 County Archaeologist: The site was evaluated in 2005 and did not locate anything of any archaeological interest. No further archaeological work is required.

23 Wiltshire Fire and Rescue: The Fire Authority require the provision of water supply and hydrant facilities for firefighting to meet the needs of the development.

24 Thames Water: A condition is requested to secure a detailed drainage strategy for the site.

Representations Made on Revised Submission (January 2017)

Parish Councils

25 Blunsdon St. Andrew Parish Council maintains their objection and consider that the proposed buildings present themselves as a poor "signature introduction" to Swindon from the north east when compared with the adjacent Vygon and even Harvester buildings. The development will have a significant impact on local and town centre retail unless this is for provision not currently available within the Borough. Technical issues regarding levels, access and materials have not been satisfactorily resolved.

26 Haydon Wick Parish Council objects to the proposal as there is a history of road accidents along Thamesdown Drive and its junction with the A419 is still causing problems in spite of marginal improvements to signage. Peak traffic leads to queuing beyond the Latham Road junction and the development will exacerbate further congestion. The proposed retail offering is similar in size to that of the Orbital Shopping Park and there are concerns as to whether the allocated number of parking spaces is adequate.

Neighbours

27 No further representations have been received.

Third Party Representations

28 Chairman of Forward Swindon:

- The proposal will jeopardise the success of the town centre programme and hopes of the Council fulfilling its pledges, a quarter of which relate to the town centre (Pledge 10 seeks to regenerate and redevelop the former Aspen House / Granville Street site and Pledge 12 seeks to improve the town centre road network to pave the way for the development of Kimmerfields).

- If the Gateway North development proceeds it will draw footfall from the town centre and depress land values whilst reinforcing investor perceptions that Swindon does not care about its town centre.

29 GVA Grimley on behalf of UK Commercial Property Trust (owners of The Parade Shopping Centre and Regent Circus) – received on the 18th January 2017:

- Additional analysis of alternative potential development sites across the Borough as part of the sequential test and a suggestion by the applicants that the amount of retail floor space could be reduced by 30% still does not properly deal with the policy requirement to demonstrate flexibility. Car parking however remains part of the applicant's alternative site assessment requirements which does not show flexibility as adequate provision already exists in Swindon town centre. Therefore the use of a minimum site requirement of 1.75 hectares (from the present 2.5 hectares) renders the remainder of the sequential assessment inadequate.
- The updated Financial Impact Assessment and Town Centre Health Check Assessment concludes that the town centre *"is performing well"* and the proposal will not undermine the health or investment prospect and performance in the town centre. However careful consideration needs to be given to a lack of proper investigation of the health of the town centre, a lack of proper analysis of the town centre over time and the use of commitments within the cumulative impact analysis.
- One area which lead the applicant to conclude that the town centre is healthy is the number and proportion of vacancies in the centre. An analysis of vacancies was carried out in November 2016 but there are by January 2017 further vacancies. Such vacancies are simply compared with those against the national average but the location and prominence of these vacancies needs to be considered, such as in the Core Primary Frontage areas as defined by the Central Area Action Plan, which would demonstrate the current weakness of the town centre.
- There are a number of temporary tenants across the town centre which fill vacant space but do not represent longer term sustainable business and their presence can mask true demand, some of whom have vacated their premises since the November 2016 assessment.
- The health check lists a number of national multiple retailers but does not identify those who have vacated the town centre in recent years.
- In terms of assessment of market share based on the Swindon Retail Capacity Update 2009 and the applicant's November 2015 household survey figures, it does appear that there has been a significant drop in the town centre's comparison goods market share. Even though the 2009 study does not include internet shopping, which the applicant's data does, the difference between the two datasets are still significantly large. This indicates the significantly poorer performance of the town centre in attracting comparison goods shopping trips and in different comparison goods categories. This information is not reflected in the submitted health check assessment.

30 DPP Planning on behalf of FI Real Estate Management (managers of the Brunel Shopping Centre) – received on the 23rd January 2017:

- Ultra long growth rates are still being used in calculating available expenditure in the Borough and the revised assessment still fails to properly account for growth in Special Forms of Trading (SFT) suggesting it will remain constant between the

base year and the design year of 2021 when forecasts suggest the SFT for comparison goods will increase by 21% and represents an overestimation of the turnover of existing floorspace and the level of expenditure to support new floorspace.

- In the event that planning permission is granted, conditions should be attached to restrict the use of the retail units / floor space, but concern remains regarding the relied approach assuming a 70/30 gross to net split of comparison to convenience goods for each unit which remains entirely unrealistic. It could be restricted by condition, but it is unlikely that stand alone planning applications for each unit to vary this condition could be sustained thereby enabling a higher level of comparison goods floorspace. A worst case scenario basis in terms of potential impact to centres is an 80/20 gross to net split and 100% of net floor space being used for comparison goods.
- Concerns about the level of trade diversion in the revised retail assessment remain, particularly the assumption that trade draw will come from internet shopping masks the actual trade levels that will be drawn from existing centres. The suggestion that town centre turnover will benefit from this development relies upon the Kimmerfields development delivering a significant amount of A1 floorspace and any such floor space drawing 20% from existing town centre stores.
- Additional information on the town centre health check is welcome but concerns remain regarding the commentary, accuracy and level of detail in relation to the diversity of users and vacancy rates, retailer representation, commercial yields, rental values, pedestrian flows and customer opinions or how such indicators have changed over time.
- The number of pop up / temporary shops and charity shops which are prevalent thorough the primary shopping area is not accurately reflected in the health check, in that short term letting is a sign of weakness and symptomatic of limited demand from retailers which is exacerbated by competition from out of town destinations and other towns.
- 44% of all town centre vacancies fall within the primary shopping area which should be the main focus for retail development in the centre, which is under performing and struggling to attract new retailers.
- Next, Sole Trader, The Works, Ryman, Austin Reed, BHS, Currys Digital, Blue Inc. and Monsoon have all been lost in recent years.
- No context or comparison has been provided for average rental values or how this has changed over a period of time and is of limited use to assessing the vitality and viability of the town centre. The suggestion that there is no up-to-date data for commercial yield or “zone A” rental value date is questionable for a town the size of Swindon.
- No comparable historic data has been provided to demonstrate how pedestrian flows affect the vitality and viability of the town centre.
- The household survey that was submitted with the initial application highlights that the main concerns about the town centre are the retail offer and the environmental quality of the centre. This clearly highlights the town centre’s vulnerability as a retail destination in terms of increased competition for both customers and retailers.
- The revised submitted health check paints a picture of a thriving and healthy town centre without providing the necessary evidence, despite Local Plan policy EC3 clearly recognising that the town centre is vulnerable as was also acknowledged by the Local Plan Inspector.

- The sequential test assessment with regards identifying multiple ownership of centres appears weak.
- The methodology identifying the economic benefits of the development cannot be relied upon.

31 The Council has received 61 letters representing businesses located within Swindon Town Centre. This has been collated by the In-Swindon Business Improvement District Company. The letter states:

“I write to express my concerns with the proposal to build a further retail park in Swindon. The regeneration of Swindon’s town centre should be a priority for the Council. This retail park would divert trade away from the town centre and undermine businesses located in the town centre. I would therefore request that the planning application be refused.”

32 A full list of the businesses which have objected is set out in **Appendix 1** to this report. In addition, a further six objections have been received separately from **Ask Italian, Cineworld, Gourmet Burger Kitchen, Morrisons, Regent Circus Management** and **Virgin Media**. These form the same standard letter:

- All six companies take a keen interest in proposals which have the potential to affect the health and attractiveness of the town centre.
- The proposal will sell the same types of retail goods that are on offer in the centre and will prove very damaging.
- The town centre faces a number of challenges including competition from existing out of town retail parks and warehouses and the increasing rise in internet shopping.
- In the face of these challenges, existing town centre tenants and landlords are working hard to retain existing and attract new customers but this proposal will likely damage this hard work.

33 **Business at 32-33 Havelock Street:** In the present economic climate it is increasingly difficult to fill vacant shops in the town centre which gives the centre a poor image. Efforts are being made to change the perception of the town centre but another out of town shopping area will make this even harder, particularly with the appeal of free parking. It is not government policy to encourage out of town retail developments that lead to the demise of town centres when trade is supposed to be encouraged back into towns despite the visual benefits the development will bring to this entrance to Swindon.

34 **Business at 4-5 Market Street, Swindon:** This development will have a very serious deleterious effect on the town centre. There are many sites available in the town centre area and these should be utilised by the applicants. Swindon shopping is already far too fragmented and this development will add to the retail dilution.

35 **St. Aldhelms Centre:** Concern over fall in number of visitors to town centre in recent years and number of charity and coffee shops emerging. Free parking is a benefit not extended to the town centre and on the basis that this can put people off initiatives to promote the town centre rather than show support for an out of town retail park should be the priority.

36 **Zurich:** As a large local employer they are keen to see the much needed town centre regeneration progress. Any employer's office location forms part of their Employee Value Proposition and it may help or hinder attraction and retention of talent. The proposed development does not align with the town centre strategy and focus and resources will likely be diverted away from town centre redevelopment and compete with it for shoppers and other visitors. If any existing key town centre retailer were to relocate to this proposed site this could further precipitate town centre decline.

37 **Resident in Paddock Close, Haydon Wick:** Another retail park will be a further "nail in the coffin" for the town centre. Any new retailers wishing to open in North Swindon should be encouraged to open in the town centre which is not as enticing to shoppers as out of town retail parks. The proposal is also far too close to the Orbital centre and if permitted the traffic flow in Haydon Wick will increase significantly with Thames Avenue and Westfield Way being most affected. The development will open onto one of the worst junctions in Swindon which already has a poor accident rate.

Representations Made on Further Revised Submission (May 2017)

Parish Councils

38 Since the 1st April 2017 the application site has been located within the new parish of **St. Andrews**. No representations have been received.

39 The previous parish of Blunsdon St. Andrew (now **Blunsdon Parish Council**) and neighbouring **Haydon Wick Parish Council** have made no further comments.

Neighbours

40 No further representations have been received.

Third Party Representations

41 **Business at 4-5 Market Street:** The development should be vigorously rejected as developments like this are destroying the town centre. Retailing is already far too dispersed in Swindon and should be concentrated in existing centres.

42 **DPP Planning on behalf of FI Real Estate Management (managers of the Brunel of the Brunel Shopping Centre) – received on the 22nd May 2017:**

- Even with the removal of the smaller units and a bulky goods condition, the development will still have an adverse impact on Swindon Town Centre and investment.
- The applicant's suggested wording of a condition is imprecise, allows a significant degree of flexibility which would not be required for a true bulky goods retail park and allows the sale of a wide range of goods that could be or are already available in Swindon Town centre.
- Many of the suggested range of items do not fall within bulky goods definitions as provided within the Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note.

- There is no definition as to what constitutes “ancillary” in relation to the sale of specific goods. This must be provided for any condition to be enforceable and precise.
- The suggested list of goods lacks the necessary certainty and precision required. Reference should be made to the specific and standardised Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose (COICOP) categories to ensure that the condition is clear as to what goods can and cannot be sold from any of the retail units.
- The amended retail assessment appears to assume all the proposed floorspace is used for the sale of bulky goods and does not allow for or, seek to model, the trade diversion of the ancillary goods and non-bulky goods which are to be sold from the retail units in accordance with the suggested planning condition.
- The assessment assumes unrealistic trade diversion patterns and assumed turnover of the proposed floorspace. Particularly the assumption of a net to gross floorspace ratio of 70/30 is entirely unrealistic for bulky goods operators and there are no details provided as to which retailers have been identified when calculating the average sales density.
- It is unclear whether the applicant has revisited the submitted Transport Assessment and Economic Benefits Assessment to take into account the revised scheme, including amended trade diversion patterns.
- It is clear the proposed condition will allow a significant proportion of non-bulky goods sales despite the suggested restriction to bulky goods.
- Swindon town centre is highly vulnerable as demonstrated by the Local Plan and previous objections from other landowners and retailers.
- Even with a truly bulky goods restriction being imposed, the development will still draw a significant amount of trade away from the town centre and therefore will still have a significant adverse impact.
- The applicant’s retail impact assessment is neither sufficient nor robust.

43 GVA Grimley on behalf of UK Commercial Property Trust (owners of The Parade Shopping Centre and Regent Circus) – received on the 6th June 2017

- Surprising to see extremely limited additional information and analysis with regards the assessment of the revised scheme and updated analysis of retail impact issues.
- Presenting the revised proposal as a bulky goods scheme is misleading as many of the goods suggested to be sold from the main range of goods and the ancillary are simply not bulky in nature.
- The term ancillary is not defined. A 5% allowance in a large retail unit could equate to a retail area which is larger than some units in Swindon Town Centre. Ancillary can amount to much more than 5%.
- It would be difficult to enforce a condition [or legal obligation] particularly garden centre products such as giftware and seasonal products do not have an established definition and could stop the effective control of the proposed floorspace.
- When amalgamated 27% of all Swindon town centre comparison goods turnover has a direct trading overlap with the range of goods that the applicant wishes to sell from the proposed development.
- Non-bulky goods that could be categorised as “ancillary” will still have a trade overlap of 14% with town centre retailers, significant for a centre in a poor state of

health whose market share has been eroded in recent years thereby representing a significant threat to the centre's viability.

- The applicants analysis concludes that there will be a 1% impact which does not amount to a significant adverse impact but the this analysis lacks reference to other information regarding the health of the town centre including trade overlap, poor health of the town centre, falling market share of the town centre and whether the applicant's assessment is realistic as to the level of trade diversion.
- The level of trade diversion from internet shopping (a suggested one fifth) should be significantly reduced or removed from the impact analysis as Swindon already has a good range of in centre and out of centre retailers selling the range of goods that would be sold from the development and is unlikely to be a significant draw.
- The ability to accommodate a café use within each of the units would further add to the attractiveness of the development which will compete directly with the town centre.
- The development may attract new retailers to this location from existing out of to centre retail sites which may indirectly result in existing town centre tenants being free to move to those established parks which have less restrictive planning permissions.
- The applicant has still not satisfactorily provided an assessment to demonstrate that the proposed development will not have a significant adverse impact on existing investment in the town centre contrary to National planning guidance
- The town centres two main shopping centres and Regent Circus has made it explicitly clear that the development is likely to have an significant adverse impact through its representations.
- Such competition will affect the confidence of landlords and tenants and a failure to invest in the town centre even with the proposed controls over the range of comparison goods to be sold due to the extent on the trading overlap with the town centre and its poor health.

External Consultees

44 Highways England: In a Direction dated 13th April 2017, following the completion of its review of additional information submitted as part of the Transport Assessment dated March 2017 and subsequent working papers, Highways England whose concern rests primarily with the impact of the development on the A419 Trunk Road no longer raises an objection to the application subject to conditions.

Planning Policy:

45 Enshrined in planning law, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that the determination of planning applications should be in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

National Planning Policy Framework

46 In considering this application, regard has been had to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was published by the Department for Communities and Local Government in March 2012. This sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Paragraph 2 states that the Framework must

be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions. These will be considered in the main body of this report from paragraph 55 below. However, paragraph 12 of the NPPF confirms the primacy of an up to date Local Plan as the starting point for decision making.

Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026

47 The Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 (SBLP) forms a statutory part of the Development Plan for the Borough of Swindon. It was adopted in March 2015 and the policies therein are considered to be up-to-date and continue to carry significant weight in decision making.

48 The following Local Plan policies have been taken into consideration in reaching the above recommendation. These will be considered in the main body of the report under Planning Considerations:

- SD1 - Sustainable Development Principles
- SD2 - The Sustainable Development Strategy
- SD3 - Managing Development
- DE1 - High Quality Design
- EC3 - The Role of the Centres and Main Town Centre Uses
- TR1 - Sustainable Transport Networks
- TR2 - Transport and Development
- IN1 - Infrastructure Provision
- EN4 - Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- EN5 - Landscape Character and Historic Landscape
- EN6 - Flood Risk
- SC1 – Swindon's Central Area
- SC2 - Swindon's Existing Urban Communities

Swindon Central Area Action Plan

49 The Swindon Central Area Action Plan (CAAP) was adopted in February 2009 and together with the Local Plan and the other plans identified in Item 5, Appendix 1 of this agenda forms part of the overarching Development Plan for the Borough of Swindon. Although the proposed development does not fall within the defined CAAP area, it will have relevance to the delivery adopted CAAP policies. In particular, policy CAAP13 (Development Requirements for the Retail Core) states that the Retail Core as defined will be the main focus for shopping activity in the Borough and to this end a number of criteria is set out to help protect and enhance the retail offer provided in this area.

50 Policy SD3 of the Local Plan seeks to realise the aims of the CAAP and it is acknowledged through the Local Plan that policies have been set to help ensure that the aspirations of the CAAP are realised (paragraph 4.4, SBLP). Furthermore policy SC1 seeks to improve and enhance Swindon's Central Area with the Retail Core being the focus of retail-led development with provision being made for at least 53,700 square metres of net comparison retail floorspace within the town centre primary shopping area (the Retail Core). Policy SC2 again emphasises the priority to regenerate Swindon's

Central Area which will be implemented through application of the Central Area Action Plan.

Swindon Gateway Design Brief:

51 The application site previously formed part of the landscaped campus of the Motorola plant which occupied the wider site until the late 2000's; but part of this was sold off by the company in the early part of the that decade and marketed to provide a mixed use of employment, leisure and ancillary facilities. This included offices, a leisure centre, hotel, public house, crèche and car showroom uses. The development brief was approved by the Planning Committee in October 2004 for the purposes of development management.

52 The objective of the brief was, with the profile already raised by the adjacent development of the then celebrated Motorola complex (now the V park) to secure a well planned development of the highest quality whilst safeguarding the character of the site as a whole. This included development of a modern hi-tech appearance, with structured landscaping and a sustainable transport strategy to encourage greater access to the site by public transport, cycling and pedestrian links.

53 Whilst development has come forward over the 7.4 hectare (18.24 acre) site since the adoption of the brief in the form of the David Lloyd Leisure centre, an approved hotel which has never been implemented and a Harvester restaurant and public house, the development of the site has been somewhat piecemeal with the further development of an Aldi supermarket and the Robins Farm family restaurant and public house which were subjected to planning approval on their individual merits. The previously envisaged employment, leisure / hotel development which had formed adopted policy under a previous local plan was not carried forward into the present adopted Local Plan. As the Design Brief was never adopted as a formal supplementary planning document and as other uses have now come forward, it is considered that the brief no longer carries any substantial weight or have been superseded by adopted policy.

54 However, in giving consideration to future developments at the Gateway North site including the proposed retail park now being considered, favourable consideration should only be given where it can be demonstrated that the proposal is in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and adopted Local Plan, including any other material considerations that may have arisen to date. This includes the need to secure sustainable development through high quality design, making development accessible by walking, cycling and public transport and contributing to the retention of jobs and growth of the local economy and complement town centre regeneration (Local Plan policy SD1).

Planning Considerations:

The Proposal Site – Development History and Policy Context

55 The proposal site is not located in an established or designated retail centre, but also does not have any other land designation based on the Local Plan Policies Map. Policy SD2 of the Local Plan states that in recognising its role and function in the wider area, development in the Borough will be concentrated at Swindon through a combination of realising development opportunities within Swindon's urban area and allocated strategic

sites such as the proposed New Eastern Villages for example. The site is located within the urban area boundary, therefore there is scope within the remit of the policies of the Local Plan as a whole to consider a range of new development opportunities on this site. However there are some constraints to development such as the proximity of both the A419 Blunsdon By-Pass and junction, the A4198 Thamesdown Drive and the A4311 Cricklade Road together with the existing adjacent commercial land uses which for instance suggest that residential development may not be feasible for amenity reasons.

56 Previously, under the now superseded Swindon Borough Local Plan to 2016 the land had been designated for employment and leisure use. The leisure uses have been delivered to an extent in the form of the David Lloyd Leisure centre and the development of the Harvester restaurant and pub together with the more recent opening of the Robins Farm Inn to the north of the Gateway North site. An office development has also recently been approved under planning permission S/17/0211 to the north of the Harvester whilst a hotel which had previously been approved as part of that restaurant / pub development has never come forward.

57 It is also pertinent to note that the envisaged new employment uses that were set out under that former Local Plan policy and the largely superseded Swindon Gateway Design Brief have never materialised with little interest being expressed for Class B1 office development other than the recently approved buildings that await implementation. It was on the basis of there being limited appeal for conventional employment use at this location that the Aldi convenience store was granted planning permission on its planning merits after being demonstrated by the applicants at the time that this would provide a retail facility to meet the day to day shopping needs of local residents predominantly in the Groundwell West and St. Andrew's Ridge residential areas and provide a source of inward investment and employment opportunities so soon after the 2008 financial crisis.

Economic Growth and Investment

58 Policy EC1 seeks to encourage inward investment and growth, together with the retention of existing businesses to be enabled by promoting Swindon's Central Area as the first preference for office development, protecting the best employment sites, identifying new employment sites, supporting large inward investment proposals where there is a significant net economic or social benefit. Although the proposed development is for Use Class A1 retail use rather than Class B1 employment use, the provision of a 7000 square metre retail park will undoubtedly encourage inward investment from retailers that may not have a presence within the Borough or from existing retailers who may wish to open additional stores. This has the potential to create a significant number of new jobs. However, in supporting the development of a retail park and further economic growth, this must be considered against the risks that a new retail development that is not located in an existing allocated centre could have in terms of its potential to draw trade from those other centres, and potentially undermine their role by competing directly with them.

59 Particularly careful consideration and significant emphasis needs to be given to the impact of any new retail development on the vitality and viability of Swindon Town Centre, particularly in supporting existing retailers and ancillary facilities, attracting new businesses and protecting and attracting new jobs, recognising its current health and prosperity and the opportunities to implement Development Plan policy and support the regeneration of the Borough's central area.

New Retail Development and Town Centre Uses – Planning Policy Context

60 Paragraph 2.8 of the Local Plan states that Swindon has a strong potential for growth but there are significant threats to its future economic success. These include *“the poor performance of Swindon Town Centre, specifically in terms of the retail and office offer”*. This weakness was also recorded in the Planning Inspector’s Report on the examination into the Swindon Borough Local Plan in February 2015, which at paragraph 96 stated, *“There was general agreement at the Hearing that Swindon town centre was under-performing in retail terms, and that it was experiencing ‘leakage’ to out-of-town shopping centres and to competing towns, such as Reading.”*.

61 The importance of addressing this weakness is reflected in the Plan’s foreword, written by the Leader of the Council, which states: *“We have a responsibility ... to deliver the much-needed regeneration of the Town Centre”*. The centrality of Town Centre regeneration to the plan is also reflected in Policy SD1 which states that all development proposals in the Borough should *“complement Town Centre regeneration”*. The same message is repeated elsewhere in the Plan, for example at paragraph 4.61, where it is stated that *“A vibrant and prosperous Town Centre is essential to support economic growth and prosperity”*.

62 The National Planning Policy Framework requires local planning authorities to form policies that are positive, promote competitive town centre environments and set out policies for the management and growth to centres over the plan period. Paragraph 23 sets out a number of objectives that should be pursued through Local Plans. These include:

- Recognising town centres as the heart of their communities and pursue policies to support their vitality and viability;
- To define a network and hierarchy of centres that is resilient to anticipated future economic changes;
- Promote competitive town centres that provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer and which reflect the individuality of town centres;
- Allocate a range of suitable sites to meet the scale and type of retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural and community and residential development needed in town centres and undertake assessment of the need to expand town centres to ensure a sufficient supply of sites; and,
- Where town centres are in decline, plan positively for their future to encourage economic activity.

63 The need to promote the regeneration of Swindon’s town centre is reflected in two key Local Plan policies; Policy EC3 and SC1. Policy EC3 seeks to direct the development of main town centre uses, including retail to Swindon town centre. This policy states that proposals for main town centre uses outside of the identified Swindon Central Area, namely this Gateway North site, will only be permitted where they do not harm or undermine the regeneration of Swindon’s Central Area and where there do not undermine the vitality and viability of existing defined centres.

64 Retail uses excluding small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance, together with food and drink uses and entertainment and leisure uses are for the purposes

of planning classified as ‘town centre uses’ as they would be quite appropriate and sustainable within a town centre context. Paragraph 24 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that:

“Local Planning Authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses that are not in an existing centre and are not in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan. They should require applicants for main town centre users to be located in town centres, then in edge of centre locations and only if suitable sites are not available should out of centre sites be considered. When considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference should be given to accessible sites that are well connected to the town centre. Applicants and local planning authorities should also demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale.”

65 Paragraph (d) of Policy EC3 states that all applications for retail development with a floor space exceeding 600 square metres should include a Retail Impact Assessment which the applicant has submitted and reviewed during the consideration of this application. This is almost 75% lower than the threshold set out in paragraph 26 of the NPPF. The reasoned justification for Policy EC3 at paragraph 4.77 states in relation to the implementation of the policy that *“There will be continued pressure for more out-of-centre development of retail warehouses...It will be important to resist such pressure in order to protect the vitality of the Town Centre.”*

66 Policy EC3 is supplemented by Policy SC1 which outlines a number of priorities to improve Swindon’s Central Area. It identifies the retail core as the focus of retail-led development. When applying Policy EC3 to the proposed development, it is again necessary to look at whether this application has adopted a sequential approach to site selection, whether the development would undermine the vitality and viability of existing centres and whether it would harm or undermine the regeneration of Swindon’s Central Area.

67 Policy EC3 has been found to be sound and adopted subsequently to the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework. However, it should be recognised that, whilst in accordance with the NPPF, Policy EC3 it is not worded in exactly the same way as NPPF paragraph 26. For example, the requirement that development should not harm or undermine the regeneration of Swindon’s Central Area is a policy test that a Planning Inspector has confirmed to be specific to Swindon, which is additional to NPPF policy and is linked to the specific circumstances of the town as have been detailed above. It would not be in accordance with Section 38(6) of the 2004 Act to ignore the specific requirements of Policy EC3, given the significant weight that the Local Plan continues to have in this regard rather than apply NPPF policy, which whilst a material consideration is not adopted and up-to-date development plan policy in this particular regard.

The Sequential Approach

68 In accordance with Local Plan Policy EC3 provides for a hierarchy of centres in order of preference and priority as follows:

- Firstly, within Swindon town centre.
- Secondly, at the edge of the town centre.

- Thirdly, at district and primary rural centres including Cavendish Square, Gorse Hill, Highworth town centre, Orbital Shopping Park, Old Town, West Swindon, Wroughton village centre and the proposed New Eastern Villages district centre.
- Fourthly, at Local Centres as shown on the Local Plan Policies Map including those at Wichelstowe, Commonhead, Tadpole Garden Village and the Kingsdown development.

69 An initial sequential test assessment was submitted by the applicant and formed part of the March 2016 Planning and Retail Assessment. This related to an initially proposed retail park with a 70/30 split between unrestricted comparison retail and convenience retail and included five small retail units of equivalent floorspace to smaller shops. At the time this was considered by the Planning Manager to be weak and inaccurate in places, with two areas in particular likely to be sequentially preferable to the application site, specifically Aspen House / Granville Street car park within the Town Centre and North Star at the edge of the Town Centre which had been ruled out in the applicant's initial assessment and subsequent December 2016 revision.

70 Following assessment of the applicant's additional sequential test evidence in early 2017 it remained that the Kimmerfields (Union Square / Carfax Street / "Exchange"), Aspen House / Granville Street car park / "Regent Place" and North Star sites were all considered to be sequentially preferable to the proposed Gateway North site. Therefore, the application initially failed to meet the sequential approach on the basis of the original envisaged trading format as there would be a number of other sequentially preferable sites that could contribute to the accommodation of individual units/retailers proposed within the development proposal. This also included the New Eastern Villages District Centre, an envisaged 12,000 square metre gross retail led development to support the new communities within the east of the Borough.

71 It is incumbent on the applicant to demonstrate compliance with the sequential test. Paragraph 27 of the National Planning Policy Framework identifies that when an applicant fails to satisfy the sequential test, it should be refused. Therefore, as the applicant had initially not demonstrated a sequential approach to site selection, the proposal was considered to be in conflict with this NPPF guidance and adopted and up to date Local Plan Policy EC3.

72 In their latest written submission dated 21st March 2017, the applicant maintains that the four suggested sites have been fully considered and dismissed as part of their own comprehensive sequential assessment, which considered in detail relationships of the sites with their local retail, development plan allocations, current development proposals, land ownership, physical development constraints, existing uses, neighbouring uses and distance to public transport. They continue to uphold the robustness of their assessment considering each of the four mentioned sites to be "*unsuitable, unavailable or unviable or a combination [thereof]*".

73 In addition to sequentially preferable sites being available in the view of officers as confirmed by GL Hearn's review of the initial evidence, there were also significant concerns that the proposed unrestricted retail park, other than trading in a 70/30 comparison to convenience goods split would result in considerable trade draw from the Town Centre to the detriment of its ongoing regeneration and inward investment, and

would detrimentally impact on the Town Centre's vitality and viability. It was also considered that the proposal on the basis of the original trading format would be predominantly car borne, creating a destination in its own right which would be contrary to the Council's policy objectives to encourage sustainable transport and modal shift away from the private car. On the basis that your officers advised the applicants that they would be recommending refusal of planning permission. The applicant has now accepted this stance and in light of representations received and the third party advice of GL Hearn has subsequently amended their application.

The Proposed Development Now Under Consideration – Revised Sequential Approach:

72 The principle changes to the scheme as of May 2017 are:

- Deletion of Units F which comprised 5 smaller retail units;
- Car parking increasing from 305 spaces to 317 spaces;
- Addition of a free standing ATM kiosk;
- The proposition put forward by the applicant to agree, initially by planning condition to a restriction on the range of goods to be sold from the proposed development, limiting this to bulky goods only, with no convenience retail and only ancillary non-bulky items to reflect the trading patterns of many bulky goods retailers such as furniture, beds and mattresses, carpet and DIY stores for example.

73 In light of the amended proposal for bulky goods retailers only to trade from the proposed retail development, the Sequential Assessment has been reviewed. Dealing with those sites which were originally considered to be sequentially preferable in turn:

Kimmerfields

74 Kimmerfields benefits from an outline planning permission (S/11/0614) for up to 13,471 square metres of retail floor space. That planning permission is flexible as to the exact nature of the retail uses, subject to broad compliance with approved drawings. There would thus be no basis for refusing an application for approval of reserved matters for bulky goods retail space, because the principle of that use would be within the scope of the outline planning permission. It is considered that this site therefore remains suitable for the size, type and range of goods proposed.

75 Turning to consider availability, the owner of the Kimmerfields site is largely Swindon Borough Council with the future development is being managed by Forward Swindon Limited. Although there remains considerable flexibility over the future development of the Kimmerfields site, Forward Swindon have advised that it would not be available for genuinely bulky goods retail. Therefore on consideration of the site on the basis for bulky goods retail over Gateway North, Kimmerfields is no longer considered to be sequentially preferable.

Aspen House / Granville Street Car Park

76 Since the original policy response was made, an application for outline planning permission (S17/0665) has been made in respect of part of this site and is at the time of writing awaiting determination. That application proposes 642 square metres of Class A1 to A5 and B1(a) floor space. The site forms part of Site A (Regent Place) referred to in Policy CAAP13 (Development Requirements for the Retail Core) of the Swindon Central

Area Action Plan which identifies that the wider site could deliver 35,000 square metres of net additional retail floor space.

77 In terms of quantum of floor space, the site remains suitable for the broad size of retail proposed and there is no policy impediment to the suitability of the site. However, once again the issue about whether this site could be sequentially preferable to Gateway North is one of availability, and again your officers agree that that the site would not be available for retailing of the broad type and range of goods now proposed.

North Star

78 North Star is an edge of centre site. It is allocated under Local Plan Policy SC1 (Swindon's Central Area) as the location for a new regional leisure facility. There is still an outline application (S/OUT/15/0943) awaiting determination which proposes 12,000 square metres gross external area of Class A1 and A3 retail floorspace including a minimum of 9,000 square metres of sports retailing. The town centre sites, including Kimmerfields and Aspen House / Granville Street, are sequentially preferable to North Star, but North Star is sequentially preferable to the Gateway North site in terms of being capable of accommodating the proposed quantum of development at Gateway.

79 Retail could form part of the uses mix at North Star (subject to the sequential and impact tests), although this would not be the preference of the Local Planning Authority and would need to complement the development of the site as a leisure facility in accordance with Policy SC1. In the view of the your officers, it would be challenging for bulky goods retail to support that objective, and therefore it is considered that the site would not be available for that purpose.

New Eastern Villages District Centre

80 This site is allocated under Local Plan Policy NC3 (New Eastern Villages). Policy NC3 states that the allocations will provide "*about 12,000 square metres (gross) of retail floorspace including a high quality district centre...comprising an anchor food store and complementary uses*". The allocation could accommodate more than one and a half times the quantum of retail proposed in the current application, but it is questionable whether bulky goods retail would represent a complementary use within a high quality district centre. Your officer's assessment is that, based on the revised range of goods that are proposed to be sold at Gateway North, the New Eastern Villages District Centre is no longer a suitable sequentially preferable site.

Conclusions on the sequential test based on the revised scheme

81 Taking into account the deletion of the smaller units, which could potentially have been accommodated within vacant units in the town centre, and the proposed restriction on the range of goods that can be sold, it is considered that the proposed development as revised will now pass the sequential test although the smaller Unit D in its own right of a size that is equivalent to a town centre unit. This is subject however to the imposition of a planning obligation restricting the range of goods that can be sold. Additionally, to ensure that the proposed development accords with the sequential approach and to limit its future potential to adversely impact on centres, your officers consider that a restriction should be also be imposed to prevent future subdivision of the units into smaller retail units.

Potential Impact on Swindon Town Centre – Present Context

82 Whilst it is considered that the revised proposal will now satisfy the sequential test, Members are quite aware of the significant number of objections that have been received in respect of this proposal from a wide range of town centre interests. Despite the agreement that the development will be limited to the sale of bulky goods only with ancillary non-bulky to reflect the trading patterns of such predominantly bulky goods retailers, in light of the sustained objections of The Brunel, The Parade and Regents Circus, and in balancing the arguments made by the applicant against those of existing retail providers in the Town Centre, it is important that Members fully understand the present condition of Swindon's Central Area in making their decision on the recommendation of officers.

83 The Forward Planning Officer has advised that the relatively poor performance of Swindon town centre is illustrated by its lower "VenueScore" ranking. Swindon town centre currently finds itself in 72nd position in the UK rankings, falling from 55th position in 2007 and 65th in 2010. Although the development of new shopping centres entering the national retail market will have had some effect on the rankings, this does demonstrate the clear downward trend of Swindon's position over the past ten years and a poor performance when compared to competitor centres such as Reading, Bath, Cheltenham and Oxford. Evidence of this is set out in Swindon Retail and Leisure Needs Assessment (RLNA) which was prepared for the Council by Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners and published in January 2017. This figure represents a low ranking in relation to Swindon's size as the largest population centre in the region and *"is a clear downward direction of Swindon's position"* relative to competitor centres.

84 The Retail and Leisure Needs Assessment finds that between 2010 and 2015 the number of comparison retail units in the town centre decreased by fourteen. Additionally, it observes that *"...while the proportion of comparison goods units is similar to the national average, for higher order shopping centres, in general terms, the proportion of comparison goods units would be expected to be noticeably higher, reflecting the main shopping draw of the centre"*. It identifies that *"Although it would appear that Swindon town centre has a strong retail offer and is well represented by multiple retailers, many of the premium brands are located in the Swindon Designer Outlet or in out of centre retail parks"*. In particular the fashion offer for comparison goods, as opposed to convenience good which relate to day-to-day shopping items such as food, toiletries and household goods is identified as a weakness.

85 Another acknowledged weakness is in the town centre's evening economy, with the number of class A3 (cafes and restaurants), A4 (pubs) and A5 (hot-food takeaways) units falling below the UK average. This is linked to the town centre's single use zones and relative lack of mix of uses.

86 The limitations of the town centre's offer is also reflected in the customer views study undertaken for the Retail and Leisure Needs Assessment, which identifies that of residents who expressed a view on the centre, the majority were looking for a better quality and more diverse range of shops and a better appearance / refurbishment of the centre; therefore better environmental quality. The study's business survey of 150 businesses in Swindon also showed the town centre performing poorly for liveliness,

street life and character and performing less well than Old Town and the Outlet Village on all but one category.

87 Vacancy figures for the town centre provide a snapshot at any one point in time. In 2010 vacancies were at 16.7% of units, increasing to 17.4% of units in 2015. The applicant's agent's figures indicate a recent decline in vacancy with the opening of the Flannels store in the former H&M premises, but overall significant vacancy appears persistent and indeed the insolvency of British Home Stores has created a major new anchor vacancy in The Parade shopping area, albeit at the time of writing it is understood that Wilkinson will be moving to this site within the primary shopping area. There are significant vacancies in the retail core primary frontage as defined in the Central Area Action Plan proposals map as has been highlighted by GVA and DPP, which together with a large number of charity shops and short term lease retailers or "pop-up shops" tends to suggest that the centre is weaker than the overall percentage vacancy centres may suggest.

88 The relative weakness of the centre is in part a consequence of its mixed environmental quality (as recorded in the Retail and Leisure Needs Assessment 2017) with peripheral parts of the centre such as the Fleet Street area having suffered from a lack of recent investment, which will now be exacerbated with the moving of Wilkinson to The Parade. Additionally, retail and office decentralisation from the 1980's onwards has progressed further in Swindon than many other towns, resulting in significant quantities of existing out of centre retail in the Borough.

89 A number of public realm and environmental issues are picked up on in the Retail and Leisure Needs Assessment, which states:

"The Parade and Canal Walk provide a good quality environment, with trees and hard landscaping, however while there is public art and elements of interest in this area, there is no clear focal point of the shopping core. The quality of the pedestrianised areas along Regent Street and Bridge Street reduces with distance from the crossroads with The Parade and Canal Walk. The Brunel Centre was refurbished in 1996, but its appearance is dated and has little active frontage to the surrounding streets. The recent development at Regent Circus has improved the spaces around this southern end of the town centre, although it is separated from the main retail core".

90 The Retail and Leisure Needs Assessment identifies that there are further public realm issues in terms of accessibility within the centre. There is currently no direct or clear pedestrian route between the railway station and the retail core. The underpass beneath Fleming Way in particular does not currently present an attractive entrance to the shopping centre, although its removal forms part of the plans for the proposed Kimmerfields development. Pedestrian access throughout the centre is reasonable and the retail core is pedestrianised, however the centre does not have a natural retail circuit that encourages flows around the main retail area.

91 Unfortunately, in part as a consequence of the global recession, Swindon's centre did not receive the public and private investment to address its issues that rival town and city centres received. However, efforts are now taking place to regenerate the centre and

considerable public and private investment has been undertaken or is planned. For example:

- The Council's regeneration company, Forward Swindon Limited, is advancing a number of projects to bring forward redevelopment and public realm improvements within the centre. Consultation has already taken place on a part-residential and part-retail development on the Aspen House and the Granville Street car park sites that were previously known as Regent Place and a planning application is now being considered.
- The Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP) identified the regeneration of Swindon town centre as a focus in its 2016 Strategic Economic Plan. The SWLEP has also outlined its intention to invest in transport packages and schemes to support the regeneration in Swindon town centre.
- Approximately £850,000 was recently invested in improving the public realm at Havelock Square in the town centre derived from previous "Section 106" developer contributions that were secured through the now superseded Central Area Public Realm supplementary planning document.
- The Council has pledged £5m towards the proposed £22m new Swindon Museum and Art Gallery in the town centre, which will be the subject of a Heritage Lottery Fund bid.
- The Kimmerfields (formerly Union Square) development on the north eastern edge of the retail core has secured outline planning consent with peripheral sites now completed or under development whilst the North Star edge of centre development is still in the pipeline with a planning application currently pending.
- The Council recently successfully defended a legal challenge to the Swindon Borough Council Kimmerfields Compulsory Purchase Order 2014 which was made in connection with enabling works for further phases of the Kimmerfields scheme.
- The Council has invested considerable resources in enabling town centre regeneration, for example by demolishing the Carlton and Wyvern Car Parks and replacing the current health centre in the town centre with a new facility in addition to a new multi-storey car park as part of the Kimmerfields development. These form part of the Council's Vision, Priorities and Pledges.
- As the applicant has also pointed out, the Tented Market site has secured planning permission for a development of restaurants whilst work on The Crossing over Canal Walk to introduce new food and drink establishments to this part of the Central Area is now underway. In addition it is acknowledged that there are other smaller scale redevelopment proposals that have been recently approved or currently subject to applications, such as the part redevelopment part restoration of the former Walkabout bar on the corner of Bridge Street and Fleet Street and a new premises for Metrobank on the corner of The Parade and Regent Street is about to be constructed.
- Wilkinson / Wilko is to move to the currently vacant BHS premises in The Parade which opens up opportunities for regeneration around Fleet Street and Bridge Street.

92 However, despite the above positive signals, the overall picture from this context is of a centre that continues to underperform relative to competitor centres in Bath, Oxford, Cheltenham and Reading in terms of its comparison retail offer and environmental quality. The town centre has shown a downward trajectory in recent years and there are a number of longstanding weaknesses. Whilst public and private investment has taken place and is still

planned, the town centre is considered to remain vulnerable to competition from other locations and arguably more locally successful out of town non-designated retail parks such as Mannington and Greenbridge, the Orbital Shopping Park which is a designated District Centre and the edge of centre McArthur Glen Designer Outlet Village.

93 This fact is well summed up in the Retail and Leisure Needs Assessment which states:

“Other competing shopping centres are likely to continue to improve their environment and retail offer, therefore the competitive gap may widen and the amount of expenditure leakage from the Swindon area could increase. If Swindon does not improve its range and choice of facilities, the town centre’s role in the wider hierarchy could decline.”

94 It is also important, by way of context, to note that the Swindon Retail and Leisure Needs Assessment indicates that, with existing commitments and proposals, there will be no surplus comparison expenditure capacity within the Borough until 2026. In 2021 there will be significant negative comparison goods expenditure capacity for the ‘Swindon Other’ designation (i.e. retail in the Swindon urban area outside of the town centre). The assessed lack of 2021 expenditure capacity for out of town retail indicates that additional out of town provision would be likely to erode Swindon town centre’s market share.

95 It should be recognised that there is no longer a test of ‘need’ in national policy and it is therefore not necessary for the applicant to demonstrate a need for the type of retail it is providing as has been suggested in their application. However, the oversupply of out of centre retail shown in the Retail and Leisure Needs Assessment is relevant and a significant material consideration when assessing the potential impacts of the development now before this Committee on the Town Centre.

The Acceptability of a Bulky Goods Retail Park Only

96 Policy comments on the original application objected to the principle of a new retail park on the edge of Swindon on the basis that the development, then proposed as an open unrestricted A1 use, would significantly impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre. Furthermore, a policy objection was raised on the basis that the development would harm town centre regeneration and investment, undermining the realisation of redevelopment aspirations for the centre and investor confidence.

97 In comparison with the original application, the revised proposal reduces the floor area proposed from 7,490 square metres to 7,018 square metres, but more importantly and in light of the above assessment of the town centre proposes a restriction on the range of goods that would be sold, including omitting convenience retail (previously proposed to constitute 30% of the proposed floor area) and significantly restrict non-bulky comparison goods retailing so that there is less competition and draw from the town centre to the Gateway North site for items such as home wares, clothing and health and beauty products for example.

98 The updated retail briefing note (dated April 2017) now reflects these changes. It applies a reduced sales density assumption to the proposed development - reflecting the change from unrestricted A1 comparison to bulky goods retail - and this is reflected in the estimate of 2021 comparison turnover of the proposed development which is reduced

from £27.87m to £14.18m. Based on the revised turnover figure, the applicant now shows that the estimated 2021 trade diversion from Swindon Town Centre would be £3.76m compared to £7.39m for the original proposal.

99 Previous concerns about some of the assessment's assumptions remain however:

- The application proposal is assumed to derive 22% of its 2021 expenditure from diverting spending from the internet but the realism of this assumptions is questioned;
- The assumption about 2016-2021 expenditure growth for the proposed development (+1.8% per annum) is below that of the study area as a whole and other centres (+2.9% per annum), reflecting a declining market share. If the consistent + 2.9% per annum assumption were to be applied to the proposed development, its 2021 turnover would be £14.96m. This assumption would increase the 2021 trade diversion from the town centre to £3.966m.

100 Comparison goods trade diversion of this magnitude could be significant in the context of Swindon Town Centre which is considered to be vulnerable, has experienced persistent vacancy, and the regeneration of which is a key focus of the Council's Local Plan. However, in light of the proposed restriction to bulky goods and the consequent lower degree of overlap, the impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre may be less than is indicated by the applicant's own assessment. Although the diversion of comparison expenditure from the town centre remains concerning, in light of the limited overlap in goods likely to be sold, whereby bulky goods retail shopping is often more car dependent, requires greater areas of floor space and is often a planned destination rather than impulsive, your officers would find it difficult to conclude that the impact upon the centre would be significantly adverse.

101 It is difficult to gauge the potential impact of the revised proposed development on town centre regeneration generally and investor confidence specifically. Complementing town centre regeneration is, as previously advised a core sustainable development principle under Policy SD1 (Sustainable Development Principles) of the Local Plan. Ostensibly the reduced expenditure diversion and reduced trade overlap would indicate a lesser potential for diversion of retail occupiers. However, the impact of the proposed development on investor confidence is difficult to quantitatively measure.

102 The Orbital District Centre is the closest District Centre to the application site and the applicant's agent's latest assessment projects that there would be impact upon the Orbital in terms of trade diversion of some -0.9% in 2021. The Swindon Retail and Leisure Needs Assessment (RLNA) shows that there is projected to be an oversupply of out of town comparison retail floorspace in Swindon by 2021 and both the RLNA and the Local Plan record that there has already been pressure for the relaxation of bulky goods restrictions and town centre retailers moving out of town to fill vacant units. In light of this, it could be that permitting the proposed development would indirectly lead to operators being drawn out of the town centre to other out of town locations which are not subject to bulky goods restrictions. However your officers have no evidence to demonstrate this assumption and could not recommend refusal of the application on the basis of any potential "domino effect".

103 In light of the central importance of town centre regeneration to the Swindon Local Plan, it is important that the Council errs on the side of caution in assessing the impact of proposals which could undermine those objectives. However with that in mind, the Committee should take careful account of the representations of town centre stakeholders and investors in assessing the potential impact of the scheme on town centre regeneration and investor confidence but given the assurances that a legal agreement can be reached that limits the scale and nature of goods that can be sold from the site, the proposed development provides a strong opportunity to support inward investment, particularly in an evolving growth area in north Swindon without substantially detrimentally impacting upon or competing with the town centre.

The Legal Agreement

104 In their letter dated 26 April 2017 in light of concerns about the type of retail that was being proposed at the Gateway North site, the applicant proposed the imposition of the following restriction on the range of goods that could be sold as a potential planning condition to any grant of planning permission:

“The retail units shall be used for the sale of bulky comparison goods and ancillary customer café(s) only and no other purpose including any other use within Class A1 (retail) and Class A3 (Restaurants and Cafe) of the Town and Country Planning (Use Class) Order 1987 (as amended). The premises shall only be used for the sale of goods consisting of:

- *DIY home products*
- *Garden centre products*
- *Furniture (excluding non-bulky domestic items unless ancillary)*
- *Carpets, floor coverings and tiles*
- *Lighting*
- *Beds*
- *Soft furnishings / textiles*
- *Electrical goods (excluding non-bulky electrical goods unless ancillary)*
- *Gas products*
- *Motor vehicle accessories and cycles (but not motorcycles)*
- *Office supplies & accessories (excluding non-bulky office supplies unless ancillary)*
- *Pets & pet products (unless the latter is ancillary)*
- *Bathroom fixtures and furnishings*
- *Kitchens and kitchen equipment*

Sales of the following items are specifically excluded:

- *Giftware (unless ancillary)*
- *Cookware (unless ancillary)*
- *Seasonal products (unless ancillary)*
- *Books and magazines (unless ancillary)*
- *Confectionary (unless ancillary)*
- *Home ornamental products (unless ancillary) Reason: To define the permission.”*

105 This was discussed with the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage and the Planning Manager and agreement has been reached in principle to a restriction on the type of goods that could be sold from the site in order to make the development acceptable in planning terms. However, in the first instance it is considered that the imposition of a condition is not appropriate. Whilst a condition restricting the types of goods for sale could initially form a blanket restriction over the entire site, individual retailers would have the ability under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to modify that condition and enable them as an individual unit to trade without restriction. Although any such application would be assessed on its merits, it is considered that the rationale behind the condition would be gradually eroded increasing the risks to the town centre in creating direct comparison retail competition. This issue is specifically referenced in the Swindon Borough Local Plan (paragraph 4.77) which states "*There will be continued pressure for more out-of-centre development of retail warehouses, and pressure to relax bulky goods conditions on existing retail warehouses in Swindon. It will be important to resist such pressure in order to protect the vitality of the town centre*". Therefore it is considered that such a restriction on the sale of items to predominantly bulky goods should be made by way of a legal obligation and that no planning permission should be granted without this binding agreement.

106 However in considering the proposed restriction as put forward by the applicant in order to balance their own investment interests against the wider public interest, your officers are in agreement with the main objectors to the application who represent the main town centre sites in that the suggested wording above lacks precision and may be too flexible. Therefore, as is set out in **Appendix 2** to this report, a more prescriptive wording is to be recommended based upon the Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose (COICOP) as suggested by DPP, planning consultants to The Brunel in paragraph 42, above although it must be emphasised that this is a draft list. This would provide a more detailed list of items that could and could not be sold at the Gateway North retail park and in the view of your officers will significantly reduce the potential for ambiguity.

107 It is important to also ensure that ancillary goods that may be sold from each of the five units are not proportionate in scale to a town centre retail unit that the sale of non-bulky goods either as an linked product to bulkier goods or retail concession within a larger host store does not bring the units into direct competition with town centre retailers. As the proposed units are very large, for example Unit A is 2,793sqm), the 'ancillary' sale of non-bulky electrical goods and non-bulky domestic items for instance could actually represent a significant area of tradable floor space devoted to selling these goods. Ancillary book sales in one of the proposed units could represent a larger floor area devoted to the sale of books than would several small town centre shops. The potential for a significant 'ancillary' floor area selling non-bulky items, and the difficulty of enforcing the 'ancillary' restriction, would undermine the effectiveness of the proposed restriction in reducing trade overlap with Swindon town centre. Therefore, as Swindon town centre is a vulnerable centre and impact upon it was a reason for objecting to the previous iteration of this application, it is considered that the wording of the restriction must be tightened by removing references to ancillary sales on non-bulky goods and considering the percentage of net retail floorspace that could be devoted to the sale of ancillary goods.

Accessibility

108 Paragraph 17 of the National Planning Policy Framework sets out a core planning principle to ensure that planning should *“actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are, or can be made sustainable.”* Paragraph 34 notes that *“plans and decisions should ensure developments that generate significant movement are located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised.”* Paragraph 37 later advises that *“planning policies should aim for a balance of land uses within their area so that people can be encouraged to minimise journey lengths for employment shopping, education and other activities”*. The above guidance is reflected through Local Plan policy SD1 which seeks new development to be “accessible by walking, cycling and / or public transport” and TR1 which seeks to create a sustainable transport network in the Borough.

109 Whilst the initial Planning and Retail Statement noted that the proposal is within easy walking distance of nearby residential areas, at a local scale this proposal does not represent the type of development that the present Aldi convenience store does as a place for nearby residents to fulfil their day to day shopping needs. The envisaged catchment area for the development encompasses much of Swindon’s urban area, all of which is within a ten-minute drive. However there is a bus stop within 400 metres away as the crow flies in Saltzgitter Drive which is within good proximity to the site, although access to it does require crossing Thamesdown Drive twice. Nevertheless, the Highways Officer does consider the site to be well located to provide access by foot, bicycle and public transport with illuminated footways, cycle ways and Toucan crossings being prevalent in the area. Again, bus stops are located within 400 to 500m of the site and provide links to residential catchment areas and the Town Centre.

110 There is no getting away from the fact that the proposed development will be a car dependant scheme. It is therefore once again essential that in order to support this proposal, only that type of bulky goods retail that by its very nature requires customers to make planned car based journeys could be supported rather than permitting as would have originally been the case a new out of town retail park offering the convenience of enabling customers to make trips to a relatively unrestricted retail destination in preference to existing designated centres and particularly the town centre by more sustainable means. Crucially however, whilst customers may be inclined or required to travel to the site as planned by car, employees at the various retail units do have other sustainable alternatives to cycle, walk or use public transport. On that basis, in addition to the bulky goods restriction clause within the legal agreement, the Highways Officer has requested that the development should be covered by an overarching Travel Plan which shall set targets for encouraging sustainable travel for staff.

Highway Matters

111 Access to the proposed retail park will be achieved by means of an existing point of access north of the Aldi store whilst a further access is proposed from the Harvester car park to the north for simultaneous access and egress by cars, although the Highways Officer suggests that the latter secondary access is not required in capacity or junction safety terms. However the car parking associated with the Harvester Restaurant was originally to comprise 65 spaces shared with a hotel that has never been realised which would now be shared by agreement with the retail park.

112 Based upon the submitted Transport Statement and traffic modelling, it is envisaged that the development will generate during the weekday highway network peaks in the region of 121 vehicles during the am (08:00-09:00) peak hour and 260 vehicles during the pm (17:00-18:00) peak hour with daily weekday flows totalling 3,355 vehicles. Saturday peak hour (10:00-11:00) is 563 vehicles with 3,754 daily vehicles. To put these figures in context, over 4,100 vehicles pass through the Thamesdown Drive junction with Cricklade Road in each weekday peak hour. It is confirmed that a 55% majority of the trips to the site are predicted to arrive via Thamesdown Drive which reaches a significant proportion of the residential dwellings of Swindon including those in West Swindon. 38% are predicted to arrive from the south via Cricklade Road or the A419, with 7% coming from the north via Lady Lane or the A419. The trip assignment for the horizon year 2026 also reflects the build out rate of the permitted residential development of Tadpole Garden Village, with an increase in trips from north Swindon and corresponding decrease in trips from south Swindon via Cricklade Road.

113 Therefore it is considered that despite the fact that the development will be predominantly car borne, although with measures in place to encourage cycling and the use of alternative modes of transport; including the requirement for a site wide staff travel plan, the above figures derived from database modelling will easily be incorporated into the existing highway network. Thirty-two bicycle spaces are to be provided, although there does not appear to be a separate long term cycle parking facility for staff. Nine motorcycle spaces are also proposed in a central part of the site that is easily accessible to all the retail units.

114 The Transport Statement addendum satisfactorily addresses the junction modelling. Signal Control Data was obtained from the Highway Authority and traffic flows from the strategic SATURN model. The industry recognised LinSig and Junctions9 modelling software have been used to undertake the individual junction assessments for the appropriate model scenarios of 2016 “Do Nothing”, 2016 “Do Something” (with development) and the same for the horizon year of 2026. The results show that the proposed development is unlikely to have any detrimental impact on the capacity of each of the junctions tested. The model scenarios enable the comparison between the effect of the development on the highway network now and in the future. Junctions already operating at or overcapacity remain as such but with a minor increase in the Degree of Saturation of the junction. These junctions are the A419 Southbound offslip with the B4019 (Cold Harbour), the B4019 with B5434 (Lady Lane) and the A419 Northbound off slip with B5434 (Turnpike). However the following junctions are predicted to operate with the development with significant spare capacity:

- Thamesdown Drive with Cricklade Road
- Thamesdown Drive with Latham Road and Thresher Drive
- Thamesdown Drive with Saltzgitter Drive
- Latham Road site access roundabout.

115 Highways England is now satisfied that the proposal will not have any adverse impact on the Strategic Road Network and recommends a condition pursuant to any planning permission. Highways England completed its review of the updated Transport Assessment submitted in March 2017 and subsequent working papers and agreed that surveys of existing retail parks at St. Margaret’s and Bridgemead Retail Parks in Swindon would be

the most suitable means in which to identify trip rates. They agree that a total of 66% development trips were identified as being new trips on the highway network with 34% diverted from other nearby retail areas. Following assessment of the applicants telephone survey involving interviews with members of the public within a 10 minute drive time of the site, it is accepted that the majority of trips would not require travel via the A419 and that based on the evidence the additional queues generated by the proposal at Gateway north would not constitute a severe impact on the A419 junction, but this is based on the assumption that the Tadpole Farm improvement scheme being in place.

116 It is therefore considered that although both Blunsdon Parish Council and Haydon Wick Parish Council have expressed concerns about whether roads in the vicinity of Turnpike Junction could cope with the anticipated traffic flows and shared concerns about the increase risks of accidents and congestion, the evidence provided has demonstrated that the development can quite satisfactorily accommodate the predicted demand that this development would generate.

117 The Highway Officer has given consideration to and has accepted the suitability of the on-site Swept Path Analysis details, tree protection, tactile paving and vertical engineering features such as kerbs and the need to provide a retaining wall to accommodate the ramp to the higher car park at northern edge of the site, together with safety features within the site such as "Give Way" sign provision at the junction to the delivery bays leading to the rear of units A to E. This provides clarity for all vehicles to the layout of the development. There are some concerns about the ability of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) to pass on approaches into and out of the service yard. However once well within the service yard there is considered to be space for HGVs to pass. The Transport Statement states that *'...the predicted frequency of vehicle movements would be sufficiently light and during quieter periods that it is unlikely that more than one vehicle will arrive at any one time...'*, however, the result of more than one vehicle accessing the service yard at the same time will be reversing HGVs which the Highways Officer advises should be avoided where possible and particularly avoided within public areas such as the main access to the site. A Delivery Management Plan is therefore recommended in the event that planning permission were to be granted to be implemented and controlled by the management company for the whole site.

118 Sixteen disability spaces are located around the site to the front of each of the units in groups of two or three. In addition to this, a total of 317 car parking spaces are proposed, with circulation routes through the car park providing two way circulation and manoeuvring aisles. The Council's adopted Parking Standards for this site equate to a maximum of 338 car parking spaces and a minimum of thirty cycle parking spaces. An Accessibility Discount of just eight per cent can be applied to the site based on its location and accessibility to other modes, resulting in a maximum parking provision of 311 spaces. Therefore it is considered that the provision as proposed is acceptable.

Design and Landscaping

119 As a purpose built out of town retail development, the proposal will consist of a block form of steel framed structures which is orientated to face west over an expansive area of surfaced car park. Since the original submission, it has been accepted that the location of the main part of the development on the eastern edge of the site will create a degree of enclosure and ensure that the development will respond positively as a composite and

interconnected form with the existing uses that have developed on a piecemeal basis on this site over the past 10 years. However this does result in the development turning its back onto Cricklade Road and potentially exposing the delivery areas, but this area will be screened in part by a 3 metre wide planting strip of native shrubs along the entire eastern and southern boundary.

120 There were concerns about the initial design which did not reflect the site's geographical credentials as a "gateway" to the town. The Urban Design Officer considered that as a gateway, the development should better communicate this status through improved massing and use of materials which would further enhance an identity and legibility emphasis for the development's prominent location. Consequently, whilst still being simple in form, the scheme has been improved to a degree modelling itself to an extent on the Mannington Retail Park in West Swindon and by increasing the height of Unit A to communicate more visual prominence. Given the scale and relative complexity of the development the Urban Design Officer had suggested that the scheme could have warranted referral to the Swindon Design Review Panel, but there was no appetite for this. Instead however, the applicant has heeded some of the design advice of officers and has sought to improve the quality of the development following the initial submission. Whilst increased uses of glazing on the frontage would be preferred and unit E could have a better relationship with the existing Aldi store through using similar materials, it is considered that on balance the quality of the development has been improved and that the layout, form and function of the development will be acceptable and will comply with Local Plan policy DE1 on High Quality Design.

121 The Urban Design Officer has recommended that the external space could better contribute to the creation of a social place in terms of providing better pedestrian access from Thamesdown Drive and the provision of potential dwell space through the creative use of street furniture, materials and public art installations, which would help contribute to securing a stronger identity for the site. However given that the proposal is not intended to form a new district centre or act as destination in its own right unlike the nearby Orbital Centre which provides food and drink, community facilities and other retail offers; rather a place to purchase bulky goods which would otherwise compete with other centres, a stronger degree of functionality needs to be retained across the site. The location of the delivery bay adjacent to Thamesdown Drive and Cricklade Road does render it difficult in safety terms to provide direct pedestrian linkages in these areas. However pedestrian access will be retained, provided and improved from the north of the site and from Latham Road to the west.

122 A consequence of an out of town retail park is that the car parking tends to cover a single expanse and generally does not represent an efficient use of land. Therefore it is important in design terms that the car park needs to be substantially broken up by robust and high quality landscaping. The applicant has now submitted any detailed planting plan with the scheme which indicates that the development will realistically deliver both trees and shrubs to be planted on this site.

Community Infrastructure Levy

123 The applicant's agent's planning statement has made reference to the fact that this proposal will be chargeable for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments for which the new St. Andrew's parish would benefit from a proportion of that charge. The

Planning Practice Guidance makes clear that “*Whether or not a ‘local finance consideration’ is material to a particular decision will depend on whether it could help to make the development acceptable in planning terms. It would not be appropriate to make a decision based on the potential for the development to raise money for a local authority or other government body.*” In the case of this application it is not considered that future CIL or business rates receipts (which are not a local finance consideration) could help to make the development acceptable in planning terms. They therefore do not satisfy the PPG criterion and are considered immaterial to determination of this application. However based on new out of town retail floor space at a charging rate of £100 per square metre the development will generate in the region of £700,000 in CIL contributions.

Concluding Comments:

124 Planning policy largely seeks to focus new retail development at existing centres with the priority under the Local Plan to attract such uses to Swindon’s Town Centre. There continues to be pressure for more out of centre development or retail warehouse development in Swindon and pressure to relax bulky goods conditions on existing retail warehouses. Such pressures therefore need to be resisted in order to protect the vitality and viability of the town centre and actively support and encourage its ongoing regeneration. The applicants have now accepted that an open retail use trading in non-bulky comparison items and convenience goods would not be acceptable and would go against both national and local planning policy.

125 On that provision that subject to the completion of a legal obligation to restrict the sale of goods at the site to bulky items only, albeit accepting some degree of ancillary sales, the applicants have now been able to demonstrate that there are no sequentially preferable sites available within the Borough and that the trade draw and competition with existing centres, particularly the town centre will not be as severe that it would undermine the role and function of those centres. In particular, the development trading in bulky goods only will not detrimentally affect the fundamental goal of the Council through its vision, priorities and pledges as enabled by the Local Plan and Central Area Action Plan to support its regeneration and increase its prosperity.

126 It is therefore essential to protecting the vitality and viability of the town centre, whilst continuing to attract a measured level of new inward investment and further employment opportunities that the wording of that legal agreement is robust and unambiguous to secure sustainable development at Gateway North without compromising the prospects for the town centres regeneration.

127 In agreeing that the principle of development is acceptable for a bulky goods retail park only, the development is considered to represent good design proportionate to its purpose and will not generate any adverse highway impacts through the use of appropriate conditions.

Recommendation

128 That the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage be authorised to GRANT planning permission subject to conditions and to amend, add or omit conditions as necessary, and subject to the satisfactory completion of a legal agreement in order to

restrict the sale of items to bulky goods only, with ancillary non-bulky goods and to secure a travel plan for the site.

Conditions

Three Year Time Limit

1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 (1) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.

Approved Drawings

2. This decision is in respect of:

- Transport Statement, dated 17 Mar 2016; Planning and Retail Statement, dated March 2016; Ecological Appraisal Revision A, dated March 2016; Sustainability Statement, dated March 2016; Flood Risk Assessment, dated March 2016 received by the Local Planning Authority on the 23rd March 2016.
- Supplementary Retail Report, dated June 2016 received on the 7th July 2016.
- Signage illustrations; revised Arboricultural Impact Assessment, dated March 2016 and Additional Supporting Information, dated 21 December 2016 all received by the Local Planning Authority on the 22nd December 2016.
- Revised Framework Travel Plan, revision A, dated 24.01.2017; Economic Benefits Infographic received on the 14th February 2014,
- Indicative Wall Detail (drawing number 10454SK0001, dated 17/02/17); received on the 14th March 2017.
- Revised Existing Site Sections (drawing number P(1)15A, dated 26/1/16); Revised Site Location Plan (drawing number P(1)01A, dated 15/3/16); Revised Site Context Plan (drawing number P(1)02B, dated 15/03/16); Revised Proposed Site Plan (drawing number P(1)04E, dated 15/03/16); Revised Existing Site Plan (drawing number P(1)03A, dated 15/03/16); Revised Proposed Roof Plan (drawing number P(1)05C, dated 15/03/16); Revised Unit A Floor Plan (drawing number P(1)06B, dated 26/01/16); Revised Unit A Elevations (drawing number P(1)07C, dated 26/01/16); Revised Proposed Context Elevations (Units A,B,C & D) (drawing number P(1)14C dated 26/01/16); Revised Unit B Floor Plan & Elevations (drawing number P(1)08B, dated 26/01/16); Revised Unit C Floor Plan & Elevations (drawing number P(1)09B, dated 26/01/16); Revised Unit D Floor Plan & Elevations (drawing number P(1)10B, dated 26/01/16); Revised Unit E Elevations (drawing number P(1)12B, dated 26/01/16); Revised Unit E Floor Plan (drawing number P(1)011B, dated 26/01/16); Revised Proposed Site Sections (drawing number P(1)16B, dated 26/01/16); Revised Design and Access Statement; Planning and Retail Statement Addendum, dated 26 April 2017; Retail Briefing Note, dated April 2017; Soft Landscape Proposals (drawing 1237-01 revision C, dated November 2016); Revised Site Section D-D (drawing number P(1)23A, dated 8/3/17); received on the 27th April 2017.

Reason: To define the scope of the development hereby permitted, in accordance with section 72 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Slab Levels

Prior to the commencement of works on site in connection with the development hereby permitted, details of the proposed slab levels of the building(s) in relation to the existing and proposed levels of the site and the surrounding land shall have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development hereby approved shall be constructed in accordance with the approved slab levels.

Reason: To ensure the details and appearance of the development is acceptable

Materials – Submit Details

Prior to the commencement of works on site in connection with the development hereby permitted, details of all external facing materials shall have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with these approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the development is satisfactory.

Surface Water Drainage Strategy

Development shall not begin until a surface water drainage scheme for the site has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is completed. The scheme shall include, but not be limited to:

- Evidence that the proposed flows from the site will discharge at or below greenfield runoff rates, or as close as practical for any areas that have been previously developed;
- Details of how the drainage scheme has incorporated SuDS source control techniques to manage water quantity and maintain water quality in accordance with best practice guidance including the latest SuDS Manual C753;
- Detailed drainage plan showing the location of the proposed SuDS and drainage network with exceedance flow routes clearly identified;
- Details to demonstrate the SuDS Scheme has been designed in accordance with best practice guidance including the latest SuDS Manual C753;
- Details of how the scheme shall be maintained and managed after completion;
- Details to confirm that any drainage systems offered for adoption will be designed to Sewers for Adoption 7th Edition and/or SBC Standards;
- Detailed drainage calculations for all rainfall events up to and including the 1 in 100 year plus climate change event to demonstrate that all SuDS features and the drainage network can cater for the critical storm event for its lifetime; and
- The submission of evidence relating to accepted outfalls from the site, particularly from any third party network owners.

Reason: To ensure development does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere

Waste Water Drainage Strategy

Development shall not be commenced until a waste water drainage strategy detailing any on and/or off site drainage works shall have been submitted to and approved by the Local

Planning Authority in consultation with the sewerage undertaker. No discharge of foul or surface water from the site shall be accepted into the public system until the drainage works referred to in the strategy have been completed.

Reason: The development may lead to sewage flooding. To ensure that sufficient capacity is made available to cope with the new development and in order to avoid adverse environmental impact upon the community.

Landscaping Scheme

Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby permitted, the approved landscaping scheme and planting schedule shall be accompanied by a timetable of works which shall have first been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved scheme shall be implemented as per the approved timetable. Any tree or shrub planted in accordance with the scheme which is removed, dies or becomes diseased within a period of five years from first being planted, shall be replaced by one of a similar size and the same species.

Reason: To ensure the appearance of the development is satisfactory.

Boundary Treatment Details

A plan indicating the positions, design, materials and type of boundary treatment shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This boundary treatment shall be implemented before the buildings are occupied and shall be retained in the approved form for so long as the development hereby permitted remains on the site.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of the area.

Detailed Design of Retaining Walls

Notwithstanding the submitted plans, prior to commencement of construction works detailed design of the retaining walls that are proposed shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and approved in writing and implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure a safe means of retaining the highway or land dedicated as highway.

A419 Slip Road Improvements

The development hereby approved shall not be brought into use unless or until the A419 northbound off-slip improvement scheme as shown on the Reuby & Stagg Ltd drawing number 14447/PA/1300/P2 and approved under planning application reference S/13/1567, has been completed in accordance with the Local Planning Authority's approval (in consultation with Highways England) and is open to traffic.

Reason: To mitigate against the impact of development traffic on the Strategic Road Network (SRN) and ensure the safe and efficient operation of the SRN is maintained.

Parking and Turning

The buildings hereby permitted shall not be occupied until the vehicular parking and turning and loading/unloading facilities have been provided in accordance with the submitted plan (drawing number P(1)04 Rev E, and those facilities shall be maintained available for those purposes thereafter.

Reason: To reduce potential highway impact by ensuring that adequate parking and manoeuvring facilities are available within the site.

Cycle Parking

The buildings hereby permitted shall not be occupied until secure and sheltered cycle storage facilities for a minimum of 30 bicycles has been made available in accordance with details to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority that accord with Swindon Borough Council's Parking Standards, and thereafter maintained.

Reason: To promote and encourage sustainable transport and travel.

Motorcycle Parking

Before the development hereby permitted is brought into use, secure parking facilities for 9no. motorcycles conforming to Swindon Borough Council's Parking Standards shall be completed in accordance with details and materials to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and shall be maintained thereafter.

Reason: To promote and encourage sustainable transport and travel.

Construction Method Statement

No development shall take place, including any works of demolition, until a Construction Method Statement has been submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The Statement shall:

- i. Specify the type and number of vehicles;
- ii. Specify point of construction access and access route to the site;
- iii. Provide for the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
- iv. Provide for the loading and unloading of plant and materials;
- v. Provide for the storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;
- vi. Provide for wheel washing facilities;
- vii. Specify the intended hours of construction operations;
- viii. Measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction.

Reason: to reduce the potential impact on the public highway during the site preparation and construction phases of development.

Delivery Management Plan

The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until a Delivery Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved Delivery Management Plan shall be adhered to thereafter. The Plan shall:

- i. Specify the type, number and frequency of vehicles that will serve the site;
- ii. Specify delivery route to and from each store, and;
- iii. Specify delivery times outside of store opening hours, or specify a method of delivery and customer control that reduces risk of collision between delivery vehicles and pedestrians if delivery during store opening hours is unavoidable.

Reason: To provide safe and suitable access for all and reduce the potential impact on the public highway.

Open Storage

No goods, plant, machinery or materials shall be deposited or stored, or articles displayed, or processes undertaken, outside any building(s) on the site.

Reason: To safeguard the visual amenity of the area.

Subdivision of Units

No retail unit hereby permitted shall be subdivided either vertically, or horizontally through the addition of any mezzanine to form any additional or separate retail unit or retail concession with a floor area of less than 750 square metres in gross floor area.

Reason: Any unit with a floorspace of less than the stated gross floor area will fail the sequential test and compete with retail units in designated centres.

Ancillary Uses

No ancillary use including any café / coffee shop facility shall trade outside the opening hours of the host retail unit.

Reason: In the interests of retaining the use of the development as a bulky goods comparison retail park only and to prevent ancillary uses from becoming a Class A retail destination in their own right.

Informatives

Wheel Wash in Winter

1 The weather will have an impact on construction sites which in turn will require roads to be swept in addition to using wheel washing facilities. Swindon Borough Council are on winter service alert for gritting roads around the Borough from mid-October to mid-April each year. The de-icing material used for road treatment by this council is Thorox. This material is rock salt treated with an agricultural by-product similar to molasses and has the advantage of being active on the carriageway for up to three days providing there is no substantial precipitation or sweeping. It is imperative that any salt removed from the treated network by sweepers clearing mud and debris is replaced straight away at a spread rate of 15 grams per square metre. Where a sweeper is used on the roads around the site subject to this development proposal, it is the developer's responsibility to retreat roads after washing or sweeping to ensure safety of road uses is maintained during the winter period. In order to assist with this retreatment, Swindon Borough Council's Highway Operations Team can provide a filled grit bin at a cost available on request for use by developers. It should be noted that once delivered the bin and its contents will be in the property of the developer. In the first instance, please contact the Duty Winter Service Engineer on 01793 466354 to discuss and confirm site specific requirements.

Retaining Wall

2 The proposed retaining wall will require the approval of the Local Highway Authority in accordance with Section 167 of the Highways Act 1980 and the applicant is required to submit plans, sections and specifications of the retaining wall for approval prior to construction works commencing.

Water Comments

3 Thames Water would recommend that petrol / oil interceptors be fitted in all car parking, washing and repair facilities. Failure to enforce the effective use of petrol / oil interceptors could result in oil polluted discharges entering local watercourses.

4 Thames Water will aim to provide customers with a minimum pressure of 10 m head (approx. 1 bar) and a flow rate of 9 litres per minute at the point where it leaves Thames Water's pipes. The developer should take account of this minimum pressure in the design of the proposed development.

5 Having reviewed the Flood Risk Assessment (dated March 2016), the applicant is requested to provide the drainage layout plan at a legible resolution, and to provide the pipe routes up to the points of connection to the public networks in Thamesdown Drive. The proposed greenfield runoff rate of 35 l/s for the 1 in 100 year storm return period for 2.5 hectares also raises capacity concerns. The public surface water network is designed to accommodate up to the 1 in 30 year storm return period and as a guide discharges are attenuated to 5 l/s/hectare, however more onerous constraints may be imposed to fit local circumstances.

Appendix 1

List of Town Centre Businesses which have objected to the application (See Paragraph 31) prior to the March 2017 amendments.

1. Regent Circus/The Parade Shopping Centre
2. RSPCA
3. Lazy Frog
4. Sewcraft Swindon Ltd
5. T4 Cameras
6. Cancer Research
7. Abes Cakes
8. The Gate
9. Phonexchange
10. Great Western Cameras
11. Iles Jewellers
12. HMV
13. Poundworld
14. Shoe Zone
15. T Reds
16. Robert Dyas
17. Helen & Douglas House
18. Prospect Charity Shop
19. Swindon Model Centre
20. Phone Fixers Ltd
21. Fillerz
22. Crunch Catering

23. Coal Grill and Bar
24. Sugar Celebrations
25. Giggles Swindon
26. Don Rogers Sports
27. Holmes Music
28. At The Hub
29. The Lock
30. Claire's Accessories
31. Shuropody
32. The Brunel Centre
33. PCH Business Support Ltd
34. Vince Ayriss
35. Holland & Barratt
36. Blue Banana
37. The Perfume Shop
38. Joban Newsagents
39. Reynolds Blinds
40. Paddy Power
41. The Flower Shop
42. E Vapor Electronic Cigarettes Ltd
43. Style Council
44. Healthy Lane
45. Nick Jones Hair
46. The Giant Party Shop
47. Groves Company Inn
48. The Gun Centre
49. Spot On Models & Games
50. Kiss Gyms Ltd
51. Pandora
52. Bodycare
53. Crystals
54. The Forum
55. CEX
56. The Entertainer
57. Ann Summers
58. Timpson
59. Supercuts
60. That's Entertainment
61. Card Factory (Brunel Plaza)

Appendix 2

Suggested Wording to Form Part of the Legal Obligation to Restrict Sales to Bulky Comparison Goods (draft)

See next pages

Appendix 2 – Suggested Wording to Form Part of the Legal Obligation to Restrict Sales to Bulky Comparison Goods (draft)

1. Subject to paragraph 3 of this Schedule not to use the land comprised in the said titles other than for the sale of bulky comparison goods (as defined in paragraph 2.1 of this Schedule) and one ancillary customr café only and for no other purpose including any other use within Class A1 (retail) and Class A3 (Restaurants and Cafe) of the Town and Country Planning (Use Class) Order 1987 (as amended).

2.1 The goods permitted to be sold pursuant to paragraph 1 of this Schedule are:-

Turley suggested wording	SBC suggested amended wording
DIY home-products	<p>Materials for the maintenance and repair of the dwelling Products and materials (such as paints and varnishes, renderings, wallpapers, fabric wall coverings, window panes, doors, plaster, cement, putty, wallpaper pastes) purchased for maintenance and repair of the dwelling, including (without limitation): small plumbing items (e.g. pipes, taps, joints), surfacing materials (e.g. floorboards, ceramic tiles) and brushes and scrapers for paint, varnish and wallpaper.</p> <p>Tools and DIY equipment for house and garden Tools and DIY equipment for the house and garden including (without limitation):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Motorized tools and equipment such as electric drills, saws, sanders and hedge cutters, garden tractors, lawnmowers, cultivators, chainsaws and water pumps; - Hand tools such as saws, hammers, screwdrivers, wrenches, spanners, pliers, trimming knives, rasps and files; - garden tools such as wheelbarrows, watering cans, hoses, spades, shovels, rakes, forks, scythes, sickles and secateurs; - ladders and steps; - door fittings (hinges, handles and locks), fittings for radiators and fireplaces, other metal articles for the house (curtain rails, carpet rods, hooks, etc.) or for the garden (chains, grids, stakes and hoop segments for fencing and bordering); - small electric accessories such as power sockets, switches, wiring flex, electric bulbs, fluorescent lighting tubes, torches, flashlights, hand lamps, electric batteries for general use. <p>But excluding: clothing and shoes.</p>
Garden centre products	Gardens, plans and flowers

Turley suggested wording	SBC suggested amended wording
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Natural and artificial flowers and foliage, plants, shrubs, bulbs, tubers, seeds, fertilizers, composts, garden peat, turf for lawns, specially treated soils for ornamental gardens, horticultural preparations, pots and pot holders; - Natural and artificial Christmas trees; - Garden furniture, garden ornaments and other garden features (such as water features); - Fences, walls and paving; - Insecticides and pesticides.
Furniture (excluding non-bulky domestic items) Beds lighting	Furniture (excluding non-bulky domestic items) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Beds, desks, sofas, couches, tables, chairs, cupboards, chests of drawers and bookshelves, occasional furniture and other items of bulky furniture; - Office furniture; - Lighting equipment such as ceiling lights, standard lamps, globe lights and bedside lamps; - Pictures, mirrors, sculptures, engravings, tapestries, reproductions of works of art; - Screens, folding partitions; - Base mattresses, mattresses, futons; - Bathroom cabinets and other bathroom fixtures; - Kitchens; - Baby furniture such as cradles, high chairs and playpens; - Blinds and curtains; - Camping and garden furniture. <p>But excluding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Non-bulky furniture and furnishings; - bedding and towels; - cookware, crockery, cutlery, kitchen utensils; - soft furnishings (such as cushions) and textiles; - ornaments and clocks; - carrycots and pushchairs; - works of art and antique furniture.
Carpets, floor coverings and tiles	Carpets, floor coverings and tiles
Soft furnishings / textiles	Items in this category are not bulky goods, so the category should be deleted.

Turley suggested wording	SBC suggested amended wording
Electrical goods (excluding non bulky electrical goods unless ancillary)	Bulky electrical goods Bulky electrical goods, including (without limitation) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Television sets, DVD players and recorders, television aerials of all types; - CD-players, stereo systems and their constituent units (turntables, tuners, amplifiers, speakers, etc.), - personal computers, visual display units, printers and photocopiers, - fans, heaters and air conditioning units, - telephones. But excluding: small electrical goods such as mobile telephones, personal stereos, software, DVDs, CDs, video games, video game consoles, toner and ink cartridges, calculators.
Gas products	Gas products and solid fuels
Motor vehicle accessories and cycles (but not motorcycles)	Motor vehicle accessories and cycles (but not motorcycles)
Office supplies & accessories (excluding non-bulky office supplies unless ancillary)	This is now included within the furniture and electrical goods categories.
Pets & pet products (unless the latter is ancillary)	Pets & ancillary pet products
Bathroom fixtures and furnishings Kitchens and kitchen equipment	These are now included within the furniture category. Kitchen equipment e.g. utensils, cookware, cutlery, crockery is not bulky.

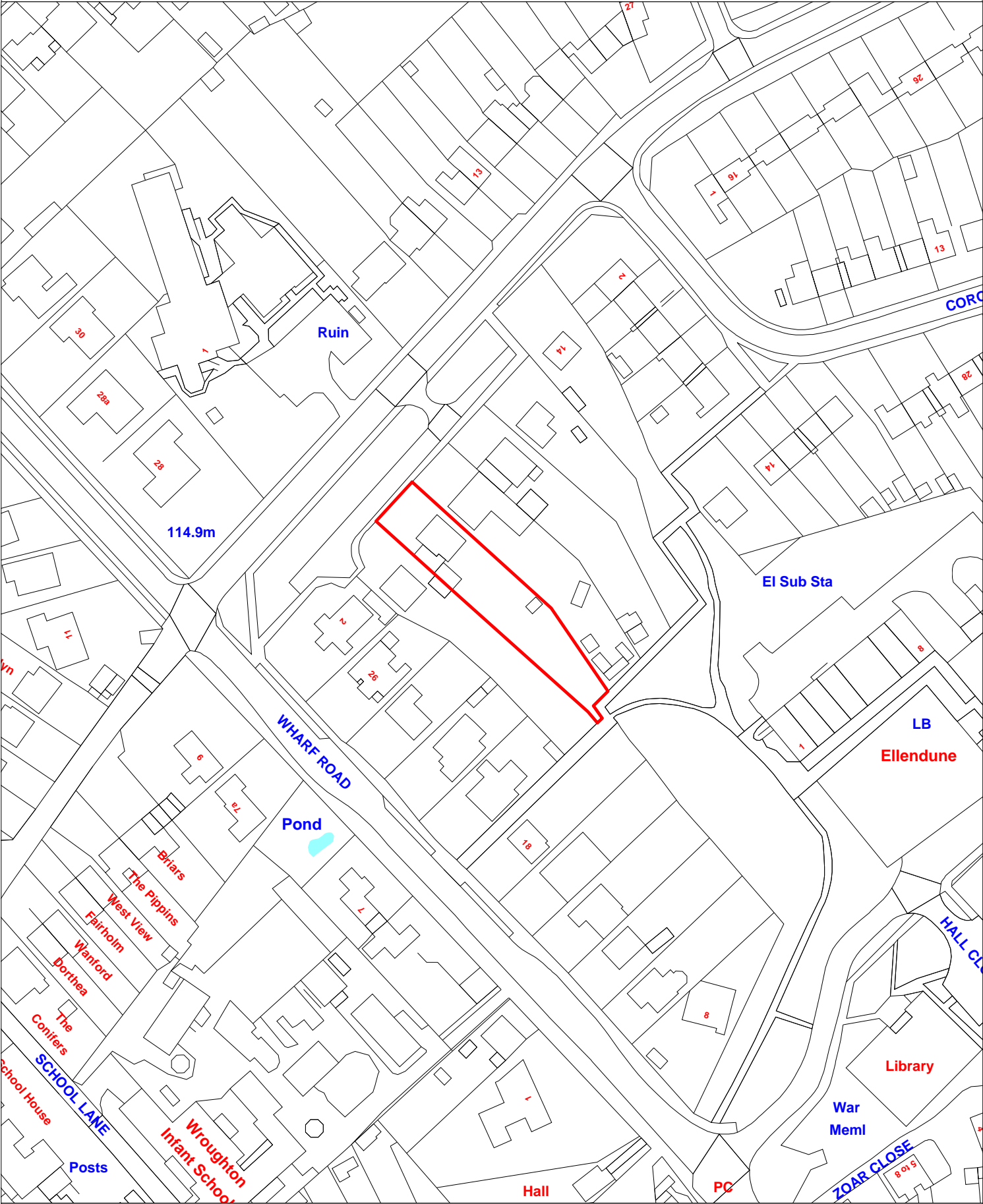
2.2 Subject to paragraph 2.3 of this Schedule sales of the following items are specifically prohibited:

- Giftware
- Cookware
- Seasonal products
- Books and magazines
- Confectionary
- Home ornamental products

2.3 Sale of any goods listed in paragraph 2.2 of this Schedule shall only be permitted if such sale:

- is ancillary to the sale of bulky goods listed within paragraph 2.1; and
- the floor space used for the sale of such ancillary goods (collectively) shall not in each of Units A, B, C ,D and E exceed 5% of the net floor space of that unit.

Erection of detached garage (Retrospective).
6 Perrys Lane Wroughton Swindon SN4 9AU



Erection of detached garage (Retrospective).

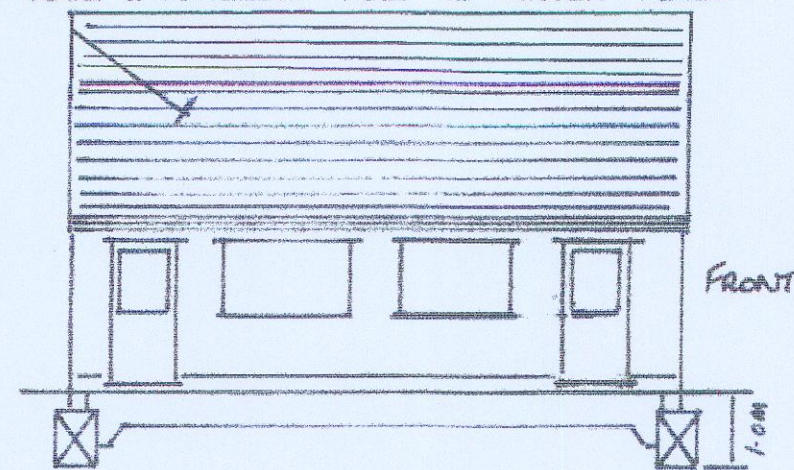
6 Perrys Lane Wroughton Swindon SN4 9AU



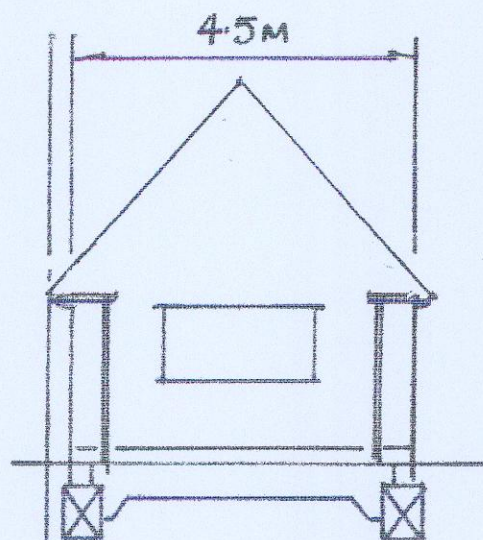
This Plan is for illustrative purposes only and is not intended to provide accurate representation of the development.
In all cases references should be made to the submitted plans.

NOTE:-

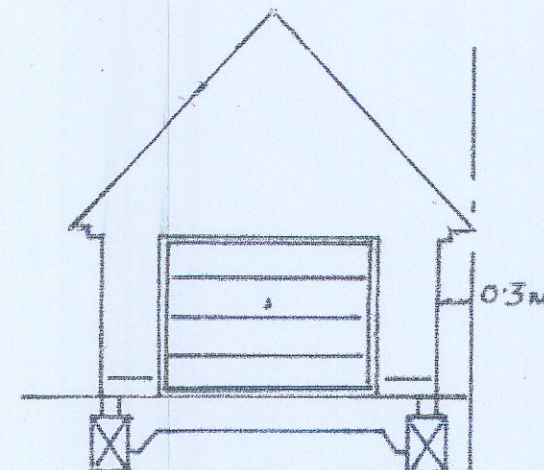
STANDARD RIDGE & CONCRETE TILES TO MATCH HOUSE



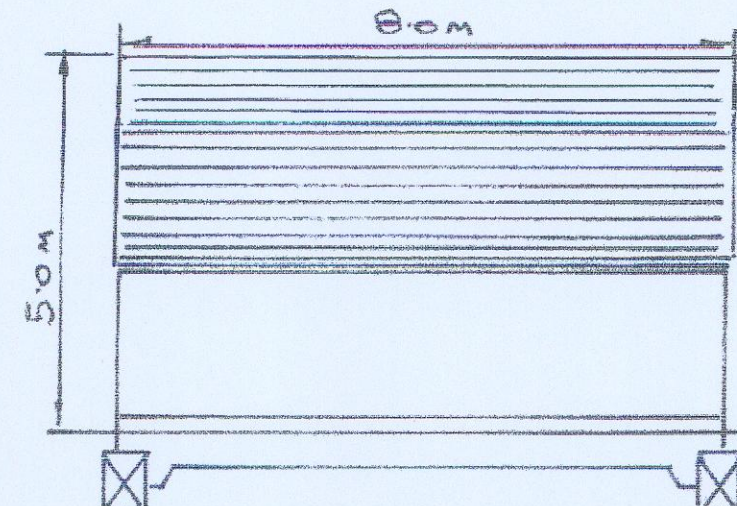
SIDE ELEVATION N-E



REAR ELEVATION S-E



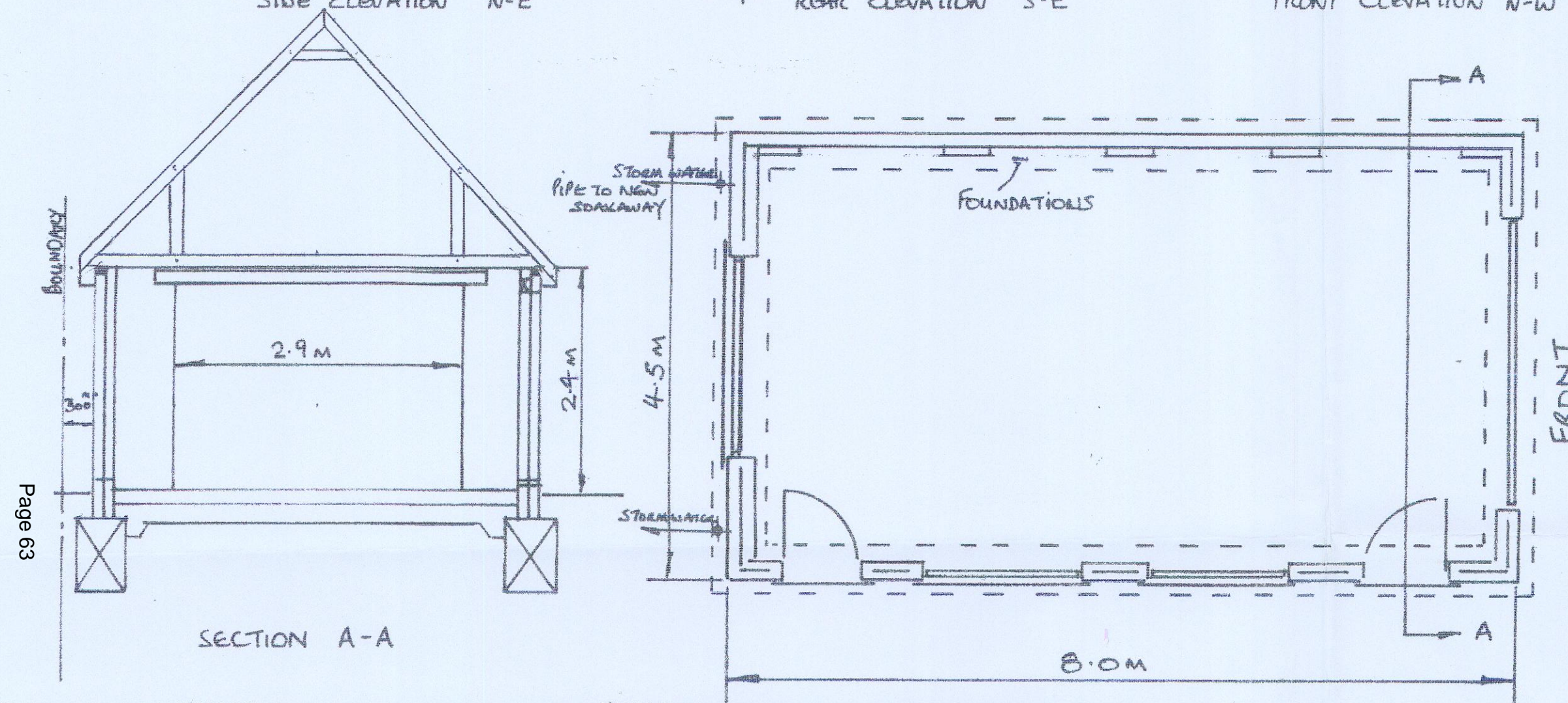
FRONT ELEVATION N-W



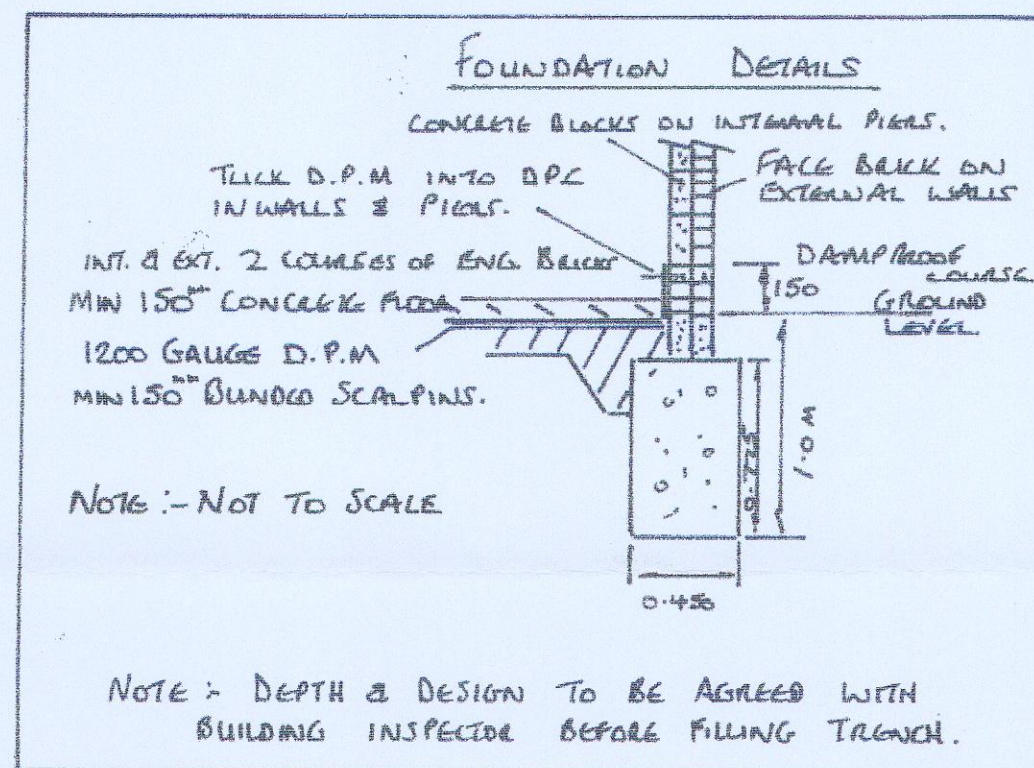
SIDE ELEVATION S-W

NOTE:- 1) ALL OPENINGS TO HAVE STEEL LINERS OVER.

2) ELECTRICAL CONSUMERS UNIT REQUIRED FOR LIGHTS & POWER SOCKETS.



SECTION A-A



NOTE:- DEPTH & DESIGN TO BE AGREED WITH BUILDING INSPECTOR BEFORE FILLING TRENCH.

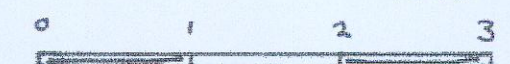
NOTES:

All dimensions must be checked on site and not scaled from this drawing.

SCALE BARS 1:100



1:50



1:200



A 26-4-16 INITIAL DESIGN

Date Revisions

©Copyright

Client

MR B. LEACH

Job Title

REAR SIDE GARAGE AT 6 PERRYS LANE, SN4 9AU.

Drawing Title SCALE
 • GARAGE EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS 1:100
 • GARAGE SECTION A-A 1:50
 • GARAGE PLAN VIEW. 1:50
 • SITE PLAN WITH PROPOSED BUILDINGS 1:200

Scale 1:100 1:50 1:200

Date 24.3.2017 Drawn by BL

Drg No. 10F1 Rev A

SWINDON BOROUGH COUNCIL
 29 MAR 2017
 S14011710576
 PLANNING DEPARTMENT





COMMITTEE REPORT

Item Number: 7
Application Number:
 S/HOU/17/0576/IH

Ward: Wroughton & Wichelstowe
Parish: Wroughton

Proposal: Erection of detached garage (Retrospective).

Site Location: 6 Perry's Lane, Wroughton, Swindon

Case Officer: Mr Ian Halsall

Agent:

Applicant
 Mr Ben Leach
 6 Perry's Lane
 Wroughton
 Swindon
 SN4 9AU

Officers Report

Background:

i Planning permission was granted on the 7th July 2016 (application number S/16/0859) for the erection of a front porch and detached garage. The construction work on the porch has been completed in full. A garage has been completed but has not been built in accordance with the approved plans. Following referral to the Planning Enforcement team a retrospective planning application for the garage has been invited. Wroughton Parish Council has requested that the application be brought before Planning Committee.

Summary of Recommendation:

1 That planning permission be GRANTED with Conditions.

The Proposal:

2 The proposed garage is rectangular in form with a dual pitched roof and front north-west and rear south-east facing gabled elevations. It measures 8 metres in length, 4.5 metres in width, has an eaves height of 2.4 metres from ground level and a ridge height of 5 metres. The garage is sited beyond the rear wall of the host dwelling within the back garden adjacent to the boundary of 4 Perry's Lane and is accessed via a recently repaved driveway. The structure has a up and over front garage door in the front north west elevation with two personnel doors and two windows on north east facing side elevation facing into the rear garden. There is a further window on the rear south east facing elevation. Although not

currently included on the submitted drawings, two rooflights have been installed into the north eastern roof plane facing into the garden and a revised plan showing these has been requested.

The Site and Surroundings:

3 The application site comprises a detached two storey dwelling located on the south eastern side of Perry's Lane close to the junction with Wharf Road. An access road serving this and 5 neighbouring properties runs parallel with the main highway. The property has a generous garden measuring some 65 metres in length and is set back from the edge of the access road by approximately 9 metres with the front garden area now forming a paved driveway. The garage replaced a previous structure on the boundary with number 4 Perry's Lane behind the host dwelling within the rear garden. Properties in Wharf Road are positioned at 90 degrees from those in Perry's Lane with 5 sharing a rear garden boundary with number 4 Perry's Lane.

Representations:

Parish Council

4 Wroughton Parish Council objects to the application as it exceeds the previously approved height of 4.2 metres. The Council requests that the Local Planning Authority take appropriate planning enforcement action.

Neighbours

5 No objections have been received from those neighbours who adjoin the application property were directly notified of the application. However one objection has been received from a resident representing 24 Wharf Road which does not abut the site but has views towards it from the rear of their property.

6 They comment that the Supplementary Planning Document states that detached garages and outbuildings should be confined to single-storey height so that they are clearly subordinate to the original dwelling and the residential setting in general with a ridge height limited to 4.2 metres. The ridge height is now 800mm higher with the guttering being higher than that of the adjacent two storey house and of a similar height to a number of bungalows in Wharf Road. Number 4 Perry's Lane is on a higher ground level to number 6 yet their garage is still approximately a metre lower. Due to the length and height of the building and the angle of the roof, the new side elevation gives views of a large bare surface area. The scale of the building could set a precedent and should not be permitted when a height restriction is supposed to apply.

Policy

7 Enshrined in planning law, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that in the determination of planning applications, regard must be had to the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

National Planning Policy Framework

8 In considering this application, regard has been had to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Paragraph 2 states that the Framework must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions. However, paragraph 12 confirms the primacy of an up to date Local Plan as the starting point for decision making.

Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026

9 The Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 forms a statutory part of the Development Plan for the Borough of Swindon. It was adopted in March 2015 and the policies therein are considered to be up-to-date and continue to carry significant weight in decision making. The relevant Local Plan policy that has been taken into consideration in reaching the above recommendation is policy DE1 - High Quality Design

Wroughton Neighbourhood Plan

10 The Wroughton Neighbourhood Plan was adopted or "made" in April 2016. Under the Localism Act 2011, this must be taken into consideration in the determination of planning applications within the parish. There are no policies within the Neighbourhood Plan that are directly relevant to householder development.

Supplementary Planning Documents

11 The Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document was adopted in October 2011 and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. Section 6 provides advice and guidance on detached residential buildings such as workshops, hobby rooms and garages.

Planning Considerations

12 The approved garage that was granted planning permission in 2016 has the same footprint dimensions as the structure now before committee. During its construction the applicant decided to include additional storage space within the roof of the building without first seeking the permission from the Local Planning Authority. This has led to the ridge height of the roof to be increased by 1 metre, the eaves height to increase marginally from 2.2 metres to 2.4 metres and the angle of pitch increasing from 40 degrees to 50 degrees. This increase in height subsequently led a complaint being made and an enforcement investigation taking place, in which this retrospective application was invited.

13 Local Plan policy DE1 requires developments to be of a high quality of design. In assessing this, regard must be paid in this instance to existing built characteristics and the orientation, scale, massing, materials and detailing of the structure. The Residential Extensions and Alterations Guidance helps to inform applicants and decision makers as to the design considerations that are required in order to meet the requirements of that local plan policy.

14 Section 6 of the guidance advises that all garages and ancillary buildings should be subordinate to the existing dwelling, be ancillary in use for domestic purposes for the exclusive enjoyment of that dwelling, that these should be single storey to a maximum ridge

height of 4.2 metres. The purpose for this is to ensure that such structures are clearly subordinate to the original dwelling and the residential setting in general. The guidance advises that a garage or outbuilding may not be acceptable where changes in level result in an over dominant building significantly higher than normal domestic single storey height relative to a neighbouring property.

15 Whilst the structure is clearly now higher than the recommended 4.2 metres, even though the building has been completed, it is important to consider whether in light of guidance the development is considered to represent poor quality design or causes demonstrable harm to the character of the surrounding area or amenities of nearby properties contrary to policy DE1.

16 The garage is located in close proximity to the host dwelling and is set well back into the site away from Perry's Lane. The property benefits from an expansive area of rear garden. The building is larger in scale than the adjacent garage within the rear curtilage of number 4, but whilst the neighbouring garage is shorter, it is on an approximately 1 metre higher slab level which does go some way to minimising the perceived greater dominance of the new structure.

17 Despite the increased height from 4 metres to 5 metres, some 0.8m higher than guidance recommends, the structure at this location is not considered to be so excessively dominant that it is out of scale with the host dwelling and neighbouring properties and it will remain as a subordinate element to the number 5 Perry's Lane that will remain ancillary to it. The building is of a scale and proportion common to many other domestic outbuildings especially garages in the local area and although the front of the structure is visible from Perry's Lane, it is well set back it is not considered to be incongruous or out of character given particularly that the materials match the main dwelling.

18 The building is visible from the rear parts of properties in Wharf Road, particularly numbers 20 to 28, but although large it retains the character of an ancillary domestic outbuilding remains in scale and proportion to the houses that front onto Perry's Lane and is not remotely sited from the dwelling further into the expansive rear garden where it could have a more imposing impact if it were to be isolated from its host building. Crucially, it is not considered that the building is harmful to the outlook of those properties in Wharf Road as it is a sufficient distance away and remains lower than the main dwellings.

19 In order to ensure that the building remains ancillary, although larger and benefitting from additional storage capacity within the roof, the roof space only accommodates limited headroom. A condition was previously imposed to ensure that the structure is retained as an ancillary part of the main house and that no trade or business or living accommodation would be provided within it. It is not considered that the building as completed would be suitable as a residential property, even as an annex to the host dwelling. However to prevent the building from taking on the character and appearance of a small house and in the interests of design, a further condition restricting the right to install any additional windows within the two gabled elevations and installing any further rooflights is considered justifiable for the development to be acceptable in planning terms.

Concluding Comments:

20 Although members will note that the works have been carried out, the local planning authority is still required to determine the proposal its merit. The physical presence of the building does allow members to make an objective assessment as to whether what has been constructed has materially harmful appearance and whether that if refused, adequate justification for rejecting it could be made at appeal. Your officers are not of this view and whilst the structure is taller than would have been preferred, this development does not conflict with policy DE1 and there are sufficient safeguards to ensure that the building remains in ancillary domestic use. It would not be in the public interest to pursue enforcement action as the Parish Council has requested as the building creates no overall harm in design and amenity terms.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

21 In accordance with the provisions of the Community Infrastructure Levy charging schedule, as the garage does not exceed 100 square metres in area, it is exempt from CIL Liability.

Recommendation

22 That planning permission be **GRANTED** with Conditions

Conditions

Approved Drawings

1 This approval shall be in respect of the site location plan and Drawing numbers 1 of 1 revision A, dated 24.03.2017 and received by the Local Planning Authority on the 29th March 2017.

Reason: To define the scope of the development hereby permitted, in accordance with section 72 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Ancillary / Garage Use

2 The garage / outbuilding shall be used only as an ancillary part of the main dwelling house and for the accommodation of private motor vehicles and no trade or business shall be carried on therein.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the area.

No additional windows or rooflights

3 Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 or any Order revoking and re-enacting that Order, no windows other than those hereby approved shall be formed in the north western (front) or south eastern (rear) elevations and no further rooflights shall be formed in either the south western or north eastern roof planes of the structure.

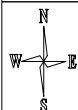
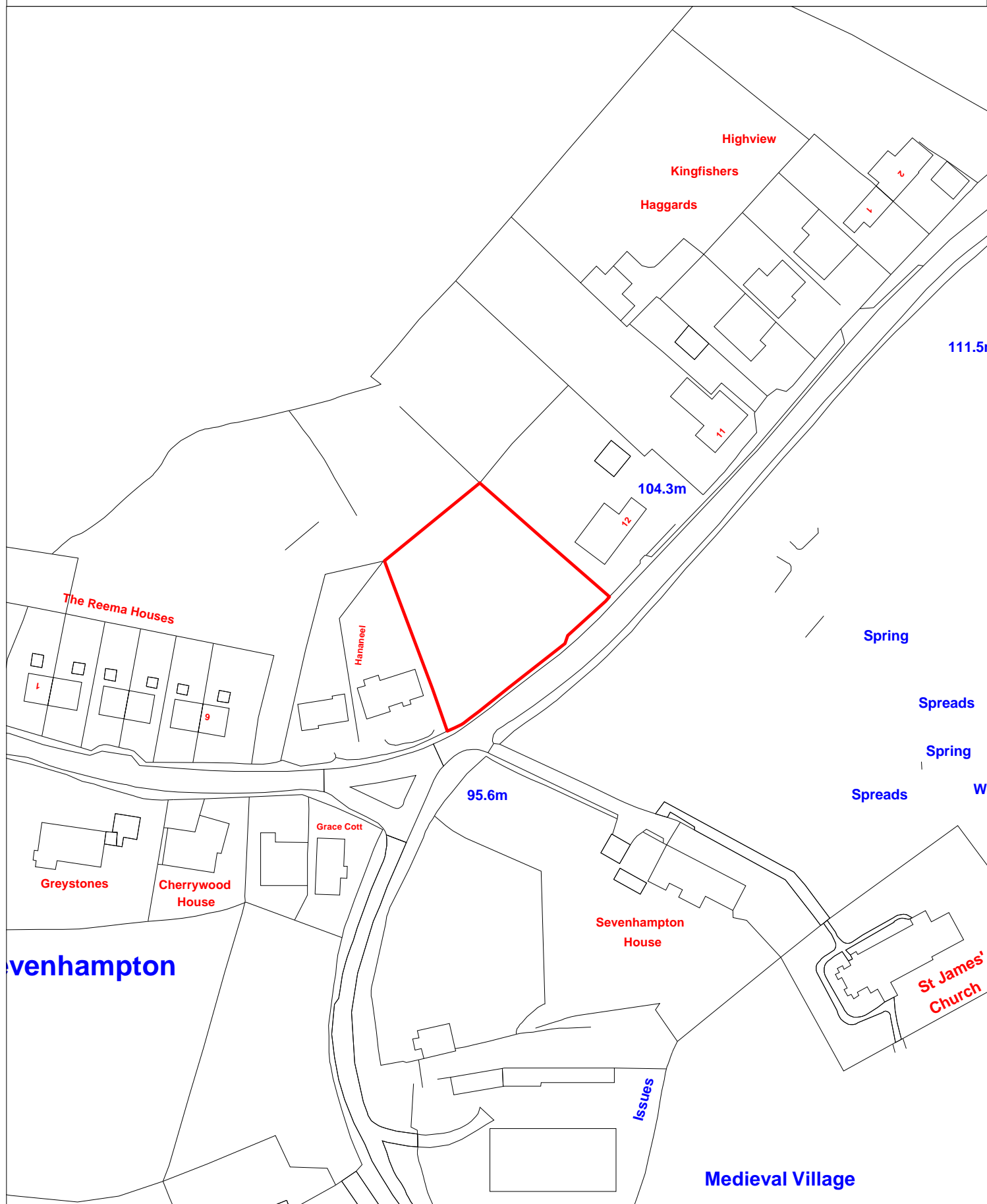
Reason: To maintain the ancillary appearance of the building in the interests of residential amenity.

Informatives

Whilst the development proposed generates a net gain in floor space, the development

proposed does not constitute CIL liable development and is exempt from CIL liability as the proposal falls under the definition of minor development for the purposes of calculating CIL liability as the proposed net gain in Gross Internal Area (GIA) of floor space is below 100 sqm.

End of Report



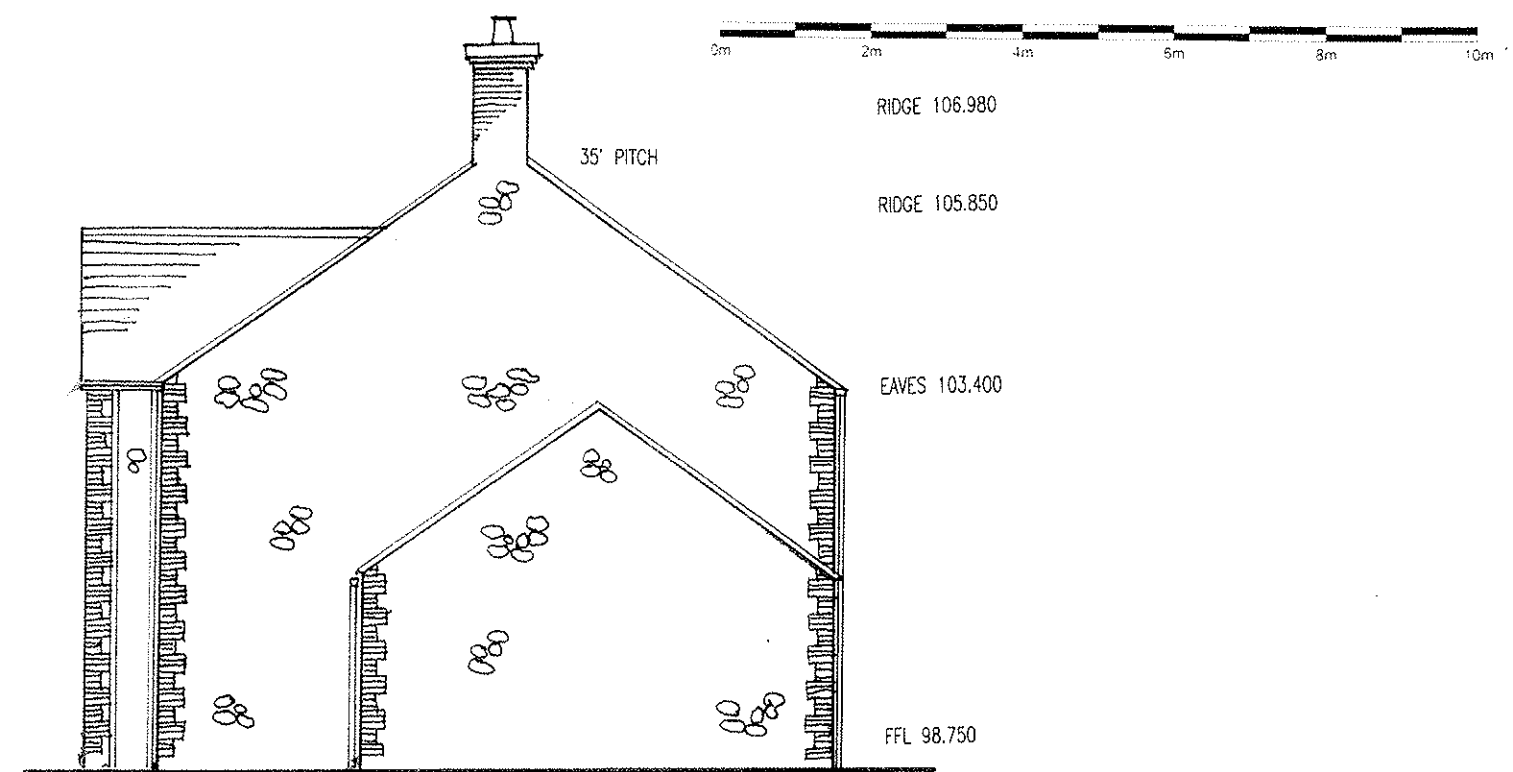
This Plan is for illustrative purposes only and is not intended to provide accurate representation of the development.
In all cases references should be made to the submitted plans.



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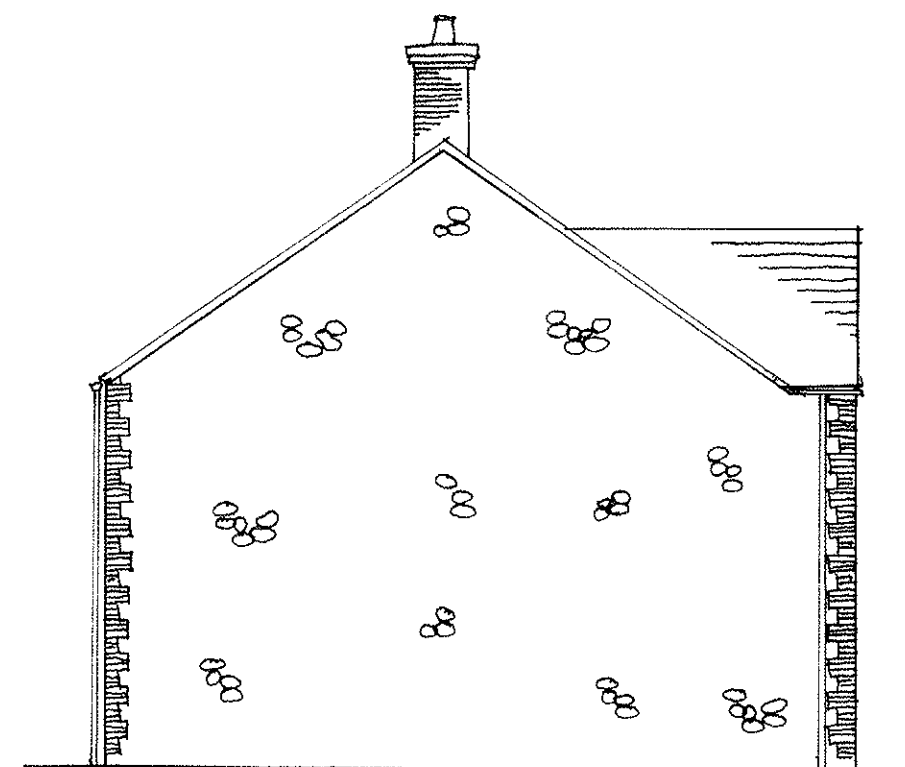
FRONT ELEVATION



SIDE ELEVATION



REAR ELEVATION



SIDE ELEVATION



LAND OPPOSITE THE CHURCH,
SEVENHAMPTON

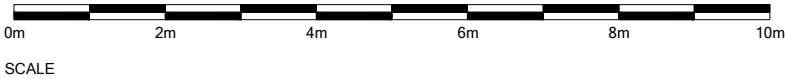
PROPOSED ELEVATIONS
PLOT 1

Dwg No: SH-EV-01 C

Scale: 1:100 @ A3 Date: 27/01/2017

Drawn By: KP Checked By: JS

Elmstone Court, Upper Minety, Malmesbury, Wiltshire, SN16 9PR



FRONT ELEVATION



REAR ELEVATION



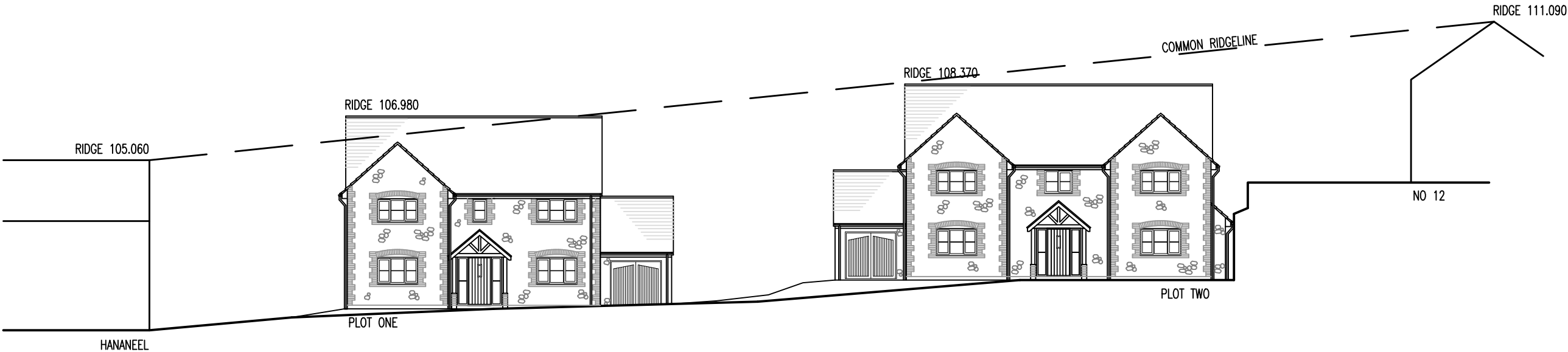
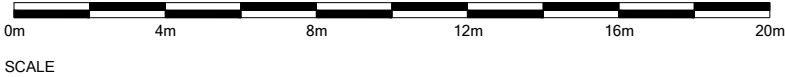
Chris James Homes

**LAND OPPOSITE THE CHURCH,
SEVENHAMPTON**

PROPOSED FRONT & REAR
ELEVATIONS - PLOT 2

Dwg No:	SH-EV1-02	A
Scale:	1:100 @ A3	Date: 24/01/2017
Drawn By:	KP	Checked By: JS

Elmstone Court, Upper Minety, Malmesbury, Wiltshire, SN16 9PR



**LAND OPPOSITE THE CHURCH,
SEVENHAMPTON**

STREET SCENE

Dwg No: SH-SS-01		-
Scale: 1:200 @ A3	Date: 10/02/2017	
Drawn By: KP	Checked By: JS	
Elmstone Court, Upper Minety, Malmesbury, Wiltshire, SN16 9PR		

COMMITTEE REPORT

Item Number: 8

Application Number: S/RES/17/0324/RM

Ward: Blunsdon And Highworth

Parish: Highworth

Proposal: Erection of 2no. dwellings (Reserved matters from previous permission S/OUT/16/0811).

Site Location: Land Adjacent To Haneneel, Sevenhampton Lane, Sevenhampton

Case Officer: Rhian Morris

Agent:

Mr Daniel Drayton
Old Bank House
5 Devizes Road
Old Town
Swindon
SN1 4BJ
UK

Applicant

Mr Jon Slattery

c / o Agent

Officers Report

Background

This application has been called to planning committee by Councillor Bishop, because of the planning history and the Parish Council as they think it should be approved as they cannot see a reason for a refusal.

1 Summary of Recommendation

That planning permission be Refused

2 The Proposal

2.1 The proposal is for the all reserved matters to be approved for two dwellings to the east of Hananeel, Sevenhampton. The reserved matters include access; appearance; landscaping; layout and scale.

2.2 The two houses include plot 1, a 4 bedroomed two storey house with kitchen/diner, lounge, study and attached garage this property measures 11m by 9.9m. Plot 2, is for a 4 bed house with breakfast room/kitchen; family room, lounge; study; playroom. There is an attached single garage. This proposal measures 8.5m tall and 13.3m by 14.2m with the garage.

3 The Site and Surroundings:

3.1 The site is located within Sevenhampton Conservation Area and is situated

between the property Hananeel and no. 12 Sevenhampton Lane and immediately adjacent to the road. The site is approximately 0.16ha and has an upward slope which runs south-west to the north east of the site. The site is undeveloped with a low stone boundary wall with mortar capping with walls curved inwards at the entrance at approximately a metre high. The land has an agricultural appearance with an unkempt appearance which appears to have not been actively managed by grazing or similar and is overgrown.

3.2 The village is surrounded by open countryside, mainly in agricultural use, with Wrag Barn golf course to the north west of the site and Roves Farm visitor centre a local tourist attraction. The main (Highworth) road runs east-west through the village. There is a road that heads to the Roves Lane situated opposite the south eastern corner of the proposal site from a grassed 'triangle' junction. These roads reflect the historic street pattern and contribute positively to the areas character and appearance. Immediately opposite the proposal site (south of Highworth Road) are the earthwork remains of a medieval village, now deserted, a designated scheduled monument.

3.3 To the east of the proposed site is a property no. 12 defined a being of local significance making a positive contribution to the areas character and appearance. This is a heritage asset as defined in the NPPF, it conforms to the linear street pattern and is constructed in local vernacular materials of natural stone and red brick. Its location and siting follows the natural topography and is elevated from the proposal site ensuring its high visibility within the village context.

3.4 The proposed site also reinforces the rural character and appearance and provides a north-south green spine from the countryside to the north through to the SM interrupted only by the road bounded by stone walls. The gap afforded by the proposed site is apparent when travelling north, towards the site from the direction of Roves Farm, reinforcing the rural context and character and also highlights the prominence of no. 12.

4 Representations

4.1 Transport Management: Original Plans:

Concerns were raised about visibility splays; vehicle tracking; parking; access construction; retaining wall and drainage.

Revised plans:

The highway concerns have been overcome, no objection subject to a condition attached to the planning permission.

4.2 Landscape Architect:

The landscape drawings do not tally as fully as they should, lack adequate detail and include many inadequately resolved details. These matters need addressing by the applicant.

No issues with the arbocultural report and the indicated protective fences.

The plan for plot 2 shows a retaining wall to be constructed along the north eastern edge of the plot that will pass through the RPA and very close to T5, a cherry tree, in contravention with the tree protection plan. This is not acceptable.

Care should also be taken with the proposed post and rail fence between the two

plots where it passes through the RPA of the sycamores in G4.

Revised plans: Concerned that the planting plan does not acknowledge, let alone accurately plot, the existing trees on or overhanging the site, at least one of which is a TPO. Neither does the planting plan indicate the location of the protective fencing that is detailed in the Arboricultural report that accompanied the outline application. It is important that all relevant drawings tally and have continuity and in my opinion the location of existing trees and the protective fencing necessary to protect their RPA should be included on a planting plan. In the circumstances the planting plan cannot stand in isolation.

4.3 WCC Archaeological officer: no comments in relation to this proposal.

4.4 Conservation Officer: Original scheme

The site is within the Sevenhampton Conservation Area which was designated in 1990 and updated in 2006. A conservation area is designated heritage asset as outlined in annex 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The main consideration in assessing this application is the effect of the proposal upon the character and appearance of the designated conservation area, upon setting of the listed buildings and setting of building of local significance.

The relevant development plan Swindon Local Plan policies include EN10 - Historic Environment & Heritage Assets and DE1 - High Quality Design, echoing the legislative requirement and national policy in the NPPF. Comments on the pre application highlighted a number of significant concerns with regard to the proposed development. The advice given at pre application stage has not altered in response to the fully submitted scheme, thus:

The overall scale and massing as presented are not harmonious in respect of the street scene and character and appearance of the conservation area. The proposed properties appear out of scale and dominating. The overall presented ridge height at 8.5 metres, is still significantly higher than the properties adjacent (e.g. Hananeel is shown to be approximately 7 metres and number 12 is also 7 metres).

The proposed footprint and depth of plan of the properties is disproportionate. The siting of the properties ensures high visibility of this uncharacteristic and dominant proposal, being highly prominent and, for example on junction of Roves Lane and from along the (pedestrian) access to the grade II listed Church etc opposite.

The submitted documents appear to highlight a significant lowering of the existing land form (especially at the NE side) and necessitates the need for a significant retaining walls (one seemingly approximately 2+ metres) on the eastern side.

Comments on the revised scheme: Many of the original comments remain. Not aware of public benefits that outweigh the harm identified to the areas character and appearance. The aspirations of the applicants to build these properties is understood but it does not provide any public benefit. A lesser form of development could be provided which would be less harmful. Overall the proposed development would

contribute further to uncharacteristic development with the development appearing very urban negatively affecting the rural character and appearance, which would have a harmful impact upon the setting of the heritage assets and the highly sensitive and visual nature of this part of the conservation area.

4.5 Urban Design Officer:

Character & Context:

The footprint and block scale for plot 2 is larger than the neighbouring properties. This does not reflect the two storey scale typical of the dwellings in the locality.

Form:

The building scale and height for both plots need to convey a similar pattern to better respond the surrounding built form.

The architectural style and built form should offer similarities to best integrate and reinforce the existing context. The materials proposed for doors, windows and garages should be simple, yet traditional. The quality of materials is a design consideration and the colour, texture and scale of materials should respond to the context and character of the setting.

Function and Amenity:

The façade for No.12 facing plot 2 is not regarded the rear of the development, it does contain numerous windows and patio space, which should be appreciated.

The height of the proposed stone wall to the side of both plots should better reflect the height of the retained stone wall and therefore should be below 1.8m.

4.6 Highworth Town Council Comments: Recommend acceptance.

4.7 N The Woodpeckers: Original comments

Concerned about the height of the building on Plot 1. It is not clear what the difference in height will be between our properties - The Woodpeckers (but referred to as Haneneel in this proposal). A street scene was requested, whilst a plan has been provided which appears to indicate some figures, this does not cover the height of our property in which to make an informed decision.

Given the proposed height of the property, together with the increase in height from the rising slant of the hill, this will put our property in the shade.

Currently enjoy views of the church and Grade II Sevenhampton House from our back garden which will be replaced by a high wall and roof of Plot 1. We have been generally supportive of this piece of land being developed to fill in the gap in the village, this should not be to the detriment of our property or the village is a whole.

- The planting plan appears to make no allowance for the existing trees that currently exist on the border.

Comments on revised plans remain as above.

5 Planning History:

T75/0360 - 4 dwellings (outline) Granted.

T75/0429 - dwelling (reserved matters) approved

T86/0130 - Erection of a dwelling (outline) - Granted
S/00/0948 - Erection of a dwelling - withdrawn
S/00/2320 - Erection of a Dwelling GRANTED subject to conditions October 2000 - not implemented, now expired.
S/OUT/14/1922 - Erection of two dwellings - Withdrawn
S/OUT/16/0811 - Outline Planning application for 2no. dwellings with all matters reserved – Sept 2016 GRANTED.

6 Planning Considerations

Context

6.1 The application is for the reserved matters application following the granting of outline planning permission (S/OUT/16/0811), for the construction of two detached dwellings, on a greenfield site between Hananeel and no. 12 Sevenhampton Lane, which is part of the Sevenhampton Conservation Area. The village of Sevenhampton does not have a settlement boundary. The site is also within the Highworth Neighbourhood Plan area.

6.2 The Swindon Borough Local Plan was adopted by Swindon Borough Council 2015. The Swindon Borough Local Plan is now part of the Development Plan for Swindon. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

6.3 The relevant policies are:

SD1 - Outlines principles to enable sustainable development, includes the principles for development to be of high quality design and the conservation and /or enhancement of the built and historic environments.

DE1 - High standards of design are required for all types of development any proposal needs to look at the context and character of the existing built characteristics, acknowledged features of importance and existing site conditions. Additionally, need to look at the layout, form and function of the development.

HA1 - looks at the mix type and density of any development.

EN5 - Development will only be permitted where the landscape and historic landscape are protected.

EN10 - The historic environment shall be sustained and enhanced including all heritage assets including buildings, conservation areas, landscape and archaeology.

Principle of Development

6.4 The principle of development for two houses on this site has been agreed, outline planning permission has been granted for two houses on this site (S/OUT/16/0811) in September 2016 and now need to consider the reserved matters, the detailed design.

Heritage Assets

6.5 In decision making 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the decision maker to have special regard to the desirability of preserving any building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Section 72 requires that special

attention is paid to desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.

6.6 These duties are reflected in section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which sets out the government's policies on the historic environment. It requires that in considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation and where a development proposal will lead to (less than substantial) harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

6.7 The site is adjacent to Sevenhampton Lane and there is a significant change in levels with the land rising north and north-eastwards from where it meets the road. The location and topography ensures the sites high visibility and prominence within the Sevenhampton Conservation Area (SCA). The land level to the east rises significantly where it adjoins the adjacent property, no. 12 situated significantly higher than the proposal site and the road and is highly visible. Number 12 to the east of the proposed site is a building of local significance, making a positive contribution to the areas character and appearance.

6.8 Immediately opposite the proposed site (south of Highworth Road) are the earth works remains of a medieval village, now deserted. These are designated as scheduled ancient monument (SM). It encompasses a large area east and west of the road that heads southwards towards Roves Farm. The SM also includes the land occupied by the Church. The land and the presence of the earthworks make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the designated conservation area and reflect the historic development of the village. It also affords a spacious and open setting to the Church of St James and Sevenhampton House which are two of Sevenhampton's listed buildings. The proposal is contrary to policies ENV5 and EN10 of the Swindon local plan as, the design has not taken into account the historic environment and the adjacent Heritage assets ie the Conservation Area and the building of local significance.

6.9 Swindon Local Plan Policy DE1 requires high quality design standards for all types of development. Proposals for development should address the objectives of sustainable development through high quality design and place making principles. These principles include those relating to context and character including regard to existing built characteristics; acknowledged features of importance; and existing site conditions. In addition layout, form and function of the development, in respect of siting, orientation, scale, massing, materials and detailing.

6.10 It is acknowledged that through the grant of outline permission, the principle of erecting two dwelling sat this site is established, however, given the scale massing and appearance of the development the scheme is considered to be out of character and officers have sought to negotiate a more appropriate scheme that is more in keeping and results in less harm. Overall the proposed development would contribute further to uncharacteristic development with the development appearing very urban, negatively affecting the rural character and appearance. Having a harmful impact upon the setting of the heritage assets and the highly sensitive and

visual nature of this part of the conservation area.

6.12 The overall scale and massing as presented are not harmonious in respect of the street scene and character and appearance of the conservation area. The foot print shows an exceptionally large (deep) plan form, 12.5m, and a ridge height of 8.5m. This is much larger and taller than the adjacent properties. The effect of the deep plan form has resulted in a shallow roof pitch. These factors ensure proposed dwellings that appear, in this context incongruous and out of character. The vernacular is not respected unlike the suggestion put forward by the applicant at the outline stage

6.13 The submitted documents appear to highlight a significant lowering of the existing land form and necessitate the need for significant retaining walls. Which will result in a considerable amount of earth moving proposed to achieve the proposed scale of dwellings. The submitted scheme results in an urbanisation of the conservation area.

6.14 It is considered that this development, exacerbated by its elevated siting and prominent elevations would cause adverse harm to the character of the conservation area and would fail to preserve its character or appearance and fail to preserve the setting of nearby listed buildings and the setting of a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The development is therefore contrary to Policies DE1 and ENV5, EN10 of the adopted Swindon Borough Local Plan and the provisions of NPPF.

Access

6.15 Access is proposed to be from the main road, which is subject to 30mph speed limit. There is shown to be sufficient space within the site for 4 car parking spaces for each dwelling and includes a garage for each dwelling.

Landscape

6.16 The arboriculture report supplied identifies two sycamore trees on the north-west corner of the site that are considered worthy of retention. It is suggested that these could be retained, if permission were to be granted and a condition could protect these.

Agent's comments on the scheme

6.17 Landscape and leisure consultation response: Protective fencing has been shown on the tree survey report. Due to the sewer easement cannot provide a planting nor a wall between the two properties. The bin store has been relocated away from the front of the buildings.

Urban design response:

6.18 It was suggested to the agent that the applicant was considered by the Swindon Design Panel, as other contentious schemes have been, however the agent was not supportive of this approach and "we consider that the current proposals are appropriate for the site and the surrounding context".

6.19 It is considered that both plots are a suitable size within the surrounding context and built form. The frontage of the site is so open to allow for vehicle tracking /

movement. It is considered that the height and scale of the proposed plot 2 will shade amenity space for no.12 and the impact could be reduced if the scale of plot 2 was reduced, the agent considers that the plot is a suitable size in the surrounding context

Conservation officer comments:

6.20 The agent states that the proposals will not have a negative impact on the character and appearance of the designated conservation area – consider that the development will enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area as the new dwellings are set alongside existing modern dwellings. The scale and massing of the properties is considered to be a suitable size within the surrounding area. The proposal as it stands result will in the urbanisation of the rural area and the conservation area, to its detriment. It is considered that the development will enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area as the new dwellings will be set aside existing modern dwellings. The materials will be natural materials including natural stone and natural roof slate.

7 Conclusion

7.1 Following lengthy discussions with the applicant, the advice offered by officers has not been accepted and the proposal remains for two very urban and bulky dwellings in the conservation area and this rural location.

7.2 The proposed development of two dwellings would contribute to uncharacteristic development in the village and with the development appearing urban, negatively affecting the rural character and appearance. It is considered that this would have a harmful impact upon the character and appearance of the conservation area and the setting of other designated heritage assets. The duties of the Act are reflected in Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and specifically paragraph 132 notes that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. Furthermore paragraph 134 states that 'where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal'.

7.3 Policy EN10 echoes these statutory tests and the NPPF in requiring that proposals for development affecting heritage assets shall conserve and where appropriate, enhance their significance and setting and development in the vicinity of a listed building, shall not be permitted where there will be an adverse impact on those elements which contribute to their special architectural or historic significance including their setting. The proposed dwellings will neither conserve nor enhance the affected heritage assets

Permission be REFUSED:

Reasons for Refusal

1 The proposed design of the dwellings results in a development that fails to reflect the local vernacular and rural distinctiveness, preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area or preserve the setting of the listed building to the detriment of the visual amenity and is contrary to Policies DE1, EN5 and EN10 of the adopted Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 and the NPPF.

Informatives

1.This refusal is in respect of drawings;

SH-PL-01 C

SH-EV1-02 C;

SH-EV2-02 C

SH-ML-01 B;

SH-S2-01 A;

SH-S1-01 A

Plant Plan;

C785/01 rev D;

C785/02 rev C

C785/03 rev C

C785/04 rev B;

Multi mat;

Ground Reinforcement;

File note dealing with SBC highway comments; received 25th April 2017

SH-LP-01 location plan;

Design and access statement received 22 Feb 2017 .

2. This development proposal constitutes Community Infrastructure Levy 'CIL' liable development. CIL is a mandatory financial charge on development. For more information on CIL visit www.swindon.gov.uk/cil or telephone the SBC CIL Team on 01793 466289 or 466397 or email cil@swindon.gov.uk. To avoid additional financial penalties the requirements of the impact of CIL must be managed before a development is commenced and subsequently payment made in accordance with the requirements of the CIL Demand Notice issued. CIL would remain relevant in the event that planning permission were allowed by planning appeal.

New Eastern Villages Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document (NEV GI SPD)

Planning Committee

Date: 11th July 2017

Author: Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage

Parish / Wards Affected: All, but particularly those in the east of the Borough

1. Purpose and Reasons

- 1.1 To inform the Planning Committee to the responses received to the public consultation on the draft 'New Eastern Villages Green Infrastructure' Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
- 1.2 To seek approval to adopt the SPD, as modified in light of the consultation responses, and thereby use it as a material consideration for the determination of planning applications at the New Eastern Villages.
- 1.3 The SPD provides further guidance on the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026, in particular Policies NC3 and EN1. It seeks to ensure development at the NEV protects and enhances existing green infrastructure, and also provides and designs green infrastructure to integrate with the existing green corridors as identified on the Local Plan Policies Map.
- 1.4 The SPD, in conjunction with the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 seeks to contribute to the Council's Strategic Objectives, and will help to deliver the Council's Vision, and priorities and pledges. In particular it will assist in the delivery of Council Priority One: Improve infrastructure and housing to support a growing, low-carbon economy.

2. Recommendation

That the Planning Committee:

- 2.1 Adopts the 'New Eastern Villages Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document' (NEV GI SPD) as at Appendix 1 to this report, and to make it publically available in accordance with the arrangements detailed at paragraph 7.1 of this report;
- 2.2 Authorise the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage, in consultation with the Director of Law and Democratic Services, to make minor amendments to the content of the documents, prior to publication.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Angela Clack, New Eastern Villages Planning Team, Planning Department, Direct Dial 01793 466370, azclack@swindon.gov.uk

New Eastern Villages Green Infrastructure

Supplementary Planning Document (NEV GI SPD)

Planning Committee

Date: 11th July 2017

3. Detail

- 3.1 At Planning Committee of 14th February 2017, the draft NEV GI SPD was approved for public consultation. The public consultation was held between 20th February and 3rd April 2017. A total of 28 responses were received, generating over 270 comments. This included a number of supporting comments, in particular the positive intention to deliver a comprehensive GI network across the NEV.
- 3.2 The NEV GI SPD has been amended to reflect changes following consultation and respondents were informally engaged as part of this process.
- 3.3 A Statement of Consultation setting out a summary of comments received and officer consideration of those comments can be found at Appendix 2 of this report. The key changes proposed to the NEV GI SPD are:
 - 3.3.1 A review of the Illustrative NEV GI Masterplan and illustrative maps to improve clarity, consistency including the presentation and annotation of maps.
 - 3.3.2 Amendments to reflect partnership working from the Woodland Trust and the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust.
 - 3.3.3 Removal of Table 1 and 2 and all text related to the Landscape Visual Impact Assessment.
 - 3.3.4 Amendments to ensure consistent references to local plan policy and other NEV and GI related documents.
- 3.4 Approval is now sought to formally adopt the SPD as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and other relevant statutory provisions. Once adopted, the NEV GI SPD will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications for all relevant, (particularly strategic) development proposals within the NEV. It will help to secure the delivery of GI in a holistic and coordinated way, providing a multitude of benefits to existing and new communities.

Context

- 3.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2012) states Local Planning authorities should set out a strategic approach in their Local Plans, planning positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure. (para. 114)

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Angela Clack, New Eastern Villages Planning Team, Planning Department, Direct Dial 01793 466370, azclack@swindon.gov.uk

New Eastern Villages Green Infrastructure

Supplementary Planning Document (NEV GI SPD)

Planning Committee

Date: 11th July 2017

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- 3.6 The NPPF defines green infrastructure as “*a network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities*”.
- 3.7 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) acknowledges that the preparation of a Green Infrastructure (GI) framework or strategy can assist in planning positively for GI, and should be based upon an assessment of current GI provision and identify opportunities for improvement. The PPG continues to add:
- “Local Plans should identify the strategic location of existing and proposed green infrastructure networks. Where appropriate, supplementary planning documents can set out how the planning, design and management components of the green infrastructure strategy for the area will be delivered”* (para: 029 Reference ID: 8-029-20160211).
- 3.8 To ensure a comprehensive approach to GI in relation to the strategic allocation of the New Eastern Villages a Green Infrastructure SPD has been prepared with the intention of informing pre-application discussions; assisting with the formulation of masterplans; and guiding planning applications and future delivery. The NEV GI SPD supports the Council’s Corporate vision and pledges, the core principles of the Local Plan, and the stated objectives of the NPPF.
- 3.9 Policy NC3 of the adopted Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 (Local Plan) allocates a new mixed use development of about 8,000 new homes with associated employment, education, retail and leisure uses to the east of the A419¹, referred to as the New Eastern Villages (NEV).
- 3.10 As part of delivering comprehensive development at the NEV, Policy NC3 seeks to ensure the delivery of an integrated and connected network and green spaces. Policy NC3 states:
- “The form of the development shall comprise a series of new inter-connected distinct villages and an expanded South Marston village defined by the network of green infrastructure corridors.”*
- 3.11 The policy also requires the provision of:
- “an extensive green infrastructure network which should maximise opportunities for habitat connectivity and enhanced biodiversity including extending the River Cole green infrastructure corridor and connecting with Nightingale Wood,” and “sports and leisure facilities, including playing pitches”.*

¹ Including Rowborough and South Marston Village expansion, north of the A420

New Eastern Villages Green Infrastructure

Supplementary Planning Document (NEV GI SPD)

Planning Committee

Date: 11th July 2017

- 3.12 In accord with other policies in the Local Plan (EN1, EN2, EN3, EN4, EN5, EN6, EN10 and EN11), development at the NEV should:
- 3.12.1 Protect, integrate and enhance biodiversity, including the River Cole Corridor and River Cole Meadow County Wildlife Sites;
 - 3.12.2 Protect, acknowledge and enhance the historic environment, including the Scheduled Monument, Earls court Manor, Great Moorleaze Farm and other Listed Buildings; and
 - 3.12.3 Protect and safeguard a route for the Wilts & Berks Canal.
- 3.13 GI will play a key part in delivering sustainable transport links; mitigating impacts of the NEV on landscape character and views from the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB); and minimising any potential for flood risk.
- 3.14 The already adopted NEV Planning Obligations SPD sets out the GI requirements that will be delivered at the NEV, as detailed in Policy NC3. The NEV GI SPD identifies the GI required to achieve a comprehensive network; to be delivered at the strategic and local level. In particular, this includes green routes and green corridors, a nature reserve, outdoor sports facilities (including playing pitches delivered through sports hubs), allotments, children's play space and general recreational areas that are within easy walking and cycling distance from each new village.

GI Principles and Content of the SPD

- 3.15 In accord with the Local Plan, GI is defined as a network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities. In Swindon this includes country and town parks, a wide range of major and local open spaces, outdoor sport facilities including playing pitches, children's play space, allotments, semi-natural greenspaces including woodlands and water bodies, trees and hedgerows, biodiversity sites and scheduled monuments and other nationally important archaeological sites. These are also known as open space 'typologies'.
- 3.16 GI is essential because it provides many social, economic and environmental benefits close to where people live and work, and can:
- 3.16.1 Connect and enrich biodiversity habitats and ecological networks;

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Angela Clack, New Eastern Villages Planning Team, Planning Department, Direct Dial 01793 466370, azclack@swindon.gov.uk

New Eastern Villages Green Infrastructure

Supplementary Planning Document (NEV GI SPD)

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- 3.16.2 Enable the provision of education and visitor facilities to improve access and opportunities for recreation and tourism;
 - 3.16.3 Contribute to the health and wellbeing of the residents of Swindon;
 - 3.16.4 Enhance landscape character and respect local distinctiveness;
 - 3.16.5 Help meet the challenges of climate change; and
 - 3.16.6 Realise the potential of historical and cultural heritage features to contribute to local identity and sense of place.
-
- 3.17 There is significant opportunity to deliver a well-designed network of inter-connected green spaces across the NEV, reflecting a broad range of GI typologies that are multifunctional and accessible to all.
 - 3.18 The NEV GI SPD Vision is inextricably linked to the NEV Planning Obligations SPD providing further necessary detail on the delivery of open space and GI within and around the development islands, to be delivered through planning obligations. The provision of each GI typology is in accord with the requirements detailed in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) for the NEV.
 - 3.19 The SPD outlines the 'GI Key Principles' and thereby inform applicants what is expected of them. It also provides an open space 'calculator' to determine the quantum of open space generated by residential development, and how it should be provided locally both within the context of the individual new villages and strategically in delivering an extensive permeable and connected GI network across the NEV as a whole.
 - 3.20 On this basis, the NEV GI SPD aims to be concise approach to the delivery of GI for the NEV with a 'Leisure Lifestyle' where outdoor activity is both locally available from your doorstep and integrated into daily life.
 - 3.21 Through well-designed GI, the NEV can be a flagship example of delivering sustainable development objectives and support the promotion of healthy and active lifestyles. This is particularly important in the context of enabling people to live longer and healthier lives and thereby reducing the demand on health care resources.
 - 3.22 The delivery, implementation and monitoring of GI will be guided by the GI Vision and the Illustrative NEV GI Masterplan as detailed in each of the chapters of the SPD:
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Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Angela Clack, New Eastern Villages Planning Team, Planning Department, Direct Dial 01793 466370, azclack@swindon.gov.uk

New Eastern Villages Green Infrastructure

Supplementary Planning Document (NEV GI SPD)

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- 3.22.1 **Landscape Character** - to deliver a net gain in landscape character, all homes will be connected by high quality and distinctively designed GI networks to mitigate adverse impacts on, and loss of, landscape character and features. This includes the positive role that the Great Western Community Forest (GWCF) can achieve to landscape setting through the delivery of community woodland projects.
- 3.22.2 **Biodiversity** - to live within close proximity to habitat networks including flood meadows, managed jointly for wildlife and farming, to conserve protected species.
- 3.22.3 **Green Routes** - to live within close proximity to tranquil green routes managed for multiple travel modes, provide direct links to schools, local centres, employment and Swindon Town Centre.
- 3.22.4 **Recreation, Sport & Play** - to live within close proximity to free adventurous play opportunities for young children and teenagers. These are to include both informal natural opportunities as well as formal equipped play facilities.
- 3.22.5 **Art, Heritage, & Education** - to live in a village where public art, heritage, architecture and parks and open space all work together to create a distinctive village character, identity and educational setting and resource.
- 3.22.6 **Water Management** - to ensure water is conveyed and controlled through shallow above ground conveyance systems mimicking the natural drainage features of the site, as part of an attractive, playable, and sustainable landscape.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 The Council could delay adoption of the NEV GI SPD and choose to rely solely on the Local Plan policies, and NEV Planning Obligations SPD to guide the detailed delivery of GI at the NEV. The Local Plan sets the strategic policy framework for Swindon but these alone is not considered adequate to ensure all aspects of the GI vision at the NEV can be delivered, managed and secured in a phased and co-ordinated manner.
- 4.2 Delay to the adoption and publication of the NEV GI SPD is likely to prejudice the Council's ability to establish a comprehensive planning framework to guide the nature and quality of development at the NEV to the detriment of the proper planning of this strategic development. This would result in uncoordinated delivery of GI across the NEV allocation as a whole and at the individual village level.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Angela Clack, New Eastern Villages Planning Team, Planning Department, Direct Dial 01793 466370, azclack@swindon.gov.uk

New Eastern Villages Green Infrastructure

Supplementary Planning Document (NEV GI SPD)

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5 Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

- 5.1 The financial implications arising from adoption and publication of the NEV Green Infrastructure SPD are to be met from the Planning budgets for 2017/2018.
- 5.2 The financial implications of coordinating the Council's approach to delivering an extensive GI network across the NEV are significant. The delivery of GI in advance and as an intrinsic element of development at the NEV will reduce the risk of the burden to the Council to fund additional infrastructure or maintenance costs required by new developments from its own budgets.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 5.3 Legal and Human rights implications have been considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that the contents of this report are compatible with convention rights.
- 5.4 In preparing the NEV GI SPD, the Council has complied with the statutory procedures for the preparation and adoption of an SPD as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and other relevant statutory provisions.

All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.5 There are no staffing implications arising from this report.
- 5.6 The Council has a duty to ensure that the preparation of the NEV GI SPD is in accordance with the sustainability principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 5.7 The NEV GI SPD conforms to the policies in the Local Plan which has already been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating SEA and Health Impact Assessment (HIA) to ensure that the impact of proposals can be minimised with the least negative impact possible.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.8 The NEV GI SPD conforms to the policies in the Local Plan which has already undergone a Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) and no negative impacts were predicted. Notwithstanding this, a specific DIA has been updated and is available alongside the SPD.

Further information on the subject of this report can be obtained from Angela Clack, New Eastern Villages Planning Team, Planning Department, Direct Dial 01793 466370, azclack@swindon.gov.uk

New Eastern Villages Green Infrastructure

Supplementary Planning Document (NEV GI SPD)

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Date: 11th July 2017

Risk Management

- 5.9 Delaying the process of SPD adoption carries less risk in the short term, but much higher risk over the medium to long term, particularly in terms of comprehensive delivery and implementation of GI across the NEV including appropriate protection and mitigation of existing GI assets. This would result in the lack of adequate tools necessary through the Planning System to uphold the detailed aspects of the policy and the Council's strategic objective to deliver sustainable development at the NEV.

6 Consultees

- 6.1 The Director, Resources (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

7 Next Steps

- 7.1 If Planning Committee agrees to adopt the NEV GI SPD, it will be printed as soon as reasonably practical. Copies of the SPD will be distributed to the Borough's libraries and the Borough's Town and Parish Councils. The document would also be made available for inspection at the Civic Offices and will be available on the Council's website.

8 Background Papers

- 9.1 Appendix 1 - New Eastern Villages Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document including the Illustrative New Eastern Villages Green Infrastructure Masterplan (May 2017)

Appendix 2 - Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document - Statement of Consultation (June 2017)

The accompanying Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA), all colour maps and the summary of Comments and Officer Responses will be available on the Council's Website.

Swindon - New Eastern Villages (NEV)

Green Infrastructure

Supplementary Planning Document

July 2017

Contents

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 - Planning at all spatial scales
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- 3 Delivering GI at the New Eastern Villages (NEV)
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 - Water and Climate Management
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Figure 1: NEV Illustrative Masterplan (Adopted October 2016)

Figure 2: Illustrative Existing Landscape Character

Figure 3: Proposed Community Woodland Areas

Figure 4: Illustrative Proposed Landscape Character

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Figure 15: Illustrative New Eastern Villages Green Infrastructure Masterplan

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Figure 17: Rowborough Village

Figure 18: Upper Lotmead Village

Figure 19: Lotmead Village

Figure 20: Lower Lotmead Village

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Figure 22: Foxbridge Village

Figure 23: Great Stall East Village

Figure 24: Great Stall West

Table 1: Woodland areas

Table 2: Types of Cycleway

Table 3: South Marston Village GI Obligations

Table 4: Rowborough Village GI Obligations

Table 5: Upper Lotmead GI Obligations

Table 6: Lotmead Village GI Obligations

Table 7: Lower Lotmead Village GI Obligations

Table 8: Redlands Village GI Obligations

Table 9: Foxbridge Village GI Obligations

Table 10: Great Stall East GI Obligations

Table 11: Great Stall East GI Obligations

1 Introduction

- 1.0.1 Following the adoption of the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 (the Local Plan) in March 2015, it has become necessary to provide more detailed advice and guidance on the relevant planning policies that relate to the delivery of green infrastructure at the New Eastern Villages (NEV).
- 1.0.2 Policy NC3 of the Local Plan identifies the NEV as a strategic allocation to deliver about 8,000 new dwellings, 40 hectares of employment, a new secondary school, new primary schools, retail, health and community facilities. The policy requires a comprehensive approach for dealing with the development of the NEV, including the provision of infrastructure necessary to create a sustainable development as required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Purpose of the document

- 1.0.3 Green Infrastructure (GI) is vital for all of us. The design and arrangement, quality, richness, and maintenance of green spaces can lift a development out of the ordinary into a special place; a unique destination to visit, and a fun and enjoyable place to live, work and spend leisure time. Across the NEV there are many opportunities for the delivery of a wide range of open spaces that are well designed and integrated at every village, and which respond positively to the local landscape character area to create an extensive network of GI.
- 1.0.4 This document sets out the strengths and opportunities for GI that can be realised at the NEV, detailing options to facilitate the delivery of an integrated, multi-functional GI network. The development has the potential to deliver over 300 hectares of GI providing an integrated network across the site. The strategy will seek to fulfil the full range of open space provision required, responding positively to the landscape and the topography of the area whilst maximising opportunities for the existing and new communities. GI will be delivered in a creative, innovative, and sustainable way which is engaging, promoting enjoyment and the well-being for all, in the context of the development requirements and partnership working across a range of public and private sectors.
- 1.0.5 The delivery of GI cannot be achieved in isolation, therefore partnership working will be essential to achieving an extensive network that is accessible for all.
- 1.0.6 On this basis, the SPD provides a robust framework for securing the delivery of GI generated by development in the NEV. It sets out in detail the Council's approach to the provision of GI related to development at the NEV, providing further explanation of the principles established by Policy NC3, in particular to provide:

“an extensive green infrastructure network that maximises opportunities for habitat connectivity and enhanced biodiversity including extending the River Cole green infrastructure corridor and connecting with Nightingale Wood”

1.0.7 The SPD explains the Council’s adopted policy basis to:

- Identify the strengths and opportunities to deliver an extensive GI network across the NEV, including:
 - o open space provision in accord with the need generated by residential development;
 - o consideration of landscape, biodiversity, and archaeology factors;
- Secure planning obligations for GI requirements in the NEV in accordance with Policy NC3 and other relevant policies in the Local Plan and the adopted NEV Planning Obligations SPD;
- Engage with all interested parties to encourage partnership working and help deliver management and maintenance solutions for the long term sustainability of GI.

1.0.8 The SPD will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications for all development proposals within the NEV site boundary as shown on the approved Illustrative Masterplan (October 2016).

1.0.9 This SPD relates to the GI required for the delivery of about 8,000 dwellings, as specified in Policy NC3. However, in the event that the number of dwellings exceeds 8,000, there will be a need to consider any additional GI requirements. On this basis, the Council will make amendments to the NEV IDP¹ and the level of contribution required. The NEV IDP review will be undertaken in consultation with delivery partners and stakeholders, and any update will be subject to statutory period of public consultation before being presented to Planning Committee for adoption by the Council.

What is GI?

1.0.10 GI consists of a strategic network of accessible, multifunctional sites (including parks, woodland, informal open spaces, nature reserves and historic sites) as well as linkages such as river corridors and floodplains, wildlife corridors and greenways. These contribute to people’s well-being, and together comprise a coherent managed resource responsive to evolving conditions (dRSS for the South West, 2006).

¹ Infrastructure Delivery Plan (adopted as Planning Obligations SPD in October 2016)

- 1.0.11 The National Planning Policy Framework defines GI as “a network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.”
- 1.0.12 Furthermore, Planning Practice Guidance (PPG, 2016) states that GI is not simply an alternative description for conventional open space. As a network it includes parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, but also street trees, allotments and private gardens. It can also include streams, canals and other water bodies and features such as green roofs and walls (Paragraph: 027 Reference ID: 8-027-2160211).
- 1.0.13 On this basis, all open space of public value will form an integral part of the GI network at the NEV. A range of typologies can be provided ranging from formal sports pitches to open areas within a development, linear corridors and country parks.
- 1.0.14 GI can provide health and recreation benefits to people living and working nearby and have an ecological value. GI is an important part of the landscape and setting of the built development, and an important component in the achievement of sustainable development (NPPF, para 6-10).
- 1.0.15 PPG acknowledges that the preparation of a GI strategy can assist in planning positively for GI and should be based upon an assessment of current GI provision and identify opportunities for improvement (Paragraph: 029 Reference ID: 8-029-20160211).
- 1.0.16 Swindon’s GI policy framework is detailed within the Local Plan 2026 and is supported by Swindon’s “A Green Infrastructure Strategy for Swindon 2010-2026” (2011).
- 1.0.17 In particular the GI Strategy provides an integrated framework for the protection, creation and management of existing green infrastructure, biodiversity sites and other environmental assets. The policy context is expanded further in Section 2 of this document. The policy framework has informed the GI vision for the NEV.

The Importance of GI

- 1.0.18 In accordance with PPG, there is strong recognition of the multiple benefits that GI can deliver. To ensure such benefits are delivered, the PPG reiterates that GI must be well planned, designed and maintained and, therefore, should be a key consideration in both local plans and planning decisions where relevant
- 1.0.19 In accord with Policy EN1, the benefits that GI can achieve, at a range of scales, derived from natural systems and processes include:
- Connect and enrich biodiversity habitats and ecological networks and services;

- Enable the provision of education and visitor facilities to improve access and opportunities for recreation and tourism;
- Contribute to the health and well-being of the residents of Swindon;
- Enhance landscape character and respect local distinctiveness;
- Help meet the challenges of climate change; and
- Realise the potential of historical and cultural heritage features to contribute to local identity and sense of place.

Planning at all spatial scales

- 1.0.20 The value of GI and open space is widely recognised, and effective planning, design and integration will serve to optimise the multi-functionality of these spaces at both the strategic and local scale. Furthermore, effective GI management and maintenance can ensure its long term sustainability at the NEV. The purpose of this GI Vision is to inform opportunities for delivery, not to prescribe management or maintenance regimes. These will be subject to detailed negotiations with developers and delivery partners to ensure there is no long term financial burden on the Council.
- 1.0.21 Due consideration will be given to ensure that GI is sufficiently resilient in specification and design to secure long term sustainability and reduce the management and maintenance burden.

2 Statutory and Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework:

- 2.0.1 Under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), there is a requirement to deliver sustainable development. This draft SPD will assist the Council in achieving this key National Policy requirement. The NPPF in paragraph 153 states that:
- 2.0.2 “Supplementary planning documents should be used where they can help applicants make successful applications or aid infrastructure delivery, and should not be used to add unnecessarily to the financial burdens on development”.
- 2.0.3 The SPD is considered to meet the stated objectives of the NPPF. It seeks to guide delivery of necessary infrastructure in a manner that is equitable and fair to all the landowners/developers in the NEV in accordance with the adopted NEV Planning Obligations SPD.
- 2.0.4 Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 (Adopted March 2015)
The Local Plan, sets out the level of housing, employment and other development needs up to 2026, where this should be located, and the infrastructure required enabling this development to take place. This includes the identification of a number of strategic allocations at the ‘new communities’, including the NEV, to ensure the planned growth needs are met.
- 2.0.5 The Local Plan must be read as a whole. For ease of reference, there are specific planning policies that support the delivery of the NEV:

Policy NC3 - The New Eastern Villages - including Rowborough and South Marston Village Expansion

Policy NC3 details the development requirements at the NEV including Rowborough and South Marston Village expansion. This includes the delivery of an extensive GI network that will support the delivery of sustainable, well designed places which form distinct individual villages.

Policy RA3 - South Marston

Policy RA3 sets out the approach to delivering development at South Marston. The policy will ensure the expansion of South Marston will create an integrated village with a distinct rural and separate identity from Swindon and other settlements. A Neighbourhood Plan for South Marston Village is currently being prepared by South Marston Parish Council. Once made, the South Marston Village Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the Development Plan for Swindon Borough and will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications within the Neighbourhood Plan Area.

Policy SD3 - Managing Development

Policy SD3 details how the Council will take a positive approach to applying the presumption in favour of sustainable development in the Borough. It states that for all the significant development areas, management strategies will be agreed to secure the long term maintenance of infrastructure prior to development, and a tariff or model agreement will be developed to ensure timely delivery of infrastructure, maintenance and mitigation, and fair and equitable contributions to support infrastructure delivery.

Policy EN1 - Green Infrastructure Network

EN1 requires development to provide and design GI in order to integrate with existing corridors to maximise its connections and functions, and ensure the sustainable maintenance and its future management.

Policy EN2 - Community Forest

- 2.0.6 EN2 requires development to ensure a net increase in tree cover, create or enhance habitats for biodiversity, and ensure access to local woodlands and provide opportunities for communities and businesses to benefit from the Community Forest.

Policy EN3 - Open Space

EN3 requires residential development to provide, or contribute towards, open space in line with the Local Plan open space standards.

Policy EN4 - Biodiversity and Geodiversity

EN4 seeks to ensure that development avoids direct and indirect negative impacts upon biodiversity and geodiversity sites, as identified on the Policies Map. Furthermore, development shall protect and enhance biodiversity and provide net local biodiversity gain.

Policy EN5 - Landscape Character

EN5 seeks to ensure proposals for development will only be permitted when the intrinsic character, diversity and local distinctiveness of landscapes are protected, conserved and enhanced. Furthermore, applicants for development should demonstrate how they have taken into account Landscape Character Assessments and assessed the potential impact of the proposal upon attributes of the landscape.

Policy EN11 - Heritage Transport

EN11, as relates to the canal, seeks to ensure that development protects the integrity of the Wilts & Berks Canal and its associated structures, as shown indicatively on the Local Plan Policies Map. In addition, proposals will be permitted that are designed to develop the canal's recreational and nature conservation potential and shall only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that there is no unacceptable risk to ecology, flood risk, water resource and water quality.

2.0.7 In addition to these policies, there are other Local Plan policies that support the delivery of specific items of infrastructure:

- Policy IN1: Infrastructure Provision sets out the overarching policy for ensuring development makes a positive contribution to sustainable growth, through the delivery of appropriate infrastructure in a timely manner.
- Policy TR1: Sustainable Transport Networks seeks to reduce the need to travel, and support and encourage the sustainable, safe and efficient movement of people and goods through the Borough.
- Policy TR2: Transport and Development seeks to ensure new development is located and designed to reduce the need to travel, and to encourage the use of sustainable transport alternatives. To assess and mitigate the impact of development and to promote sustainable travel choices, planning applications should be accompanied by a Transport Assessment, a Transport Statement and a Travel Plan.

Phasing

2.0.8 Figure 11 in the Local Plan helps to identify the Council's preferred approach to the phasing of the new housing, and the related infrastructure to support the new communities at the NEV.

2.0.9 If planning applications are submitted in advance of the preferred phasing, the onus will be on the relevant developer(s) and/or interested parties to deliver the appropriate level of infrastructure to support the new community until such time the delivery of other development parcels / villages come forward.

3 Delivering GI at the New Eastern Villages (NEV)

The NEV Vision:

A destination of choice for people to live, with high property values and distinct communities, with good access to facilities and served by excellent infrastructure. A series of linked villages providing homes for all, with high quality education, leisure and community facilities built at the right time to create sustainable development.

2.0.10 The NEV will create well-designed places where people want to live, work and spend time. It will:

- Be a high quality development with an excellent level of strategic infrastructure that benefits Swindon as a whole;
- Form a new eastern gateway to Swindon that improves the image of the Town and maximises benefits to the wider economy with improved connectivity to the town centre;
- Sensitively, and positively respond to the existing landscape context, natural and historic assets and the character and identity of the surrounding villages as well as enhancing biodiversity and GI;
- Comprise new distinct villages with individual identities and characters linked together by green spaces that integrate with the existing urban area and wider landscape setting; and
- Provide facilities and services required for the new communities and opportunities for existing communities to benefit from the development.

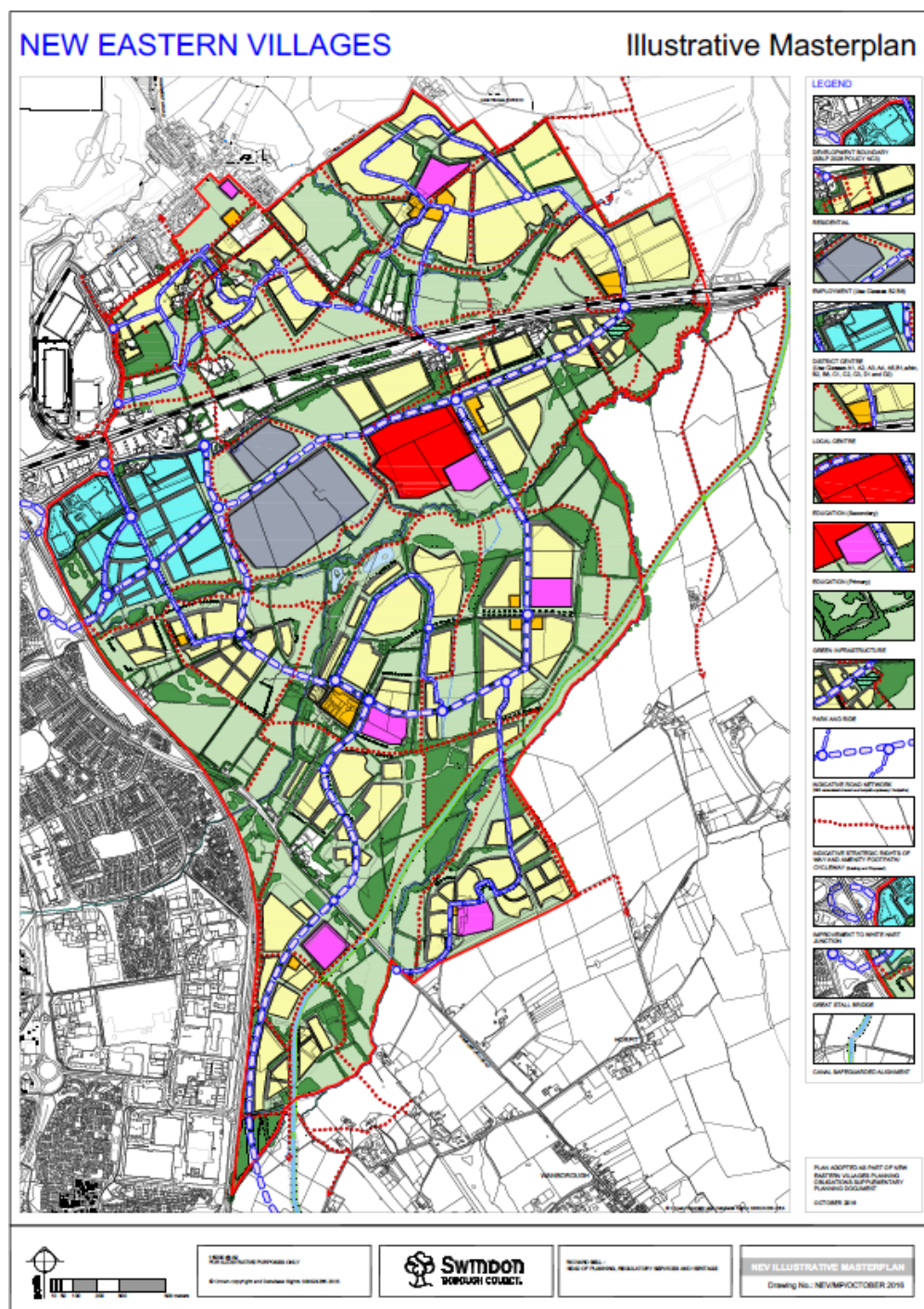
2.0.11 Policy NC3 seeks to ensure that development includes *‘an extensive green infrastructure network that maximises opportunities for habitat connectivity and enhanced biodiversity including extending the River Cole green infrastructure corridor and connecting with Nightingale Wood’*.

Delivering the right infrastructure

2.0.12 There is an opportunity to deliver a well-designed network of inter-connected green spaces across the NEV, reflecting a broad range of GI typologies that are multifunctional and accessible to all. This will help to secure public access through a network of green routes promoting walking and cycling across the NEV. The delivery of GI in a holistic and coordinated way can provide a multitude of benefits to the existing and new communities.

- 2.0.13 The delivery of GI related to development proposals at the NEV should be in broad accordance with the adopted NEV Illustrative Masterplan, shown at Figure 1, and detailed in the NEV Planning Obligations SPD.

Figure 1: NEV Illustrative Masterplan (Adopted October 2016)



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Not to Scale

NEV GI Opportunities

- 2.0.14 Based on the character and topography of the site, there is an exciting opportunity to create a new network of green linear routes and open spaces. Central to the achievement of an extensive GI network is the delivery of the species rich River Meadows providing public open space and biodiversity areas.

River Meadows

- 2.0.15 The River Meadows providing public open space and biodiversity areas will serve as the 'green heart' of the NEV development. It will optimise the potential to integrate and enhance with the existing flood plain and deliver a range of accessible and integrated linear green routes (North and South) connecting to every village.
- 2.0.16 The green linear routes will be characterised by natural features and GI assets that have been identified as important for their retention. This will include the retention of existing hedgerows, trees, grazed pastures, grassland, marshland, woodland areas, and other identified open spaces.
- 2.0.17 This mixture of open and vegetated areas, connected by formal footpaths, boardwalks and viewing platforms will provide legible nature trails and integrated green routes, facilitating ease of access for the community and visitors.
- 2.0.18 The River Meadows should be well-designed; a diverse but unified landscape feature. Effective delivery and management will be key to maximising the potential of 'Place Making' in this new part of Swindon. This includes the holistic management of farming, conservation, and recreational objectives.

Visitor Centre

- 2.0.19 A visitor centre will showcase nature conservation and local heritage at the NEV. It will be centrally located within the River Meadows (between the villages of Great Stall East and Lotmead) and it will become a new leisure destination in its own right.
- 2.0.20 The centre should showcase all that's great about the NEV. There will be an opportunity for partners to engage in, and facilitate delivery, working towards the aim of delivering an extensive GI network and providing a place where people can truly engage with conservation, the natural environment and local heritage.
- 2.0.21 The Council will work with delivery partners and stakeholders to determine appropriate specifications for the Visitor Centre, including flexible shared space, and to detail the long term management and maintenance required. The visitor centre should be sustainable in the broadest sense of the word, including financially.

What opportunities are there for my organisation?

- 2.0.22 The Council recognises that creating and sustaining high quality GI that meets local needs, particularly on this scale, requires a partnership approach and are keen to hear from local people, and organisations who may wish to explore opportunities for the design, delivery, or management of GI at the NEV whether on a large or more localised scale. Future management and maintenance options are explored further at Section 4 of this document.

3 Green Infrastructure Proposals

- 3.0.1 In accord with Local Plan policies, in particular SD1, EN1, EN11 and NC3 and RA3, the delivery of GI will deliver a comprehensive range of functions that are summarised in the following themes below:

GI Function

- Landscape Character
(incorporating Great Western Community Forest)
- Biodiversity
- Green Routes
- Open Space
(incorporating health and well-being)
- Art, Heritage, and Education
- Economically Productive Land; and
- Water management

- 3.0.2 The chapters that follow provide more detail on each theme as follows:

- An audit and assessment of existing GI assets;
- The GI requirements to support development at the NEV;
- Proposals for achieving an integrated GI network;
- Delivery Mechanisms and Management Opportunities;

- 3.0.3 This chapter will seek to identify the strengths of each GI function and how opportunities can be maximised to fulfil the potential of the GI network at the NEV. Each chapter is accompanied by a GI “Key Principle” which provides more detail on the information expected to be submitted to support development proposals and in the context of delivering an extensive GI network. This information should allow key stakeholders to focus upon the specific GI functions that are of particular interest to them.

3.1 Landscape Character

Strengthening, enhancing, and creating high quality, distinctive Landscape Character

Includes trees and hedgerows; woodlands, water courses and floodplains; landform; and key views from the area's wider landscape character setting to and from the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Baseline

- 3.1.1 The site sits mainly within National Character Area 108: The Upper Thames Clay Vales (Natural England, 2014) 'a broad belt of open, gently undulating lowland farmland on predominantly Jurassic and Cretaceous clays'. Land north of the A420 is part of NCA 109: The Midvale Ridge 'a band of low-lying limestone hills stretching east to west from the Vale of Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire to Swindon' (Natural England, 2013).
- 3.1.2 The higher ground of the North Wessex Downs is to the south, with its roads and paths having extensive long distance views across the NEV and surrounding area. "Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in ... Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty" (NPPF, 2012, para 115).
- 3.1.3 As Figure 2 shows, the site falls mainly within Swindon Landscape Character Area (LCA): Vale of the White Horse. This is a broad, flat low-lying valley with dark skies, and extensive views towards the Downs and the Midvale Ridge. There are numerous ponds, and many small streams flowing north to south into the River Cole. Fields are large with a strong north to south linear pattern, bounded by hedgerows reinforced with large trees. There are a few woodlands, a network of ancient lanes and bridleways, and a few scattered farms.
- 3.1.4 Historical character includes Roman settlements and roads at Lotmead, and the disused Wilts & Berks canal running along the northern boundary. Land north of the A420 falls in the Midvale Ridge LCA. Given the developed character of the road corridor, and works necessitated by NEV, it is important to maintain the indicative non-coalescence area between the village of South Marston, the road corridor, and proposed NEV development. It is also important to maintain the indicative non-coalescence area between the village of Wanborough and proposed NEV development.

Great Western Community Forest (GWCF)

- 3.1.5 The Great Western Community Forest (GWCF) designation covers the whole of Swindon Borough and parts of Oxfordshire and Wiltshire to deliver multi-purpose forestry that encompasses the creation and use of a diverse natural and built environment including trees and woodland, grassland, wetlands, hedgerows, ponds and rivers. The GWCF is an integral part of developing Swindon Borough's green infrastructure, and a priority for the GWCF is to achieve a substantial increase in tree and woodland cover across Swindon Borough, including at the NEV.
- 3.1.6 The GWCF is identified in the NEV Planning Obligations SPD as infrastructure required to support the NEV. One way this can be achieved is through the delivery of community woodland projects which can be important in enhancing existing landscape character. Figure 3 shows how the GWCF can help deliver new landscape character, responding positively to the design and character of each new village within the NEV. Community forest can provide other GI benefits including increasing woodland cover, enhancing biodiversity and providing new opportunities for leisure, recreation, cultural activity, education, promoting well-being and healthy lifestyles.

The Woodland Trust

- 3.1.7 As the UK's leading woodland conservation charity, the Woodland Trust's vision is for a UK rich in native woods and trees, for people and wildlife. The Trust manages over 200 sites in the South West including three significant woodlands in Swindon; Stratton, Warneage and Purton Woods.
- 3.1.8 The Woodland Trust support the commitment to achieve net increase in woodland cover, with a focus on strategic locations which create nature corridors and enhance biodiversity. The Trust believes that trees and woodland are an essential element of place making as they can deliver a wide range of benefits. As a potential delivery partner, the Woodland Trust will endeavour to provide support to ensure opportunities for enhancing woodland cover are maximised at the NEV.
- 3.1.9 Practice guidance 'Residential Development and Trees'² prepared by the Woodland Trust sets out key factors to consider when incorporating trees as part of development.

² <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/publications/2015/07/residential-developments-and-trees/>

Requirements to support the development – Analysis and opportunities

- 3.1.10 As shown in Figure 4, in order to achieve an integrated GI network that responds positively to the landscape, development at the NEV will need to:
- Increase tree cover in accord with GWCF objectives, linking to historic hedgerow field boundaries and woodland areas (both new and existing);
 - Ensure development responds positively which identifies and enhances key viewpoints from the NEV within the context of the landscape character setting and the North Wessex Downs AONB;
 - Provide a full range of GI in accord with open space requirements and GI typologies (as identified in the LP);
 - Contribute and facilitate the delivery of the river meadows nature reserve and visitor centre;
 - Link new accessible open space, green routes and leisure opportunities to wider communities;
 - Increase the range of habitats for wildlife and key species (biodiversity net gain); and
 - Protect and enhance heritage assets and create a sense of place.

Development Proposals

- 3.1.11 Development proposals should serve to deliver an extensive network of grazed wetlands, grasslands, and woodlands alongside the existing water courses including the River Cole. This will have the positive effect of visually strengthening the existing landscape character features of meandering streams and long distance views.
- 3.1.12 These fingers of natural green and 'blue' space throughout the site can support natural water management systems, and provide important separation and identity to each village. In accord with policy, and mitigation measures identified in the Landscape Impact Assessment, existing hedgerows should be retained as far as possible, and new woodland should follow the scale and pattern of existing woodland.
- 3.1.13 Due consideration should be made to new woodland and planting to soften the southern boundary, in particular at the villages of Great Stall East, Lower Lotmead and Redlands, which will create a well-defined edge and preserve strategic viewpoints. There may also be opportunities

to deliver new woodland and planting off site. The Council will work proactively with landowners to identify appropriate areas, both on and off site, for new woodland and planting. Figure 3 and Table 1 provide information on the opportunities to deliver new community woodland projects on-site and off-site at the NEV.

Delivery and Management Opportunities

- 3.1.14 Developers will be expected to deliver and provide for the long term management and maintenance of open space and GI that is required as a result of development at the NEV. Such maintenance and management arrangements should be provided for each GI asset delivered both on-site and off-site. Further information is provided in Section 4.
- 3.1.15 Delivery of the NEV will be phased and during this time the cumulative landscape and visual impacts from multiple development areas within the site will be mitigated in part by the non-coalescence areas.
- 3.1.16 Retention and enhancement of GI corridors, where possible of similar width to the developed villages shown in Figure 4, is a sustainable way of managing the cumulative impacts of continued expansion on the landscape and visual amenity of Swindon.
- 3.1.17 Developers will be expected to submit detailed Masterplans within planning application submissions which clearly identify GI typologies that demonstrate a positive contribution to the landscape setting and GI network.
- 3.1.18 Early and ongoing engagement with all partners interested in the conservation and management of land including appropriate Management Companies, Community Interest Companies, community organisations, farmers, Parish Councils, environmental groups and conservation partners will be vital to ensure long term sustainability.

Water Catchments

- 3.1.19 The delivery of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) as set out in the SuDS Vision for the NEV Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Adopted in February 2017, the SPD seeks to ensure developers design and enhance natural water management features on-site and off-site with swales, ponds, and natural wetland. Well designed and integrated SuDS features will form, and contribute towards, the delivery of the extensive GI network. This must be achieved without compromise to the primary recreational function of public open space for the community. Further guidance on planning for SuDS at the NEV can be found in the adopted SuDs Vision for the NEV.

Landscape Character: GI - Key Principle 1

Policy Context:

EN1, EN2, EN5, NC3, RA3 and NEV Planning Obligations SPD

In accord with Policy EN5, applicants will be expected to demonstrate how they have taken into account Landscape Character Assessments and assessed the potential impact of the proposal the landscape character at the NEV.

What information should be provided as part of development proposals at the NEV?

In the context of delivering an integrated GI network both locally and strategically, information should be provided on:

- How the proposal will seek to protect, conserve and enhance the intrinsic character, diversity and local distinctiveness of the landscape character at the NEV. Proposals should not adversely affect the setting of the North Wessex Downs AONB;
- Specify how design and materials will be used sympathetically to the surrounding landscape and avoid unacceptable impacts; and
- How proposals will provide mitigation to a satisfactory level in circumstances where other negative impacts are considered unavoidable.

Applicants will be expected to submit Landscape Visual Impact Assessments or Environmental Impact Assessments to fully assess landscape impacts and mitigation

Why is this information required?

The above information is required to provide demonstrable evidence that applicants / developers will seek to deliver high quality development within the context of a well-designed GI network and townscape to enhance and mitigate negative impacts upon landscape character, its features and setting.

Figure 2: Illustrative Existing Landscape Character

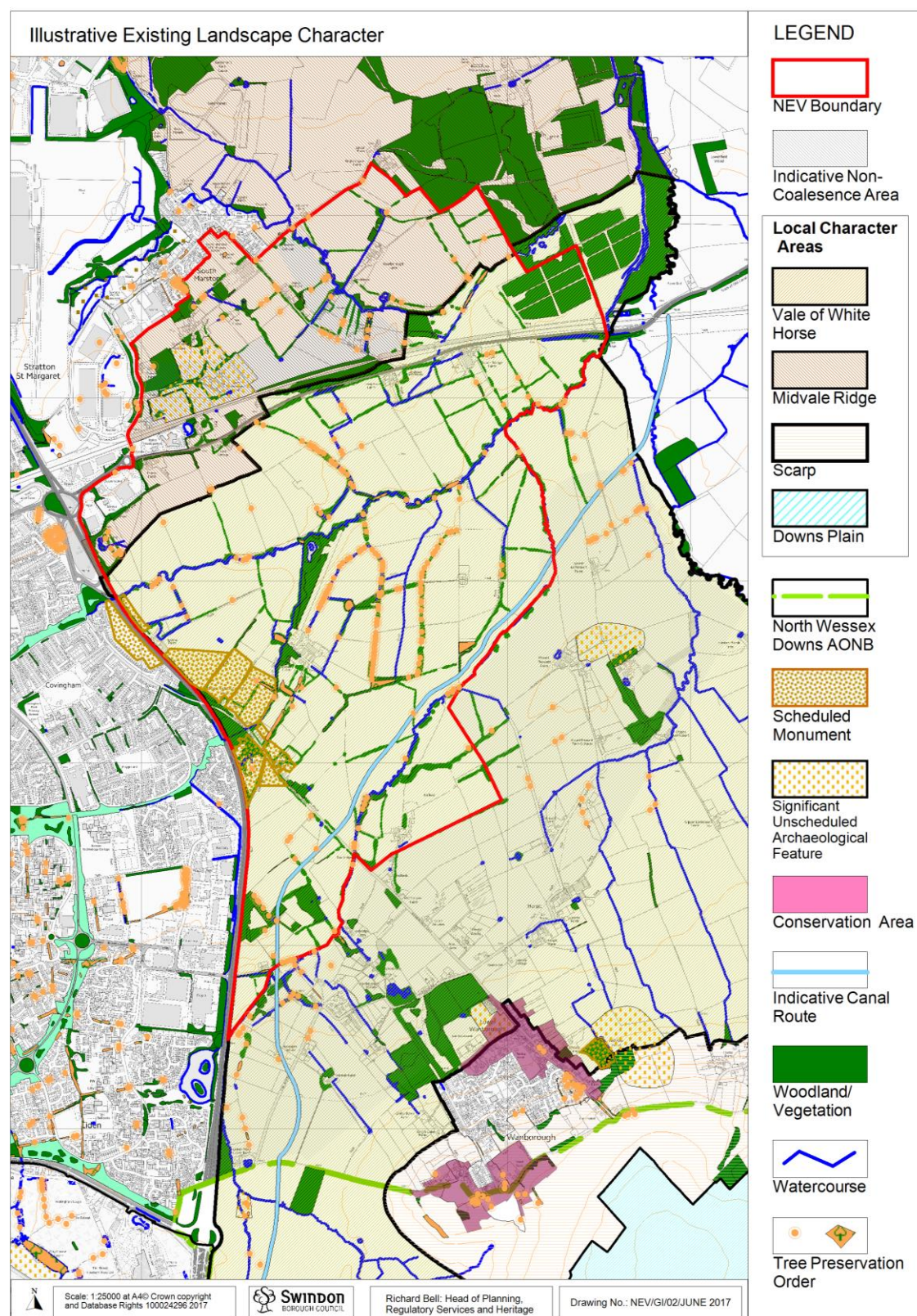


Figure 3: Proposed Community Woodland Areas

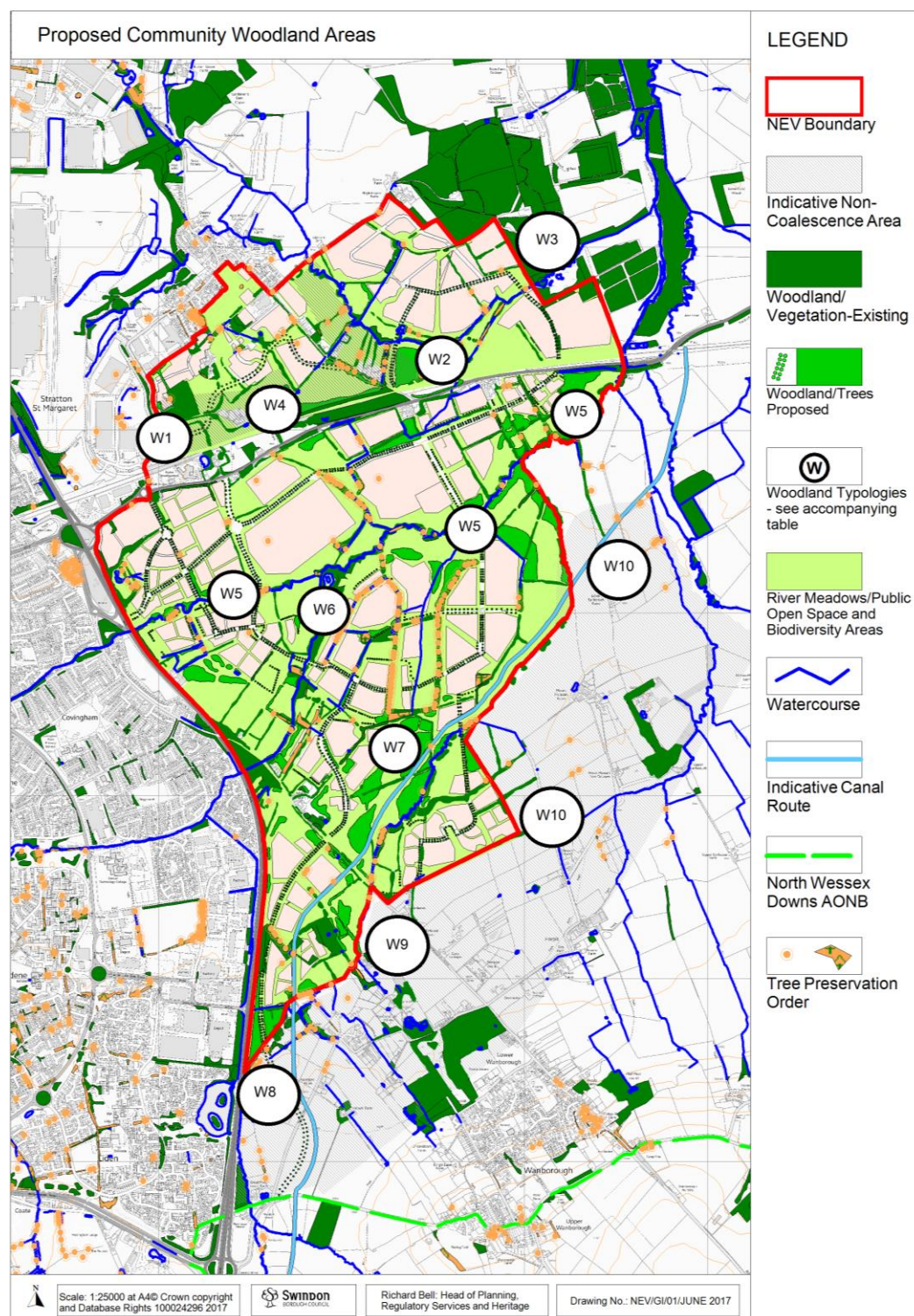
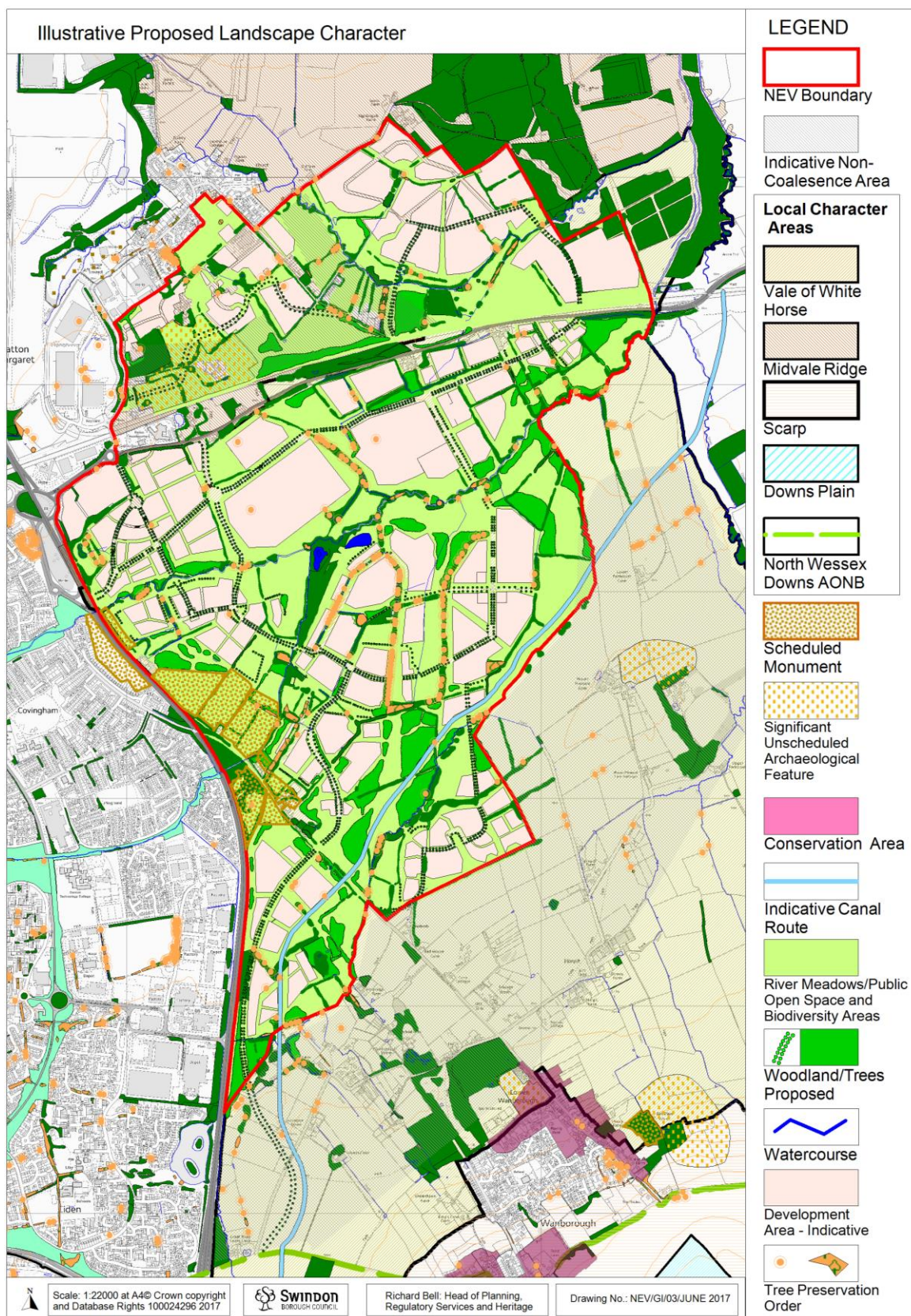


Table 1: Woodland areas

Woodland Area	Community Woodland – Project information
Woodland Area 1	Oxleaze Wood: Improvements to site infrastructure including new access points, path improvements, tree works, interpretation and community engagement. Additional planting in surrounding open spaces alongside other habitat improvements.
Woodland Area 2	Creation of new community woodland: New planting to more than double the size of existing woodland. Native broadleaf mix with additional species to provide resilience in accord with Forestry Commission guidelines. Access provision, signage and interpretation. Additional planting in surrounding open spaces alongside other habitat improvements. Planting mix to reflect potential use of wood products in by nearby allotments.
Woodland Area 3	Mitigate impacts on Nightingale Woods (Forestry Commission): Improvements and realignment of site infrastructure including creation of new vehicle access points. Sufficient funding needed for on-going management and maintenance. Programme of community engagement, information provision and interpretation. Additional planting in surrounding green-spaces alongside other habitat improvements particularly along the course of the South Marston.
Woodland Area 4	New woodland planting to strengthen the buffer between the railway and open spaces.
Woodland Area 5	New broadleaf woodland blocks and incidental planting in association with grassland and wetland habitat creation, watercourse management and integral with Sustainable Urban Drainage infrastructure. Native broadleaf mix with additional species to provide resilience following Forestry Commission guidelines. Where coincidental with floodplain the planting mix will need to reflect ground conditions and planting layout will need to be guided by the Environment Agency. Some woodlands will provide for community access, others provided primarily for nature conservation purposes.
Woodland Area 6	Management of existing woodland in association with other habitats, particularly water course and ponds.

Woodland Area 7	Extensive area of new community woodland incorporating the Wilts & Berks Canal, naturalised open spaces and integral with sustainable urban drainage infrastructure. Native broadleaf mix with additional species to provide resilience following Forestry Commission guidelines. Where coincidental with floodplain the planting mix will need to reflect ground conditions and planting layout will need to be guided by the Environment Agency.
Woodland Area 8	New woodland planting associated with the Southern Connector Route, in particular to provide screening between the SCR and the A419.
Woodland Area 9	New woodland planting to the south of the NEV to mitigate impacts with a focus on expanding and linking existing woodland. Native broadleaf mix with additional species to provide resilience following Forestry Commission guidelines. Improvements to site infrastructure, information provision and community engagement at Warneage Woods (Woodland Trust). New planting to expand existing woodland at Pack Hill with accompanying access provision and community engagement.
Woodland Area 10	Additional woodland planting to the east of the NEV to compensate for loss of woodland planting potential within the development. Particular attention should be given to enhancement of habitat corridors associated with watercourses.

Figure 4: Illustrative Proposed Landscape Character



3.2 Biodiversity

The creation of well connected, resilient, ecological corridors of floodplain meadow, marshland, wetland, woodland, scrub and grassland habitats alongside the River Cole tributaries.

Biodiversity sites, semi-natural green spaces, together with their associated species.

Baseline

- 3.2.1 There are a number of Strategic Nature Areas (SNAs) within Swindon Borough including SNA 49 - Neutral Grassland at South Marston, and Nightingale Wood. SNA's helped to shape the Borough-wide GI Strategy and aim to provide an overview of statutory designated biodiversity sites, and priority species and habitats, and propose landscape scale areas with "the best opportunities for building a healthy, resilient ecological network of priority habitats within Wiltshire. They are designed to focus and coordinate conservation efforts to attain the best outcomes for biodiversity with the limited resources available to organisations to do so."
- 3.2.2 In the light of continuing decline in UK priority habitats and species, (UK State of Nature Report 2016) current national biodiversity strategy is: "To halt overall biodiversity loss, support healthy well-functioning ecosystems and establish coherent ecological networks, with more and better places for nature for the benefit of wildlife and people" (Biodiversity 2020 - A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services, 2012).
- 3.2.3 In particular, the delivery of GI at the NEV will serve an important role in maintaining and enhancing the ecological status of water courses, and will serve to overcome the severance of habitats caused by the A419 and A420.

Requirements to support the development - Analysis and opportunities

- 3.2.4 As shown at Figure 5, the NEV represents an important opportunity to achieve significant landscape-scale biodiversity gains in Swindon; with consequent gains for the wellbeing of the new residents as they enjoy the natural environment. Partnership working can help deliver the priorities and opportunities for SNA 49.
- 3.2.5 Furthermore, the Landscape Biodiversity Areas Report by Wiltshire Wildlife Trust (2013) the River Cole "**represents an important wildlife corridor, linking Swindon urban area with the surrounding countryside and supporting associated riparian, meadow and woodland priority habitats along its length. It is important to**

maintain the integrity and ecological status of the riparian and adjacent habitats to safeguard these important corridors and their associated wildlife. [However], the river system is particularly vulnerable to pressures associated with the urban environment and transport systems which can lead to polluted run-off and raised sediment and chemical loads.”

3.2.6 Planning obligations secured for GI at the NEV will be directed towards priority habitats and ecological areas, which should be reconciled with SuDS and other key considerations:

- Identify sites with suitable conditions for restoration of floodplain meadows;
- Restore meadows and wet woodland habitats in the floodplains;
- Protect, enhance and sensitively manage riparian habitats, leaving some areas not accessible by people or dogs;
- Revert arable land in the floodplain to permanent grassland and plant woodland / buffer strips to intercept runoff;
- Improve aquatic life by removing barriers and securing sensitive bankside management - subject to consultation with the Environment Agency; and
- Provide opportunities to deliver net local biodiversity gain throughout each village and across the NEV. This includes measures that seek to preserve, restore and recreate priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species populations.

Proposals

3.2.7 The proposed habitat network, shown at Figure 6 shows the proposed location of the River Meadows and existing and proposed woodland along the River Cole tributaries.

3.2.8 Developers will be expected to submit detailed information which demonstrates how development will positively contribute towards net local biodiversity gain. This should be undertaken in consultation with local biodiversity partners and ecology experts.

Biodiversity: GI - Key Principle 2

Policy Context:

EN4, NEV Planning Obligations SPD

Development will avoid direct and indirect impacts upon biodiversity and geodiversity sites at the NEV.

All development, where appropriate shall protect and enhance biodiversity and provide net local biodiversity gain.

What information will developers be expected to provide?

In the context of delivering an integrated GI network both locally and strategically, information should be provided on:

- Sensitive site location and layout, and by maintaining sufficient buffers and ecological connectivity with the wider environment
- Where development is within 8 metres of designated main river, the Environment Agency recommend that a buffer zone free from built development including lighting, domestic gardens and formal landscaping is provided.
- Demonstrate how the development will provide net local biodiversity gain
- Damage or disturbance to local sites will generally be unacceptable, other than in exceptional circumstances

Why is this information required from developers?

The above information is required to provide evidence that developers will seek to protect, enhance and provide for net local biodiversity gain within the context of a well-designed GI network and townscape.

Appropriate mitigation and compensation measures will be required where impact upon sites is unavoidable or demonstrably not achievable.

Figure 5: Illustrative Existing Biodiversity

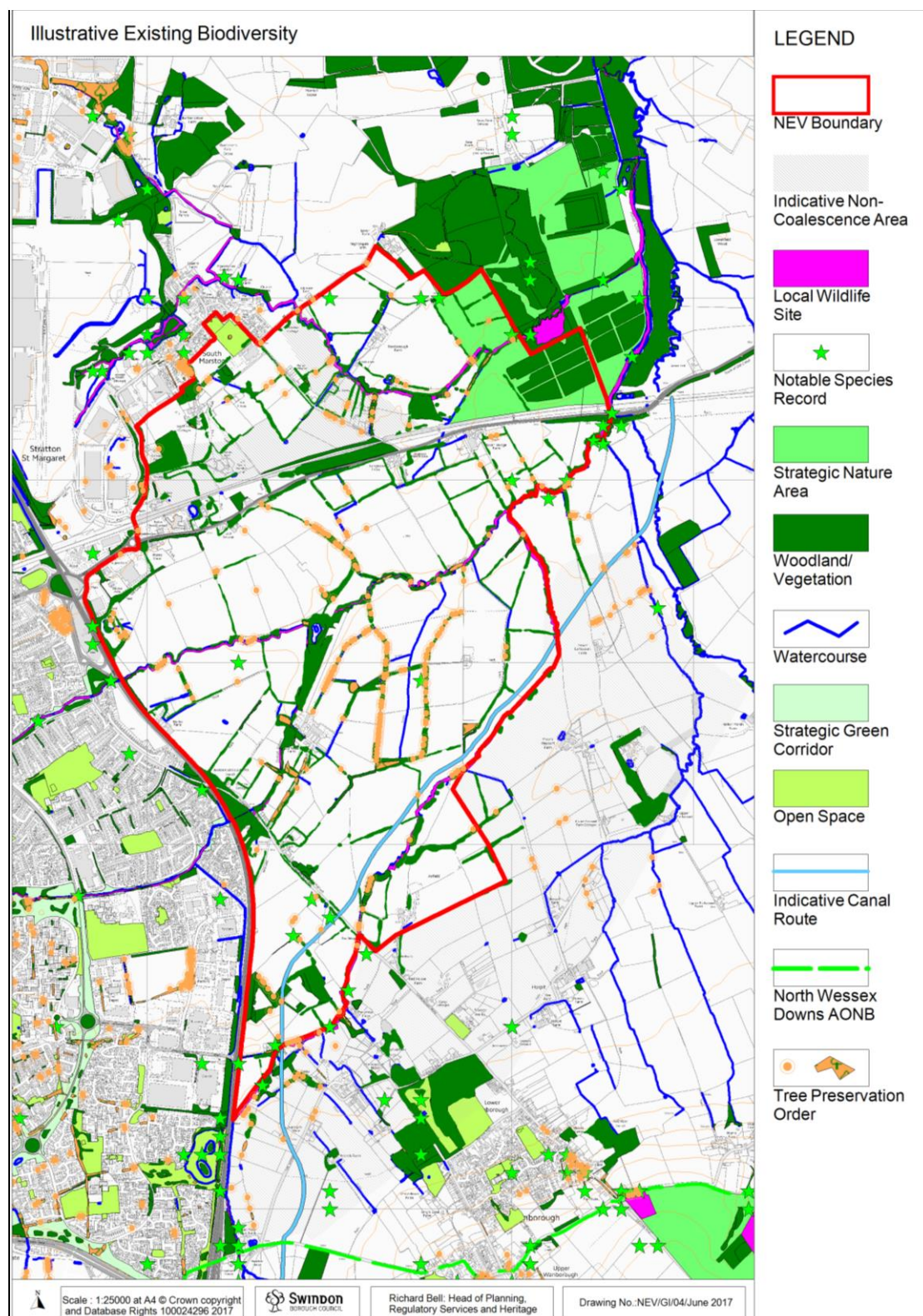
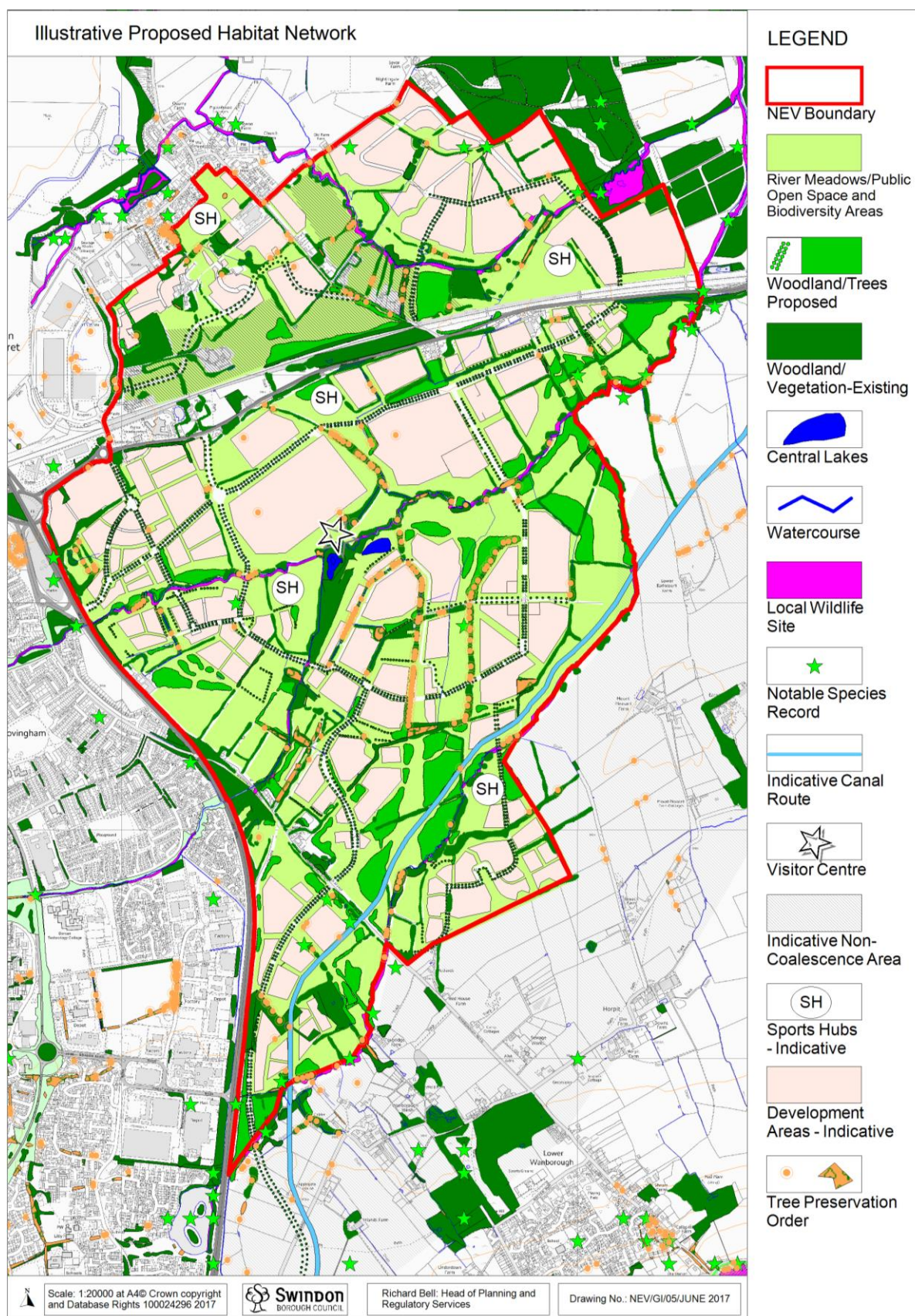


Figure 6: Illustrative Proposed Habitat Network



3.3 Green Routes

To create a continuous high quality, varied network of green routes connecting homes and destinations.

- 3.2.9 Green Routes accommodate strategic and recreational movement of the local community, connecting a range of open spaces. These spaces, whilst necessary for movement and connectivity, will further facilitate ecological transference and provide the 'green lungs' of the development.
- 3.2.10 To accommodate movement and assist the urban transport network, the green routes will accommodate Public Rights of Way (PROW), other pedestrian routes, cycleways, bridleways, long distance trails, canal corridors, field and meadow crossings, associated gateways and modal interchanges.

Baseline

- 3.2.11 There are existing, localised links represented by a network of minor lanes and bridleways within the allocated development area and to the settlements of Sevenhampton, Shrivenham, Bourton, Hinton Parva and Wanborough. Developers will be expected to provide and enhance these existing movement links.
- 3.2.12 The allocated development area, which accommodates the proposed New Eastern Villages Development, consists of a series of island plots, or villages, separated by green spaces, which shall accommodate the green routes. These green routes shall connect with the urban framework within the island plots and outwards to the existing communities of Swindon.
- 3.2.13 The creation and enhancement of an integrated movement network, facilitated by the provision of integrated green routes is of strategic priority to achieve sustainable development at the NEV. It will serve to promote well-being and healthy lifestyles and provide the new communities at each village with a range of sustainable transport options; thus reducing reliance on the car for travel needs.
- 3.2.14 Adopted in October 2016, the NEV Framework Travel Plan SPD³ supports this approach and actively promotes sustainable transport choices at the NEV. The SPD sets out a number of key principles and management mechanisms to reduce the number of car trips within and to the NEV and recognises the importance of a well-connected layout to enhance pedestrian and cyclist permeability, as well as providing priority to public transport vehicles and to reduce car dependency.

³ https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20113/local_plan_and_planning_policy/651/planning_policy_guidance/3

- 3.2.15 In addition to this, the NEV Island Bridge Vision SPD (adopted June 2017) sets out to provide the vision for connectivity between the NEV development islands which includes primary infrastructure for vehicular traffic and secondary infrastructure within green corridors for non-motorised users.

Requirements to support the development - Analysis & opportunities

- 3.3.1 A crucial part of maximising the benefits of GI for communities of the New Eastern Villages is the creation of an attractive integrated network of green routes for every day commuting, getting to school & shops, as well as leisure. The securing and implementation of the green routes will facilitate the following:

- Reduce car journeys thus decreasing pollution, congestion, energy use and reducing travel times
- Allow people to exercise as part of their daily journeys as well as planned trips to outdoor sports facilities such as pitch based sports and outdoor training facilities.
- Increase sensory experiences of the changing seasons and weather through wildlife, heritage, and farming.
- Increase community cohesion through numerous opportunities for social interaction.
- Improve well-being and healthy lifestyles including mental health.
- Provide a sense of adventure, promoting freedom, enjoyment and tranquillity.

Types of Cycleway

- 3.3.2 Cycle infrastructure will be provided throughout the development as a network of urban routes following the delivered road infrastructure and rural routes through GI.
- 3.3.3 Table 2 provides an appraisal of both types of cycle route provision:

Table 2: Types of Cycleway

Urban Routes		Rural Routes	
Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons
Security and overlooking	Possible sharing of space with traffic	Visual amenity	Limited opportunity for overlooking and security
Across seasonal activity	Noise and pollution	Limited pollution and only rural noise	Occasional seasonal disruption to use – flooding etc.
Continuity of surfacing and form	Heavy Traffic conflicts	Limited/No traffic Conflicts	Multiple surfacing
Consistent and regular wayfinding	Numerous interchanges and stopping points	Limited interchanges or reason to stop	None or limited lighting
Lighting			

3.3.4 The combination of urban and rural routes are necessary to facilitate the travel demands of the development, with the green routes providing additional benefits of attracting recreational and leisure use in a serene environment. These green routes, for the purposes of providing a movement function, refer to multifunctional, non-vehicular routes, separate from road corridors, enabling a mix of any of: cycling, scooting, skating, blading, walking, jogging, horse riding, and water based travel.

3.3.5 These can take various forms: green hedge-lined ‘bridleways’; tracks, canal routes and towpath, and soft or hard surfaced combined footways / cycleways through parks or open space.

Proposals

3.3.6 Figure 7 provides an inset map taken from the South Marston Draft Neighbourhood Plan and shows the proposed strategic routes in and around the village whilst Figure 8 shows the location of the wider proposed green route network. This will enable new communities to be well connected by green routes, facilitating easy access and movement to local services and facilities such as schools, play areas and shops. Wider links may benefit from improvements to maximise the potential of this new network, for example sustainable travel link to the Hospital.

- 3.3.7 The type of surfacing of the green route is crucial to its location, functionality, character and user types. It is proposed that green routes should be presented as a mix of tarmac routes, hoggins (self-binding stone to dust) and grassed routes for walkers.

Delivery and Management

- 3.3.8 All cycling, pedestrian and bridle routes will either form formal Public Rights of Way, Highway Maintainable at Public Expense, permissive path or route subject to secured delivery by condition or obligation.

Green Routes: GI - Key Principle 3

Policy Context: EN1, TR1, TR2, NEV Planning Obligations SPD

Development at the NEV should be located and designed to reduce the need to travel and to encourage the use of sustainable transport alternative, particularly walking and cycling, and provide the potential to maximise bus travel.

All new homes within easy walking distance to a green route that connects to the wider green infrastructure network and encourages walking or cycling to schools, local shops and facilities.

What information should be provided as part of development proposals at the NEV?

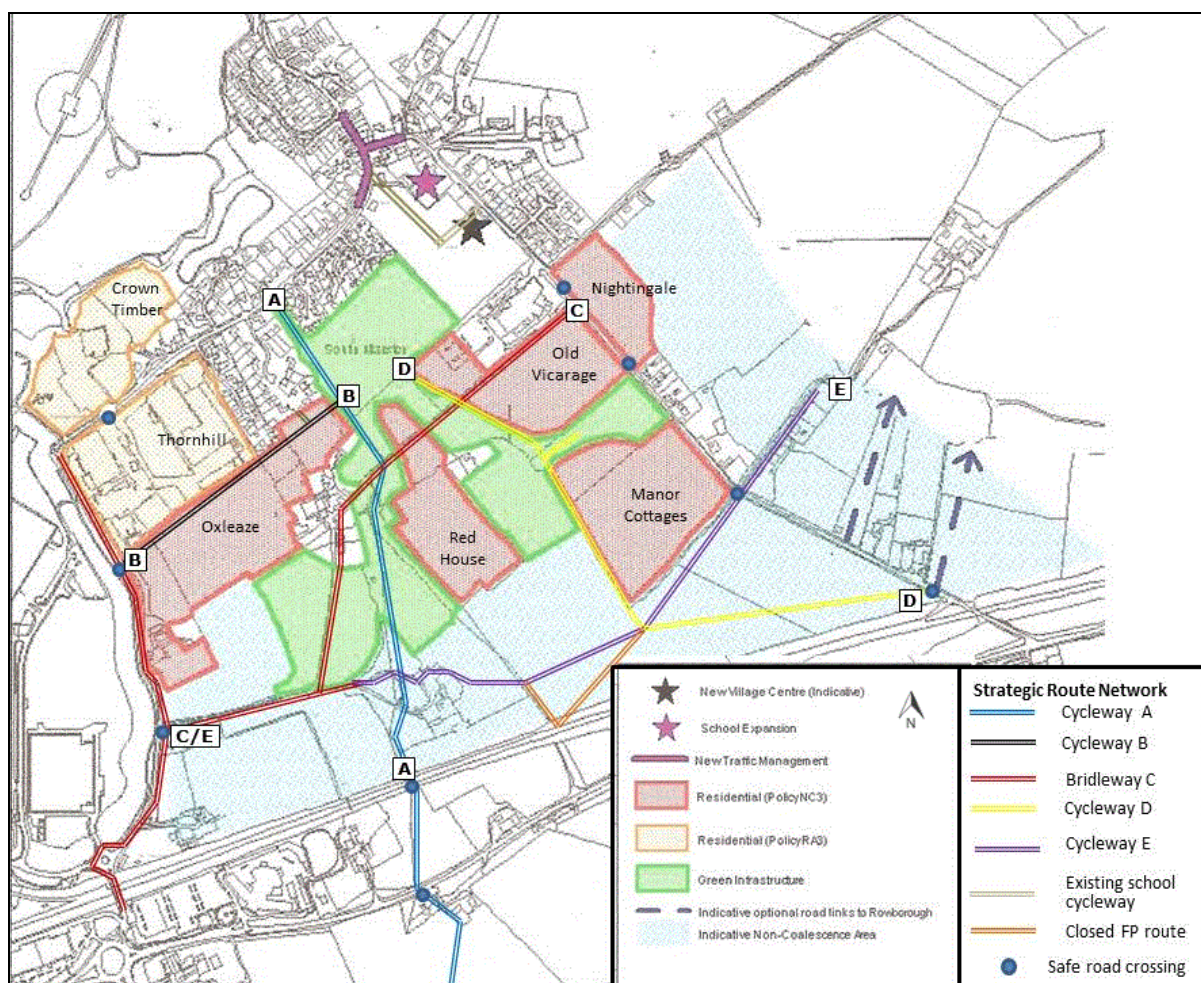
To assess and mitigate the impact of development and to promote sustainable travel choices in the context of delivering an integrated GI network, the following information will be required to support planning applications:

- A Transport Assessment: where the proposed development is likely to have significant transport and related environmental impact (in accordance with Department for Transport guidance);
- A Travel Plan: where the proposed development is likely to have significant transport and related environmental impact (in accordance with Department for Transport guidance).
- In addition to this, at the reserved matters stage a Movement Framework will be required to demonstrate connectivity to the wider development.

Why is this information required?

To fully assess the transport requirements of the development and within the context of wider NEV delivery.

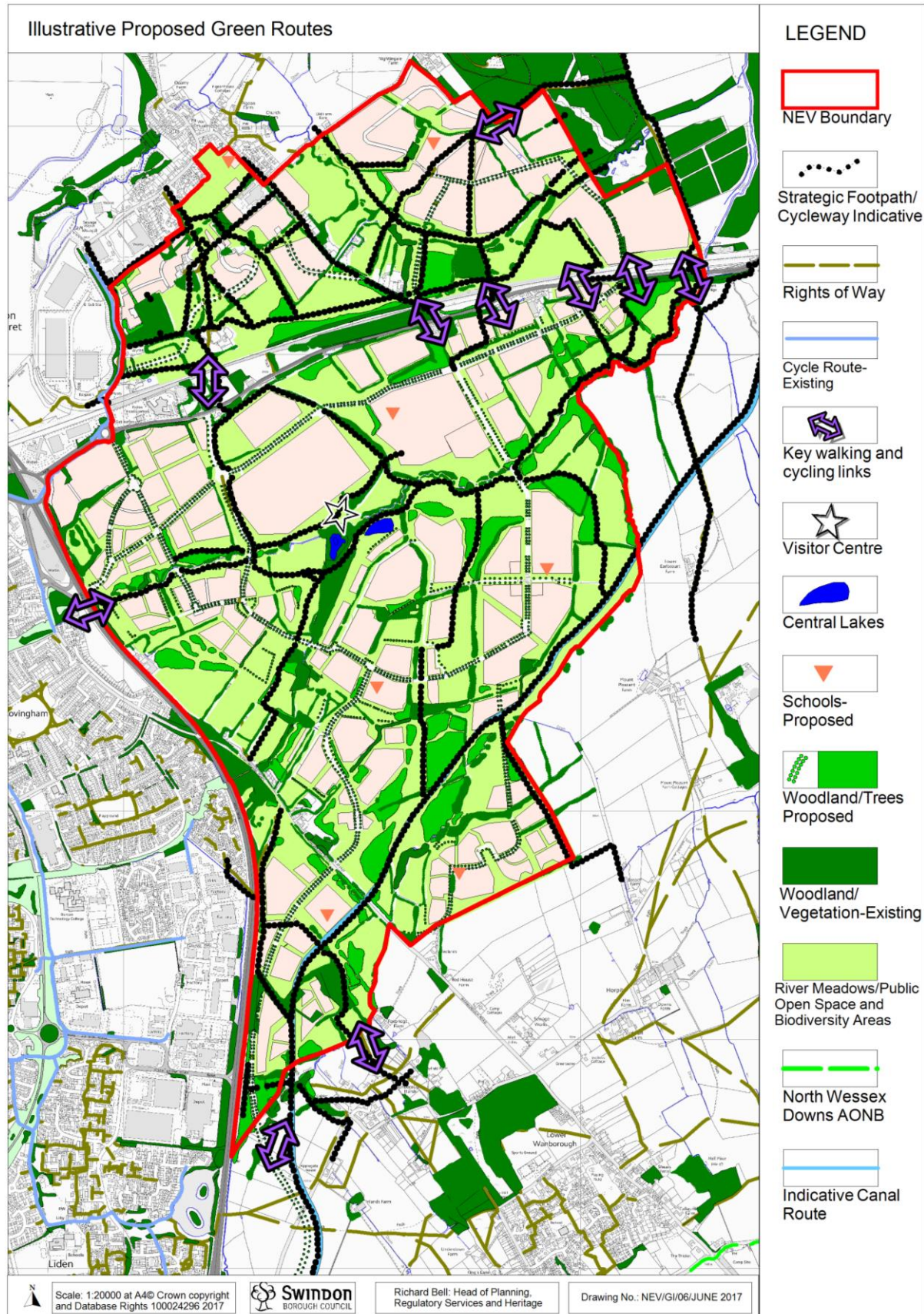
Figure 7: South Marston Village Draft Neighbourhood Plan: Proposed Strategic Routes⁴



© Crown copyright and Database Rights 100024296 2015
Not to Scale

⁴ Plan 6 Map of the Proposed Strategic Routes - Extract taken from South Marston Village Draft Neighbourhood Plan (May 2017)

Figure 8: Illustrative Proposed Green Routes



3.4 Open Space and Recreation

Create a broad range of green infrastructure supporting health and well-being for all ages

Access to open spaces for sport, play or general recreation is viewed as an important part of life. This includes outdoor sports facilities, general recreational areas, children's play areas; outdoor gyms; country parks and town parks; and other informal recreation opportunities.

Baseline

- 3.3.9 This document seeks to cover the full range of outdoor recreational, sporting, and play opportunities for all ages ranging from formal sports matches; to the everyday, informal spontaneous activities such as going for a walk or visiting the local park with children.
- 3.3.10 There are a number of walking and cycling opportunities at the NEV, on existing lanes, bridleways and paths that pass through it. Developers will be expected to retain and enhance existing Public Rights of Way routes and integrate them effectively at each village location and strategically across the NEV. This should include the provision of tranquil 'greenways' and walking only' routes.
- 3.3.11 The Council consider that building upon this potential can provide a far reaching network of connected and multifunctional open spaces and will make a key contribution to the quality of life for the communities at the NEV.

Open Space Requirements

- 3.3.12 Identified in the NEV Planning Obligations SPD, as infrastructure required to support the NEV and in accord with Policy EN3, Appendix 3 of the Local Plan 2026, the following is expected to be delivered on site as an integral part of the development:

Outdoor Sports Facilities

- 3.3.13 The Local Plan sets out a requirement to deliver 1.6 hectares of outdoor sports facilities per 1000 population, of which 1.2 hectares should be playing pitch. Responding to current trends in outdoor sports provision, a number of sports hubs are identified in the NEV Planning Obligations SPD and should be delivered on site at the NEV. Each local outdoor sports 'hub' facility should include, as a minimum requirement:
 - A minimum of four adult size playing pitches with associated ancillary uses including a pavilion, changing facilities (including toilets) and an appropriate level of cycling and car parking provision.

- 3.3.14 A 'responsive mix' of grass and artificial pitches to deliver outdoor sports and playing pitches for the benefit of all should be achieved. Although the specification of each sports hub will differ depending upon the main sporting activity or 'anchor' sport offered at each location.
- 3.3.15 In addition to this, outdoor sporting facilities (non-pitch) should also be provided at hub sites where they complement the main sporting use on-site. Alongside the policy requirement, this should be established through community consultation and where there is established demand or local need. Examples include the provision of bowling greens and tennis courts.
- 3.3.16 In accord with Policy RA3, South Marston is an exception, whereby development proposals will be expected to provide an extended recreation ground to include the field to the south-west of the current recreation ground (known as Bell Gardens) with recreational facilities of an appropriate type and scale.
- 3.3.17 Each hub will provide a perfect location and opportunity to facilitate the delivery of fitness classes and groups and arranged leisure activities and should be well connected and within easy walking distance. Other ancillary facilities on-site may include a café.
- 3.3.18 In accord with the Local Plan, development proposals should be within 600 metres or 15 minutes walking time of junior playing pitches whilst adult's sports facilities should be within a 20 minute drive time.

Playing Pitch Strategy

- 3.3.19 The Council are currently undertaking a Playing Pitch Strategy for the Borough which will also assess playing pitch requirements at the NEV. The strategy is expected to be completed by autumn 2017.

Operational arrangements

- 3.3.20 In order to secure long term sustainability of such facilities, each hub should be accompanied by a comprehensive management and maintenance programme.

Children's and Teenager's Play Areas

- 3.3.21 The Local Plan sets out a requirement to deliver 0.3 hectares of equipped children's play area per 1000 population and to be delivered as an integral part of development. A range of equipped play areas should be provided at each village location. Developers should avoid locating locally equipped areas of play at or on the edge of a village boundary.

LEAPs/ LLAPs

- 3.3.22 Each play area should be built to LEAP (Locally Equipped Area of Play) or equivalent standard and are typically laid out and constructed to provide play equipment for younger children who are at the beginning of their adventures, playing independently with supervision. Offering greater opportunities for natural play, the provision of LLAPs (Local

Landscaped Area for Play) are also acceptable providing they meet Council standards. Furthermore, through the delivery of well-designed and carefully selected play equipment, there are significant opportunities to enhance landscape setting.

- 3.3.23 LEAPs and LLAPs should be within an easy, safe and short walking distance of 250 metres (5 minute walking time) from nearby homes and provided as an integral part of development maximising opportunities for natural surveillance.
- 3.3.24 Furthermore, such facilities can provide an opportunity to enhance the importance of landscape setting, achieved through the benefits that can be delivered from natural play settings and showcasing them with carefully selected play equipment

NEAPs

- 3.3.25 A range of larger, equipped play areas built to NEAP (Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play) or equivalent standard should also be provided at appropriate village locations. In addition to play opportunities for younger children, NEAPs are typically equipped for older children.
- 3.3.26 NEAPs should be within an easy and safe walking distance of 500 metres (15 minute walking time) from nearby homes and provided as an integral part of development maximising opportunities for natural surveillance. Typical locations may include next to a Primary School, district centre and local centres serving to complement communal spaces that provide informal meeting points.
- 3.3.27 In order to secure long term sustainability of such facilities, each play facility should be accompanied by a comprehensive management and maintenance programme.

Allotments

- 3.3.28 The Local Plan sets out a requirement to deliver 0.3 hectares of allotment provision per 1000 population. Allotments should be within an easy walking distance of 600 metres (15 minute walking time) from nearby homes and provided as an integral part of development.
- 3.3.29 An area containing allotment plots which the local community can use for the purpose of producing fruit or vegetables for consumption by individuals and family wholly or mainly cultivates. Allotments are defined more precisely by the Allotments Act 1922.

General Recreation

- 3.3.30 The Local Plan sets out a requirement to deliver 1 hectare of general recreation per 1000 population, of which 0.5 hectares should be suitable for children's informal play. General recreation encompasses publically accessible Local Open Space (LOS) and Major Open Space (MOS) which are defined in more detail below. They provide significant recreational function but do not necessarily fall within the above typologies e.g. for example, parks and gardens, amenity areas and accessible wildlife areas.

Local Open Space (LOS)

- 3.3.31 Local open spaces are located within housing areas to serve the informal recreational needs of the immediate community and the play requirements of children. Such spaces should be within easy walking distance of 600 metres (15 minute walking time) from nearby homes and provided as an integral part of development.
- 3.3.32 Local open spaces may also provide equipped play areas for children and may contain multi-use games areas. They may also provide seating, paths, site information and associated landscape.

Major Open Space (MOS)

- 3.3.33 These spaces are designated principally for passive recreation serving recreational needs and providing connectivity to surrounding areas. Such spaces should be within easy walking distance of 600 metres (15 minute walking time) from nearby homes and provided as an integral part of development.
- 3.3.34 Such spaces may vary in size, shape and degree of formality and may be used to preserve and enhance retained landscape features such as woodlands, lakes or watercourses. They may also contain more formal provisions, pitches or play areas as secondary uses.
- 3.3.35 In accord with the Local Plan, major open spaces sites between 2 to 20 hectares in size should be accessible within 2km from home; sites greater than 20 hectares, accessibility should be within 5km.

Requirements to support the development - Analysis and opportunities

- 3.3.36 The Local Plan, specifically Policy EN3 and Appendix 3 sets out the standards for the provision, quality, and accessibility of open spaces. Developers will be expected to deliver open spaces which respond positively within its landscape context, optimising key attributes that the landscape can offer at this location, including due consideration to:
- Space - The significant large areas of open space identified in the Character and Biodiversity chapters can enhance the landscape character of the area and soften village settlement boundaries, responding positively to the surrounding countryside. Examples of how this can be achieved, include:
 - The preservation of important long distance views;
 - through the creation of new woodland in accord with the principles of the GWCF;
 - through the securing of viable grazed fields

- Informality - Less intensively managed, open and natural spaces located some distance from homes where there are opportunities to run free, promoting adventure and nature exploration.
- Variety - Trees, logs, boulders, naturally undulating slopes to roll upon, places to make dens and streams to paddle in. Adventurous play promotes healthy lifestyles and well-being and developers need to design these opportunities in to provide for the needs of children and families.

Proposals - Active Lifestyles

- 3.3.37 Development at the NEV can be designed to promote and facilitate active lifestyles where outdoor activity is within easy reach from your doorstep and becomes an integral way of life. Both the journey and the destination are outdoor, active, fun and social. Sport England along with Public Health England launched revised guidance 'Active Design' 'Active Design'⁵. In accordance with national planning policy, it provides 10 principles for Active Design and has considerable synergy with the objectives of delivering GI at the NEV.
- 3.3.38 Sports hubs should be easily accessible by walking or cycling, sensitively lit, and located outside Flood Risk areas. Sports Hubs should provide direct linkages to open space and the wider network including the River Meadows and woodland areas to enable the widest possible range of flexible recreational and wellbeing opportunities and experiences.
- 3.3.39 Furthermore, a location adjacent to, or combined with, school provision, other community facilities, play areas, or the visitor centre, can maximise usage; upgrade the offer for visitors; and help secure sustainable long term management and financing of facilities. Partnership working with local sports clubs and providers will help build a strong ethos and identity for sport and leisure at the NEV.

⁵ <https://www.sportengland.org/facilities-planning/active-design/>

Open Space: GI - Key Principle 4a

Policy Context

EN3, NEV Planning Obligations SPD

Open Space Calculator

In order to calculate the open space requirement and where the total number of residential dwellings are known, the below calculation can be used to work out the total average population as shown below at part (i). This must be done before undertaking the calculation for each type of open space shown at part (ii):

(i) For applications including residential dwellings:

(Total number of residential units) x 2.35 (average household size*) = Total average population

(ii) To calculate the requirement for each type of open space:

General Recreation (Major and Local Open Space): 1 hectare per 1000 population

1 hectare / (1000 / (Total average population)) = Hectare(s)

Outdoor Sports: 1.6 hectares per 1000 population (of which 1.2ha playing pitches)

1.6 hectare(s) / (1000 / (Total average population)) = Hectare(s)

Children's Play Areas: 0.3 hectares per 1000 population

0.3ha / (1000 / (Total average population)) = Hectare(s)

Allotments: 0.3 hectares per 1000 population

0.3ha / (1000 / (Total average population)) = Hectare(s)

** Please note that the average household size reflects DCLG ONS Base data as at 2012. If over time there is a change to average household size, the open space calculator will adjusted to reflect this.*

Open Space: GI - Key Principle 4b

What information will be expected?

Information should be provided to show on site open space provision as part of a detailed village masterplan, and in the context of delivering an integrated GI network both locally and strategically:

- the quantum of open space to be delivered
- the function of open space typologies
- how each typology contributes positively to the delivery of an extensive GI network
- how each open space typology is sensitively located to optimise accessibility catchments
- how each open space forms an integral part of development to optimise natural surveillance and overlooking by nearby homes.

Why is this information required from developers?

The above information is required to provide evidence that developers will provide public open space in accord with the open space standards and within the context of a well-designed GI network and townscape.

Figure 9: Illustrative Existing Recreation

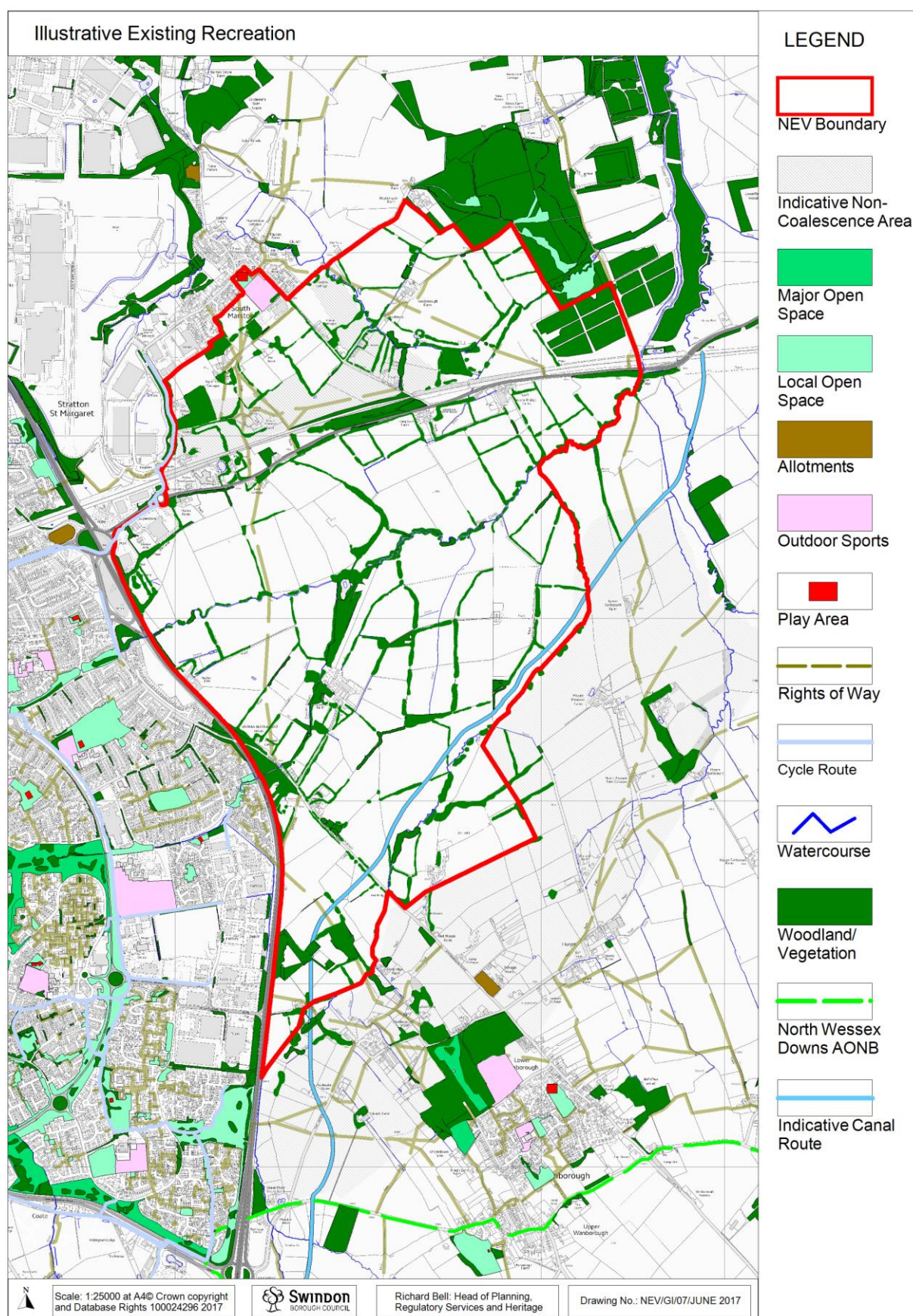
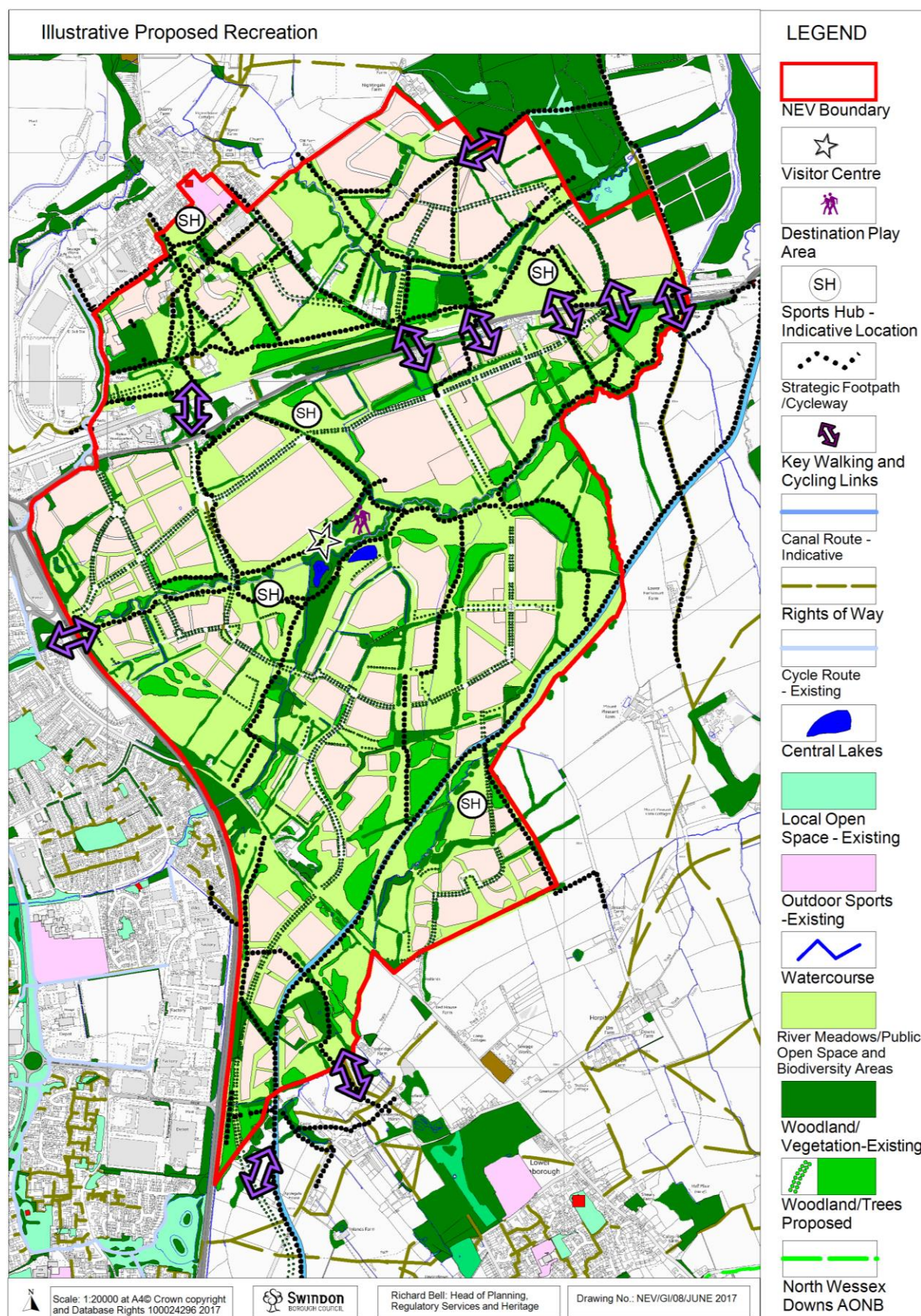


Figure 10: Illustrative Proposed Recreation



3.5 Art, Heritage and Education

Maximising access to heritage, archaeology, art, cultural, and learning opportunities the landscape.

Includes archaeological, cultural and heritage features (including designated heritage assets: Scheduled Monuments and other nationally significant archaeological sites, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Cemeteries Public Art and the public realm.

Baseline

- 3.4.1 Creation of Multi-functional GI includes Public Art, Heritage, and Educational Opportunities. GI offers an opportunity for the protection and interpretation of the historic landscape and to enable community participation and learning in its heritage.

Art

- 3.4.2 Public Art is the most accessible form of art - being free, open to all, and there all the time. Historically, art has been central to community identity, shared experience, and gathering places. Successful public art makes places very popular, and even the commissioning of an Artist can stimulate excitement and how this translates into the final piece. As stated by The Knight Foundations Soul of the Community Initiative:
- 3.4.3 “The Aesthetics of a Place together with parks and open spaces, it is a key driver of attachment to a place, ranking, along with the Social Offer, and Openness / Welcome, above Education, Safety, and the Local Economy.”

Heritage

- 3.4.4 As shown in Figure 11, there are significant heritage features at the NEV include the known archaeological assets which form part of the Roman small town of Durocornovium. This straddles either side of Ermin Street, formerly a Roman road and covers several hectares. This is a Scheduled Monument and further, new discoveries have been found outside the Scheduled Monument boundary and relate directly to this former Roman settlement. There are also locally important earthworks in South Marston.
- 3.4.5 Many other recorded non-designated heritage features exist, including Bronze Age burials, and settlements and farmsteads from the Iron Age, Roman and Medieval periods. Further investigations are expected and this is very likely to increase the number of finds and enhance the importance of such assets and their presence within the NEV.
- 3.4.6 Listed buildings and their settings within and adjacent to the NEV should be protected, giving opportunity for preservation and enhancement.

- 3.4.7 Although outside of the NEV, the Lower Wanborough Conservation Area described as the “rural setting below chalk scarp and on the edge of the Upper Thames Valley Plain” contributes positively to the character and appearance of the village.

Education

- 3.4.8 GI provides an important educational setting and resource in many ways. Popular initiatives such as Forest Schools demonstrate how regular visits to local woodland areas provide positive and natural environments to facilitate learning and life skills to come alive; and the same successful principles are true of all ages. Education using GI can be: college courses, nurseries, uniformed organisations, and a huge range of other clubs, societies and organisations, as well as the informal education coming from walking across the park to school every day for example. Education opportunities at NEV are currently limited with few people on the site, but development can create a wider range of educational settings as a resource for wider areas of Swindon too.

Requirements to support the development - Analysis and opportunities

- 3.4.9 In accord with Policy EN10, where development is likely to affect areas of known or potential archaeological interest, developers will be expected to submit an appropriate assessment and evaluation as part of development proposals.
- 3.4.10 As shown in Figure 12, such assets can help to enhance the character and distinctiveness at each village, providing inspiration from Swindon’s historical past. It can help to facilitate the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment which can positively shape the public realm at and around each village location. This may include heritage led public art, local visitor information and display boards. Shared local knowledge of a place, where it came from, and what has gone before, can help to develop sense of place, identity and help cohesive communities.

Proposals

- 3.4.11 In accord with the NEV Planning Obligations SPD, developers will be expected to explore and contribute towards opportunities to protect and better reveal the significance of art and heritage assets both at the local (village) and strategic level. This will ensure the historic environment plays an integral and positive role in place-making, to positively support and integrate the value of heritage, enhancing the cultural and economic environment.
- 3.4.12 The Council will be looking for developers to be creative and imaginative, creating opportunities for Art and Heritage as an integral part of the delivery of GI, in accord with GI principles and the GI Masterplan. Key considerations include:

Village Identity - In accord with policy, development proposals must be delivered within the context of the existing natural and historic environment and respond positively to enhance or create distinctive character and identity at each village. This includes the delivery of high quality design throughout the development optimising opportunities within the public realm including outdoor civic public space and public art.

Listed buildings and their settings - development proposals should conserve and, where appropriate, enhance their significance and setting.

Interpretation and storage - the delivery of the visitor centre centrally located within the NEV. Located at the heart of the GI network, the centre will serve to showcase local and significant archaeological finds and help the community to positively engage with the natural and historic environment.

The visitor centre will help to establish **local heritage trails, group activities and events.**

Delivery and Management Opportunities

3.4.13 It is the Council's intention to prepare a Public Arts Strategy, in partnership with local architects, artists and/or arts organisations. This will guide developers and help to ensure public art proposals at the NEV:

- respond positively to site and village character,
- provide (where appropriate) a balance of variety and unity of theme across the villages,
- investigate the application of different mediums (for example, sculpture, poetry, signage etc.)
- provide a programme for long term management and maintenance.

- archaeological assets will require a comprehensive management and maintenance regime to secure long term sustainability.

Art, Heritage and Education: GI - Key Principle 5

Policy Context:

Policy EN10, DE1, NC3 and NEV Planning Obligations SPD

The NPPF attaches 'great weight' to the conservation of heritage assets and their significance (para. 132, NPPF). In accord with Policy EN10, proposals for development affecting heritage assets shall conserve and, where appropriate, enhance their significance and setting. In accord with Policy NC3, the New Eastern Villages development will ensure the historic environment is protected, acknowledged and enhanced.

What information will be expected?

Evidence should be submitted to show how the development proposal will preserve and conserve any archaeological heritage that may be affected in areas of the NEV. This will need to be supported by the following:

- The submission of an appropriate assessment and evaluation as part of any planning application
- An appropriate management and maintenance plan will be required to secure the long term sustainability of such assets.

Why is this information required from developers?

The above information is required to provide evidence that developers will protect and conserve heritage assets.

Figure 11: Illustrative Existing Heritage

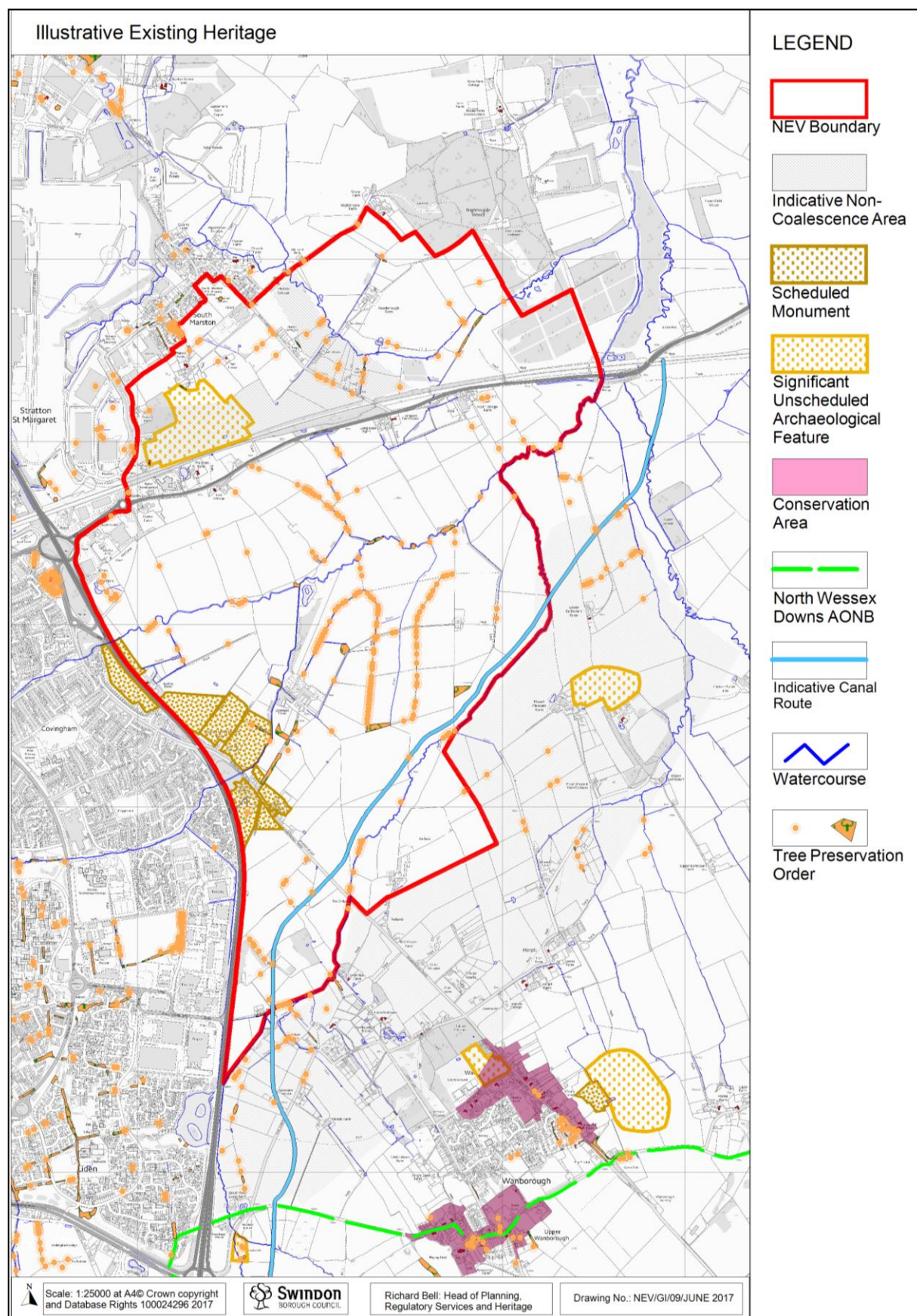
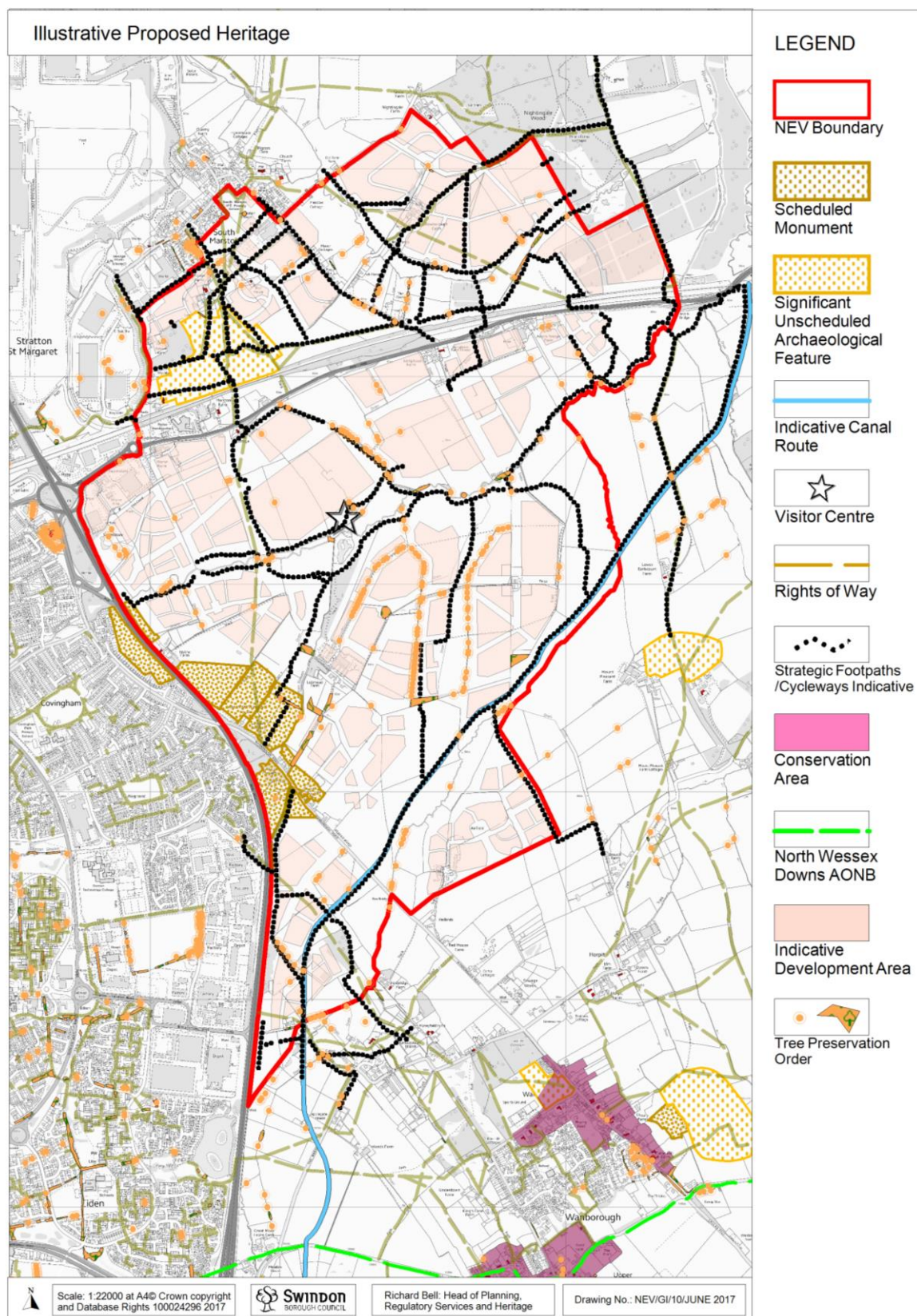


Figure 12: Illustrative Proposed Heritage



Economically Productive Land

Create sustainable economically useful and productive areas.

This includes arable fields, grazed meadows, productive woodland, coppice and allotments.

Baseline

- 3.5.1 One of the functions of GI in our landscapes is as productive land which generates income. Indeed traditional farming practices have generated much of the countryside character that we know and love, and enjoy walking and being in. Other economically productive land is forestry, allotments, and small holdings supplying farm shops etc.
- 3.5.2 The majority of the NEV site is currently farmland with a mix of arable and grazing pasture. As a result of development, the NEV will change from farmland to managed designed 'urban area', defined by the richness of the GI, providing a diverse wildlife network, offering opportunities for informal play, educational and leisure experiences.
- 3.5.3 This will also depend upon a viable and sustainable network of farmed fields within the GI. Whilst the creation of viable long term grazed pasture areas may also form part of the land management solutions for the protection of identified archaeological sites.

Requirements to support the development - Analysis and opportunities

- 3.5.4 Grazing and commercial management of woodland and pastures on the NEV can result in biodiversity benefits and are desirable for several other reasons:
 - 1. Earning income from the woodland, or cattle, or sheep helps cover the ongoing costs of land management;
 - 2. The landscapes and seasonal processes that arise from farmed land are valuable to people's wellbeing, education, and awareness of food production, and give a richness in countryside and recreational experiences and opportunities;
 - 3. Grazed pastures provides an opportunity to protect significant archaeology.

Proposals

- 3.5.5 There are opportunities to secure areas of grazed pasture at designated sites in order to protect heritage assets at the NEV. In appropriate circumstances, the Council in consultation with the local archaeologist advisor, will require the developer to submit a mitigation and monitoring plan which seeks to ensure the preservation of archaeological remains and their settings in accord with the principles of delivering an extensive GI network.

- 3.5.6 GI assets such as woodland, lakes and hedgerows can all form part of the GI network enhancing the rural character of these areas which link to more formal recreation provision, for example, the outdoor Sports hubs, play areas and the Visitor Centre.

Delivery and Management Opportunities

- 3.5.7 There are opportunities for external partners experienced in conservation grazing; biodiversity gains; and managing woodland, to work with developers and Parish Councils to create the viable network of grasslands, woodlands and water bodies that form the identity and heart of the GI network at the NEV.
- 3.5.8 Rather than developers delivering and managing the pastures and woodland, whether through Community Interest Company (CIC), or by transferring land to partner organisations; there will be economies of scale, and increased viability of grazing areas if developers and / or partners can work together to deliver and manage larger areas including the River Meadows Nature Reserve. Working in partnership can help to deliver significant cost savings, delivering continuity in delivery and connectivity across the GI network for the benefit of the new communities at the NEV.

Water and Climate Management

- 3.6.1 Sustainable management of water resources minimising impacts and causes of climate change. Includes water courses and associated floodplains and SuDS. Tree planting to help manage micro climates, air quality, and noise.

Baseline

- 3.6.2 The NEV is a generally flat area of relatively low lying fields and flood plains. A network of streams, and tributaries meander across the site and consequently parts of the NEV lie within medium and high risk flood zones (EA Flood Zones 2 and 3). These flood risk areas present an opportunity to develop and enhance the green corridors throughout the NEV - designed for biodiversity, leisure, and sustainable travel corridors. This would be in accord with the aims of the Water Framework Directive which introduced a comprehensive river basin management planning system to bring about ecological improvements to water courses and involve communities in water management planning.

- 3.6.3 With recent large scale flood events in Britain as well as global awareness of climate change, there is increasing understanding of the role that each site can play in both contributing to water and climate problems, but also in helping reduce them. This chapter will mainly deal with water management, but it is worth pointing out the important role that the NEV GI, in particular woodland blocks, can have in managing air pollution, and noise pollution, as well as mitigating water flows across land.

- 3.6.4 The water management function of GI can be split into three main areas:

- SuDs obligations for development, will need to be delivered as an integral part and design of GI
- The topography should not be raised as such to affect the existing flows on and off site. These routes need to be protected, to minimise the impact of any flood events
- Carefully sited woodland blocks and tree planting can help minimise extremes of existing surface water flooding

- 3.6.5 The SuDS Vision for the NEV SPD, provides more information on delivery and effective integration.

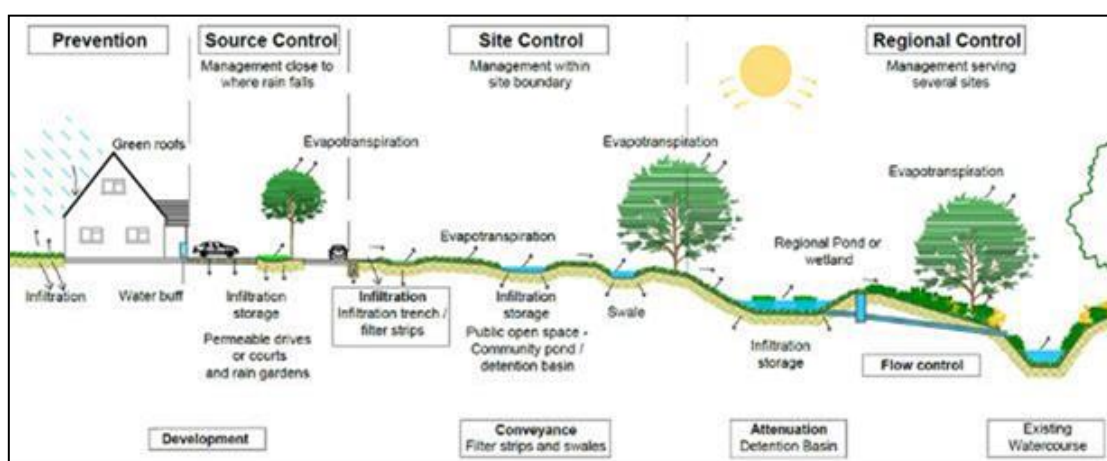
Requirements to support the development

- 3.6.6 In terms of managing the additional surface water run-off produced by each development; Section 1.5 of the SuDS Vision for the NEV SPD is very clear that “SBC will not accept a drainage strategy that seeks to use traditional gully pipe systems discharging to large attenuation features close to the final

discharge point. The Council will expect source control measures to be incorporated into the development which will ensure water is discharged throughout the management train at greenfield runoff rates. Water should be conveyed and controlled through the development using shallow above ground conveyance systems to mimic the natural drainage features of the site.”

- 3.6.7 Meeting the SuDS requirement for each development in a varied natural way as shown in the Figure 13 below, within the adjacent open space of the sub-catchment and between the development and the existing water course, can through good design by Landscape Architects and Drainage Engineers, also achieve many other of the recreational, biodiversity, and visual character obligations placed on developers.

Figure 13: Water Management Train⁶, SuDS Vision for the NEV SPD (adopted February 2017)



Proposals

- 3.6.8 Figure 14 shows existing flood risk areas at the NEV. Water management should be used to increase the richness and variety of water interaction experiences for children and adults, increasing well-being, and people’s understanding and enjoyment of the natural world. This also links to the Biodiversity proposals to create new flood meadows.

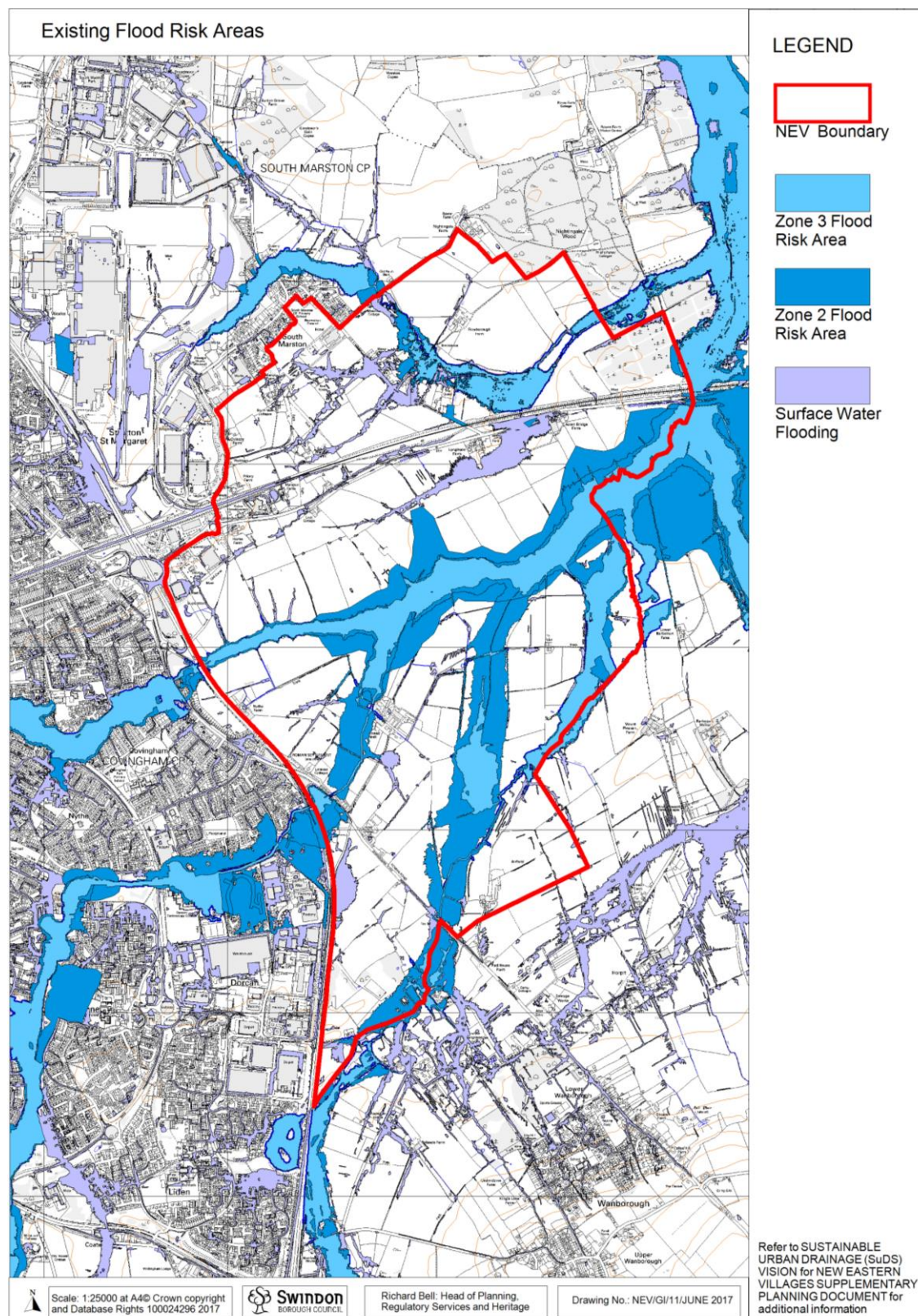
⁶ Extract from SuDS Vision for the NEV SPD, February 2017

- 3.6.9 The Illustrative Green Infrastructure Masterplan, shown at Figure 15 also identifies the opportunity to create central lakes with the potential to be linked to the visitor centre and regional play area at the heart of the River Meadows.

Delivery and Management Opportunities

- 3.6.10 There are opportunities for Parish Councils, Conservation Organisations, or social land management companies to get involved in the design, delivery and management of river and SuDS features on site, alongside developers, to ensure long term interests of communities and biodiversity are secured.

Figure 14: Existing Flood Areas





4 Delivery by Village

4.1 Delivery and Management

Securing viable, sustainable, land management solutions in partnership with stakeholders.

Key areas of strategic GI to be delivered at each village are provided. The GI Masterplan (Figure 15), sets out the green routes network to be delivered.

Issues

- 4.1.0 The aim is to provide guidance with regards to the holistic delivery of GI at the NEV.

Great Western Community Forest (GWCF)

- 4.1.1 Developers will be expected to deliver the objectives of GWCF through new planting schemes on-site or through other related projects as detailed in Figure 3 of this document. In circumstances where opportunities for on-site delivery cannot be realised, planning obligations will be secured to deliver the objectives of the River Meadows which will form part of an extensive GI network related to the development.
- 4.1.2 Working in partnership with the Council and conservation organisations, contributions may also be secured to facilitate GWCF planting schemes on sites that are adjacent to the NEV allocation but contribute towards the landscape setting and facilitate accessibility to the wider countryside.
- 4.1.3 The Council will need to ensure that all land required to support development and the new community is accompanied by a long term management plan.

Options for delivery and long term maintenance

- 4.1.4 The Council expects developers to both deliver and provide for the long term management and maintenance GI generated by the development. This includes the delivery of local onsite GI provision, together with, where required the delivery of 'shared' off site GI which falls outside the development proposal that forms part of the strategic network and contributes towards the delivery of the River Meadows.
- 4.1.5 The options detailed below, are just some that can be explored to facilitate and secure the long term management and maintenance of GI:

Option 1 - Management Companies

- 4.1.6 A developer can appoint a Management Company or Community interest company (CIC) to manage assets where there is a direct benefit to the community. This can be funded by residents through an annual charge.

Option 2 - Partnership Working

- 4.1.7 There may be opportunities for partnership working with third parties to manage GI assets.

Option 3 - Parish Councils

- 4.1.8 Parish Councils may be able manage GI assets which can be funded through a precept payment by residents.

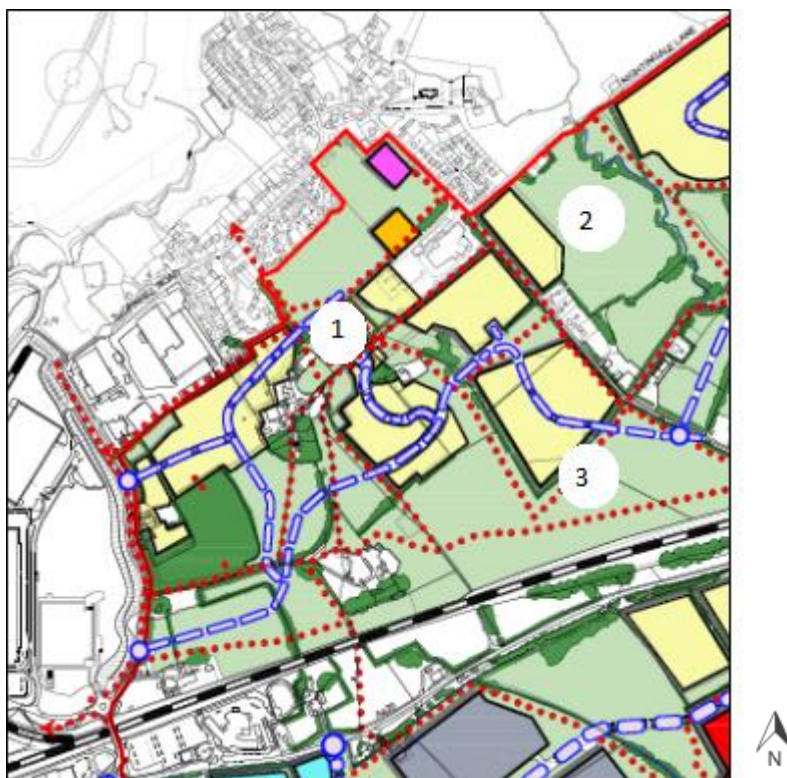
Delivering GI

- 4.1.9 The village boundaries have been predetermined by the existing watercourses and their associated flood risk zones which will form part of the wider GI network.
- 4.1.10 More formal open spaces and leisure uses, woodland planting, biodiversity and historic assets will also feature as part of the extensive network and as an integral part of the development. These areas help to define the character and edge of each individual village, providing identity and further enhancing the diversity and individuality of the parts of the development.
- 4.1.11 It is important that these spaces also provide a sense of connectivity across the wider development so that the new villages and their residents are connected through their relationship with and use of, the GI. There will also be public open space and leisure uses provided within the villages, outside of these wider GI areas. In addition to providing for leisure activities, connectivity and biodiversity, the large areas of informal GI space will also perform important flood alleviation and water storage functions.

4.1 South Marston Village (expansion)

- 4.1.0 The expansion of the existing village of South Marston must contribute to the creation of an integrated village. The provision of high quality GI is crucial to ensuring the village retains its separate identity and does not coalesce with other settlements.

Figure 16: South Marston Village



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Special Character of South Marston Village:

- 4.1.1 The special heritage, biodiversity opportunities and heritage of the ancient marshland to the south of South Marston are to be developed and enhanced in the associated open spaces to the new extension to the village. Character can be strengthened through links to the ancient lanes and bridleways, and medieval sunken lane nearby, and links to heritage of farm, field, and lane names in consultation with work ongoing by South Marston Parish Council.

Table 3: South Marston Village GI Obligations

	South Marston : Green Infrastructure S106 Planning Obligations						
	Allotments	Outdoor Sports Including Playing Pitches	Equipped Play Areas	Green routes (incl. cycle, footway, and bridleway links)	Open Space Including Major, Local & General Recreation	Biodiversity Including the 'River Meadows'	Community Forest
CONSIDER: INTEGRATED DESIGN, SuDS, & GI LINKS COMMUNITY & PARTNER ENGAGEMENT	EN3 Reqmt.	1. Bell Gardens EN3 Reqmt.		2. River Meadows 3. Indicative-non coalescence between South Marston and the A420			
PHASING							
DELIVERY							
ONGOING MANAGEMENT							

4.1.2 Key Landscape Features: Green routes across open grassland and marshland; high quality footpath and cycleway connections to the existing village; new habitat creation with interpretation as pasture, and water and SuDS corridors. There is an opportunity to deliver community woodland related projects, namely 'W1' and 'W4' as shown at Figure 3 of this document.

4.2 Rowborough Village

- 4.2.0 Located north of the A420, and east of the existing village of South Marston. The River Meadows will seek to preserve the non-coalescence with South Marston and provide links to Nightingale Wood. Green routes will ensure connectivity across the A420 and the mainline railway.

Figure 17: Rowborough Village



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Special Character of Rowborough Village:

- 4.2.1 Identity of development defined by the provision of visual and physical green routes that connect to Nightingale Wood to the north and east. This will enhance the rural character of the village with the woodland integrating with the village. And similarly, to the south and west, the open undeveloped stream valley to filter into the village layout via green space and grass verged streets, with additional tree planting and woodland giving visual separation from South Marston, and prominent green routes across A420.

Table 4: Rowborough Village GI Obligations

	Rowborough Village : Green Infrastructure S106 Planning Obligations						
	Allotments	Outdoor Sports Including Playing Pitches	Equipped Play Areas	Green routes (incl. cycle, footway, and bridleway links)	Open Space Including Major, Local & General Recreation	Biodiversity Including the 'River Meadows'	Community Forest
CONSIDER: INTEGRATED DESIGN, SuDS, & GI LINKS COMMUNITY & PARTNER ENGAGEMENT	EN3 Reqmt.	1. Sports Hub located outside of floodplain EN3 Reqmt.		2. River Meadows linking South Marston with Nightingale Wood. Community Forest planting to help soften the edges of the development. 3. Green routes across rail and roads to ensure children can cycle to NEV schools, local shops and services and other NEV destinations			
PHASING							
DELIVERY							
ONGOING MANAGEMENT							

4.2.2 Key Landscape Features: Green routes with woodland; woodland art, signage and trails; natural, informal, and adventure play provision adjacent to woods and streams / SuDs water features; wildlife interpretation and excellent forest school spaces. There is an opportunity to deliver community woodland related projects, namely 'W2' as shown at Figure 3 of this document.

4.3 Upper Lotmead Village

- 4.3.1 Located adjacent to the existing edge of Swindon, this village is the crucial GI 'Bridge' for wildlife and people. It will serve as a Green route for the community, providing connectivity within the NEV and wider connectivity through the availability of bus services to Swindon, Swindon Railway Station and town centre and thus is crucial to get right.

Figure 18: Upper Lotmead Village



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Special Character of Upper Lotmead Village:

- 4.3.2 Identity and special character of Upper Lotmead to be derived from the Roman small town of Durocornovium which also borders Lotmead and Foxbridge village. Green routes, signposting, art, and creative interpretation can extend through, and guide the design and arrangement of the development next to the park. The rural character, through its grazed long term management solution, along with tree planting and other noise abatement measures for the A419, can also form the retained green zone of non-coalescence between Swindon and Wanborough as experienced along the Wanborough Road corridor.

Table 5: Upper Lotmead GI Obligations

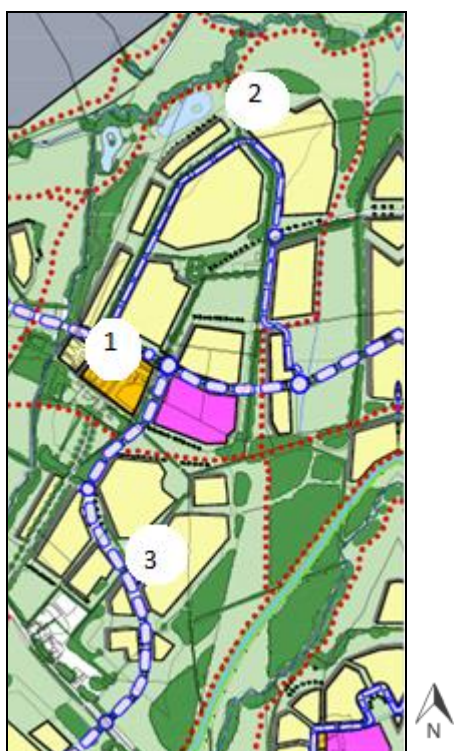
	Upper Lotmead Village : Green Infrastructure S106 Planning Obligations						
	Allotments	Outdoor Sports Including Playing Pitches	Equipped Play Areas	Green routes (incl. cycle, footway, and bridleway links)	Open Space Including Major, Local & General Recreation	Biodiversity Including the 'River Meadows'	Community Forest
CONSIDER: INTEGRATED DESIGN, SuDS, & GI LINKS COMMUNITY & PARTNER ENGAGEMENT	EN3 Reqmt		EN3 Reqmt 3. Opportunities to deliver Community woodland to help mitigate impact of NEV and key views	1. Great Stall Bridge providing connectivity to Swindon, including strategic footpath and cycleway. 2. The River Meadows will provide connectivity across the NEV			
PHASING							
DELIVERY							
ONGOING MANAGEMENT							

4.3.3 Key Landscape Features: Strategic green routes providing connectivity across the NEV to Great Stall Bridge. Extensive grazed flood meadows from the Roman small town of Durocornovium continuously through to the destination play area and visitor centre. There is an opportunity to deliver community woodland related projects, namely 'W6' as shown at Figure 3 of this document.

4.4 Lotmead Village

- 4.4.1 Lotmead Village is centrally located at the NEV. The GI characterised at this village will form numerous wetland areas and lakes and will be the location of the destination Visitor Centre. On this basis, it is likely that large numbers of people will visit and use GI facilities at the NEV.

Figure 19: Lotmead Village



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Special Character of Lotmead Village:

- 4.4.2 Special character and identity of Lotmead is linked to the River Meadows, lakes, and flood meadows to the north, and has opportunity for contemporary eco design of housing, artwork, a strong leisure and play offer providing opportunities for leisure pursuits such as running, and biodiversity driven outdoor education and interpretation. The southern edge of Lotmead Village needs to take its identity and character from the rural and Roman small town of Durocornovium.

Table 6: Lotmead Village GI Obligations

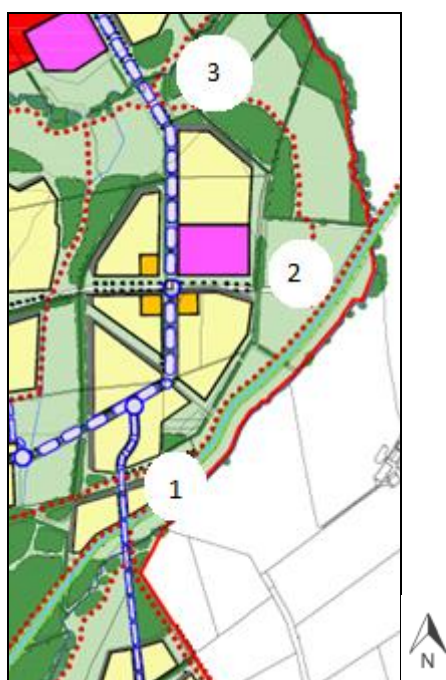
	Lotmead Village : Green Infrastructure S106 Planning Obligations						
	Allotments	Outdoor Sports Including Playing Pitches	Equipped Play Areas	Green routes (incl. cycle, footway, and bridleway links)	Open Space Including Major, Local & General Recreation	Biodiversity Including the 'River Meadows'	Community Forest
CONSIDER: INTEGRATED DESIGN, SuDS, & GI LINKS COMMUNITY & PARTNER ENGAGEMENT	EN3 Reqmt.	1. Sports Hub outside of floodplain				Lakes and flood- plain meadows	
			Destination Play Area &EN3 Reqmt	2. Strategic River Meadows will provide green routes and accessibility to the destination play area and Visitor Centre. Enhance Wildlife Sites.			
		3. Opportunities to deliver Community woodland to help mitigate impact of NEV and key views					
PHASING							
DELIVERY				Visitor Centre and destination play area			
ONGOING MANAGEMENT							

4.4.3 Key Landscape Features: Destination play area, connecting to the River Meadows and lakes; and structural woodland areas. There is an opportunity to deliver community woodland related projects, namely 'W7' as shown at Figure 3 of this document.

4.5 Lower Lotmead Village

- 4.5.1 Lower Lotmead is between the NEV and existing open countryside and settlements of Bourton, Hinton Parva, and Bishopstone. The River Meadows and woodland areas provided here will serve to mitigate the impact of the NEV, as well as strategic green corridors. In addition to this, land is also safeguarded for the Wilts & Berks canal route (Policy EN11).

Figure 20: Lower Lotmead Village



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Special Character of Lower Lotmead Village:

- 4.5.2 The character of Lower Lotmead is a lower density rural village where the scale, layout, and style of houses, roads, boundary treatments, and tree planting are inspired by nearby villages of Hinton Parva and Bourton. Art can be explored and integrated into careful detailing, for example, the individual character of real stone landmark buildings and gateways. Community forest planting, open space, and biodiversity gains on site to the east form important green routes for the NEV, offering opportunities for recreation and sustainable travel.

Table 7: Lower Lotmead Village GI Obligations

	Lower Lotmead Village : Green Infrastructure S106 Planning Obligations						
	Allotments	Outdoor Sports Including Playing Pitches	Equipped Play Areas	Green routes (incl. cycle, footway, and bridleway links)	Open Space Including Major, Local & General Recreation	Biodiversity Including the "River Meadows"	Community Forest
CONSIDER: INTEGRATED DESIGN, SuDS, & GI LINKS COMMUNITY & PARTNER ENGAGEMENT	<div>EN3 Reqmt.</div>	1. The provision of Strategic Green routes					
			<div>EN3 Reqmt.</div>	2. Strategic River Meadows will provide green routes and accessibility to the destination play area and Visitor Centre. Enhance Wildlife Sites.			
			3. Opportunities to deliver Community woodland to help mitigate impact of NEV and key views				
PHASING							
DELIVERY				Visitor Centre and destination play area			
ONGOING MANAGEMENT							

4.5.3 Key Landscape Features: Local stone boundary walls; views between houses in larger plots. Attractive, rural character green routes, offering opportunities for recreation and sustainable travel, with woodland and grassland between Lower Lotmead and the open countryside. There is an opportunity to deliver community woodland related projects, namely 'W5' and 'W10' as shown at Figure 3 of this document.

4.6 Redlands Village

- 4.6.1 Located on the airfield north of Wanborough Road, this village is in a sensitive location within the context of the North Wessex Downs AONB. In addition to this and due north of the village, land is also safeguarded for the Wilts & Berks canal route (Policy EN11).

Figure 21: Redlands Village



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Special Character of Redlands Village:

- 4.6.2 Redlands is to be a distinct, small scale village reflecting its rural setting. It is likely to consist of quality local materials and a character indicative of the nearby North Wessex Downs AONB.

Table 8: Redlands Village GI Obligations

	Redlands Village : Green Infrastructure S106 Planning Obligations						
	Allotments	Outdoor Sports Including Playing Pitches	Equipped Play Areas	Green routes (incl. cycle, footway, and bridleway links)	Public Open Space (Including Major, Local)	Biodiversity Including the River Meadows*	Community Forest
CONSIDER: INTEGRATED DESIGN, SuDS, & GI LINKS COMMUNITY & PARTNER ENGAGEMENT	EN3 Reqmt.	2. Sports Hub outside of floodplain	EN3 Reqmt.	1. Strategic Green routes to connect with the existing network of bridleways and lanes linking to nearby villages and the Ridgeway Trail &			
			3. Opportunities to deliver Community woodland to help mitigate impact of NEV and key views				
PHASING							
DELIVERY							
ONGOING							

4.6.3 Key Landscape Features: Traditional signage; trees along retained field boundaries; sensitively designed roofscapes will help to preserve high quality views to and from the North Wessex Downs AONB. There is an opportunity to deliver community woodland related projects, namely 'W5' and 'W10' as shown at Figure 3 of this document.

4.7 Foxbridge Village

- 4.7.1 Foxbridge Village is adjacent to the edge of Swindon, located between Wanborough Road and the A419. It adjoins open countryside south of Wanborough. The River Meadows and woodland areas provided here will serve to mitigate the impact of the NEV and indicative non-coalescence areas. In addition to this, land is also safeguarded for the Wilts & Berks canal route (Policy EN11).

Figure 22: Foxbridge Village



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Special Character of Foxbridge Village:

- 4.7.2 Foxbridge is a distinct new village between the A419 and the Wanborough Road. There is potential for new modern character within the village with edges softer adjoining the Roman small town of Durocornovium. A strategic green route, with avenue trees, with potential alongside the safeguarded canal route, connecting the village with the schools, shops, and leisure facilities across the NEV.

Table 9: Foxbridge Village GI Obligations

	Foxbridge Village : Green Infrastructure S106 Planning Obligations						
	Allotments	Outdoor Sports Including Playing Pitches	Equipped Play Areas	Green routes (incl. cycle, footway, and bridleway links)	Open Space Including Major, Local & General Recreation	Biodiversity Including the 'River Meadows'	Community Forest
CONSIDER: INTEGRATED DESIGN, SuDS, & GI LINKS COMMUNITY & PARTNER ENGAGEMENT	EN3 Reqmt.	1. Strategic Green routes	EN3 Reqmt.	2. The River Meadows will also form part of the indicative non-coalescence areas between the NEV and Wanborough, as well as providing an important green route to NEV schools, shops and services			
			3. Opportunities to deliver Community woodland to help mitigate impact of NEV and key views				
PHASING							
DELIVERY							
ONGOING MANAGEMENT							

4.7.3 Key Landscape Features: Woodland and avenues to relieve existing surface water flooding, manage noise and pollution from the A419; and mitigate visual impact. Continuous green routes with PROWs and bridleways and lanes near Wanborough. There is an opportunity to deliver community woodland related projects, namely 'W8' and 'W9' as shown at Figure 3 of this document.

4.8 Great Stall East Village

- 4.8.1 Great Stall East Village, to the south of the A420, links with Lotmead Village to form the heart of the NEV, providing the destination play area and visitor centre. This provides identity and a focal point across the NEV, promoting health and well-being lifestyle.

Figure 23: Great Stall East Village



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Special Character of Great Stall East Village

- 4.8.2 Great Stall East Village has opportunities for contemporary housing that will form the new gateway to Swindon from the east. This will be matched with large scale woodlands; River Meadows and a network of green routes to the proposed central lakes. The NEV Secondary School and Visitor centre will provide direct and attractive sustainable green routes in Great Stall East which are essential for delivering the Leisure lifestyle for the NEV.

Table 10: Great Stall East GI Obligations

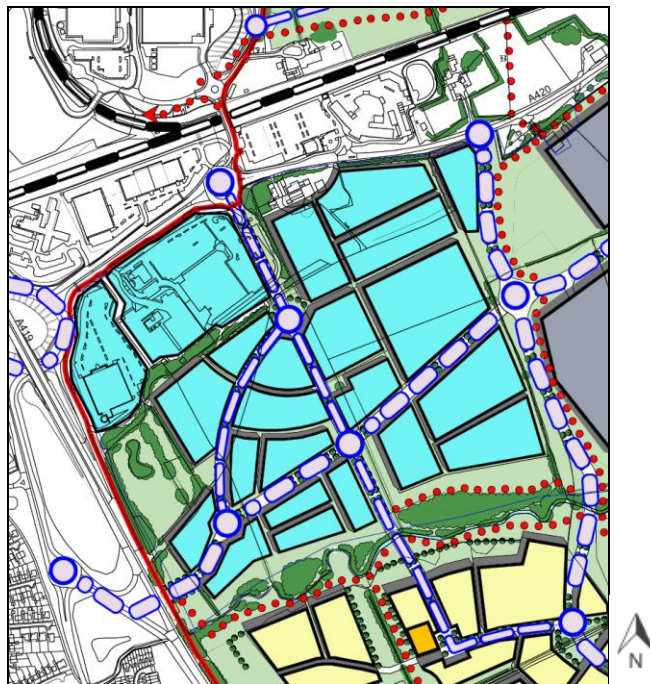
	Foxbridge Village : Green Infrastructure S106 Planning Obligations						
	Allotments	Outdoor Sports Including Playing Pitches	Equipped Play Areas	Green routes (incl. cycle, footway, and bridleway links)	Open Space Including Major, Local & General Recreation	Biodiversity Including the "River Meadows"	Community Forest
CONSIDER: INTEGRATED DESIGN, SuDS, & GI LINKS COMMUNITY & PARTNER ENGAGEMENT		1. Strategic Green routes			2. The River Meadows will also form part of the indicative non-coalescence areas between the NEV and Warborough, as well as providing an important green route to NEV schools, shops and services		
		EN3 Reqmt.	EN3 Reqmt.	3. Opportunities to deliver Community woodland to help mitigate impact of NEV and key views			
PHASING							
DELIVERY							
ONGOING MANAGEMENT							

4.8.3 Key Landscape Features: Community forest; housing areas with views across the River Meadows to the central lakes; varied and colourful planting arrangements at key gateway locations and open spaces integrated within the residential areas; destination play area. There is an opportunity to deliver community woodland related projects, namely 'W5' and 'W10' as shown at Figure 3 of this document.

4.9 Great Stall West Village

- 4.9.0 Great Stall West Village is located adjacent to White Hart Junction. Next to existing commercial uses, this will be District Centre and Leisure Sports facilities serving the whole NEV. Important green routes that connect Swindon and South Marston.

Figure 24: Great Stall West



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Not to Scale

Special Character of Great Stall West Village:

- 4.9.1 Great Stall West will form the District Centre to the NEV, with four storey buildings, and large scale employment buildings. Within and between these it is essential to have high quality public realm, and open spaces and green routes and transport corridors that are of a human scale for pedestrians and cyclists. Style can be contemporary, urban, and distinctive with opportunities for flagship public art.

Table 11: Great Stall East GI Obligations

	Great Stall West Village : Green Infrastructure S106 Planning Obligations						
	Allotments	Outdoor Sports Including Playing Pitches	Equipped Play Areas	Green routes (incl. cycle, footway, and bridleway links)	Open Space Including Major, Local & General Recreation	Biodiversity Including the "River Meadows"	Community Forest
CONSIDER: INTEGRATED DESIGN, SuDS, & GI LINKS COMMUNITY & PARTNER ENGAGEMENT		Indoor Sports facilities may have linked out- door facilities e.g. Skatepark, Play Ar- ea ...	EN3 Reqmt.	1. Great Stall Bridge providing connectivity to Swindon, including strategic footpath and cycleway. Also providing connectivity to the River Meadows			
				2. Strategic River Meadows will provide green routes and accessibility to the destination play area and Visitor Centre.			
	EN3 Reqmt.		3. Opportunities to deliver Community woodland to help mitigate impact of NEV and key views				
PHASING							
DELIVERY							
ONGOING MANAGEMENT							

4.9.2 Key Landscape Features: The provision of a strategic green routes to connect Great Stall Bridge and the Eastern flyer; distinctive and sustainable lighting and wayfinding strategy; large scale successful public art owned by the new communities. There is an opportunity to deliver community woodland related projects, namely 'W5' as shown at Figure 3 of this document.

Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms

Green Infrastructure: A network of multi-functional open space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

Local Plan: A local plan sets out local planning policies and identifies how land is used, determining what will be built where. Adopted local plans provide the framework for development across England.

Planning Policy Guidance: UK government statements of national policy and principles towards certain aspects of the town planning framework.

National Planning Policy Framework: A national planning policy document released in March 2012 which replaced previous national planning guidance contained in PPGs and PPSs.

Areas of Outstanding Natural Boundary: An area of countryside designated by a government agency as having natural features of exceptional beauty and therefore given a protected status.

Great Western Community Forest: One of England's 12 community forests. The forest covers an area of 168 square miles, stretching from Royal Wootton Bassett to Faringdon, and the North Wessex Downs to the Thames. The GWCF aims to diversify land-use, revitalise a derelict landscapes, enhance the biodiversity and provide opportunities for leisure, recreation, cultural activity, education, healthy living, social and economic development.

Community Interest Companies: A CIC is a special type of limited company which exists to benefit the community rather than private shareholders.

Green Routes: Forming an integral part of the green infrastructure network, the provision of public rights of ways, cycleways, bridleways and tree lined routes can facilitate easy access and movement to open spaces, play areas, local services and facilities such as schools and shops.

Open Space: All open space of public value, including not just land, but also inland bodies of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs which offer important opportunities for sport and outdoor recreation and can also act as a visual amenity.

Swindon - New Eastern Villages
Green Infrastructure
Supplementary Planning Document

Statement of Consultation

July 2017

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Contents

1. Introduction
2. Purpose
3. When did consultation take place?
4. Who was consulted?
5. Summary of the main issues raised
6. Post consultation changes

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This consultation statement has been prepared in accordance with Regulation 12 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The statement sets out who was consulted on the New Eastern Villages (NEV) draft Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The SPD comprises one document providing a robust framework for securing the delivery of Green Infrastructure generated by development schemes in the NEV.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The SPD sets out Swindon Borough Council's (SBC's) robust framework for securing the delivery of GI generated by development schemes in the NEV. It sets out in detail the Council's approach to the provision of GI related to development at the NEV, providing further detail to the principles established by Policy NC3, in particular to provide:

“an extensive green infrastructure network that maximises opportunities for habitat connectivity and enhanced biodiversity including extending the River Cole green infrastructure corridor and connecting with Nightingale Wood”

- 2.2 This document sets out the strengths and opportunities for GI that can be realised at the NEV, providing options to facilitate the delivery of an integrated, multi-functional, GI network throughout the NEV. It has the potential to deliver over 300 hectares of GI providing an integrated GI network across the site. The strategy will seek to fulfil the full range of open space provision required, responding positively to the landscape and the topography of the area whilst maximising opportunities for the new communities. GI will be delivered in a creative, innovative, and sustainable way which is engaging, promoting enjoyment and well-being for all, in the context of the development requirements and partnership working. The provision of Green Infrastructure is necessary to create a sustainable development as required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

3. When did consultation take place?

- 3.1 Public consultation on the draft SPD took place between 20th February 2017 and 3rd April 2017. A total of 28 responses were received; generating over 270 comments.

4. Who was consulted?

- 4.1 In accord with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and other relevant statutory provisions, all statutory consultees and interested parties were notified of the public consultation.
- 4.2 A formal public notice was made available in the locally distributed newspaper, together with publication on the Swindon Borough Council website, and hard copies of documents were made available at all libraries and Parish / Town Councils within the Borough.

5. Summary of the Main Issues Raised

- 5.1 All comments have been logged on a 'record of interested parties', and have been responded to by relevant Officers. The following paragraphs provide a summary of the comments and due to the high number of responses, it is not possible to detail all of them within this Statement of Consultation. A summary table of detailed comments and Officer Responses are available online.

Stakeholder responses

- 5.2 Comments were received from stakeholders including:
- Bishopstone Parish Council
 - Bluestone Planning
 - Councillor Gary Sumner (Ridgeway Ward)
 - Environment Agency (EA)
 - GWH Foundation Trust, Swindon CCG, Public Health (SBC)
 - David Lock Associates (on behalf of Hallam Land Management Ltd, Hannick Homes & Developments Ltd. and Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd.)
 - Harris Lamb Property Consultancy (on behalf of Barberry (Swindon) Ltd)
 - Haydon Wick Parish Council
 - Historic England (HE)
 - Jackson Planning Ltd (on behalf of The Blatchford Family)
 - Liddington Parish Council
 - Natural England (NE)

- Public Health (SBC)
- South Marston Parish Council
- Sport England (SE)
- Stratton St Margaret Parish Council
- Thames Water Ltd
- The Canal and River Trust
- Turleys (on behalf of Ainscough Strategic Land Ltd)
- Turleys (on behalf of Wasdell Commercial Properties)
- Wanborough Flood Group
- Wanborough Parish Council
- Wilts & Berks Canal Trust
- Wiltshire Council
- Wiltshire Swindon & Oxfordshire Canal Partnership
- Wiltshire Wildlife Trust (WWT)
- Woodlands Trust (WT)

5.3 A number of key themes and issues are highlighted in the consultation responses, as well as more specific comments relating to Green Infrastructure:

- There were a significant number of supporting comments to the draft GI SPD including the Canal & River Trust, Historic England, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, the Woodland Trust and Sport England;
- Several of the responses highlighted the difficult balance with competing land interests delivering GI at the NEV;
- Need for more clarity on definitions of land uses and designations;
- Concern raised in relation to the provision of the sports hubs in the flood plain and the need for facilities, for example, the visitor centre;
- More consideration is required in relation to flood risk mitigation;

- Concern raised in relation to delivery of the objectives within the plan and lack of detail to ensure effective use of green infrastructure;
- The need to link the vision to health and wellbeing objectives;
- There were comments regarding detailed matters, such as softening of the Southern Connector Road, development screening the design and location of skate parks;
- Other comments relate to the lack of detail shown on the GI maps within the SPD. The maps are too generic and not consistent with the Masterplan, and other strategies; the inclusion of the neighbourhood plan map within the GI SPD.
- The lack of reference to the indicative Wilts & Berks canal route.

The Council's Response

- 5.4 The Council acknowledges the supporting comments, in particular the positive intention to deliver a comprehensive network across the NEV. Key stakeholder engagement will be ongoing and is an important part of developing appropriate guidance on the identification of the GI required to support the NEV and in terms of effective delivery and implementation.
- 5.5 The Council consider that the SPD should not be read in isolation and there are a number of SPDs that have been recently prepared to support policy and provide further guidance to development at the NEV, namely the adopted Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Vision for New Eastern Villages (NEV) SPD (adopted February 2017)
- 5.6 The maps detailed in the draft SPD required attention with regards to their presentation and clarity. Many comments were made in relation to this, thus all the maps have been reviewed to improve the following:
- Consistency – Illustrative maps have now been prepared on a consistent basis including the annotation of existing and proposed GI
 - Clarity - The application of GIS has now improved the presentation of each illustrative map and they are now much easier to read and interpret,
 - To address comments, where appropriate to do so

Comments from Environmental Stakeholders

5.7 In summary, comments made by **The Environment Agency (EA)** relate to:

- The EA were pleased to see that the document recognises the importance of the River aspects of GI, including promoting wildlife corridors along the River Cole;
- The EA welcome the proposals in paragraph 3.2.7 to restore floodplain meadows, this will not only result in an increase in biodiversity but could also cause a reduction in flood risk;
- The EA would also support improvement of aquatic life through removal of barriers and sensitive bankside management as set out in 3.2.7;
- As relates to key principle 2 in the document, it is recommended that there are more specific requirements contained in the SPD that all developments within 8 metres of designated Main Rivers provides a buffer zone free from built development including lighting, domestic gardens and formal landscaping.

The Council's response

5.8 The Council welcome the supporting comments from the Environment Agency. The Council will continue to engage with the Environment Agency on planning related matters at the NEV, including the provision of green infrastructure.

5.9 The Council acknowledge the point made with regards to ensuring that all developments within 8 metres of designated Main Rivers provide an appropriate buffer zone free from built development. On this basis, additional text has been included as part of 'Key Principle 2'. Such buffers form a vital part of GI provision, in accord with paragraph 109 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

5.10 In summary, comments made from **Natural England (NE)** relate to:

- NE welcome the emphasis on grazing as a management regime. To the benefits listed in 3.6.3 we would add that biodiversity benefits significantly from grazing (especially cattle) rather than mechanical management. The type of grazing regime is important.
- There is considerable scope to deliver GI within the built areas. A few large trees within the built areas is likely to provide large landscape benefits.

- Tree planting is likely to be an important element of landscape mitigation in terms of views from the AONB and is not likely to require a large depth of trees, but tree height will be important. Developers should be encouraged to undertake any tree planting works as early as possible in the development process so that they can provide mitigation as early as possible.
- Figure 7 shows indicative new woodland planting. It should be made clear that this should not preclude tree planting in areas identified for other uses where it would serve a positive landscape purpose (e.g. possibly the southeast side of Lower Lotmead).
- At present, the landscaping of Redlands appears weak as seen from the AONB. The SPD should be clear that Redlands landscape impacts will be adequately mitigated as seen from the AONB.
- There is considerable emphasis on creating wet meadows. Creating wet grassland priority habitat types can be difficult. Consideration should be given to the soil fertility, hydrology, the target NVC habitat type, and how dedicated and competent the habitat creation and (especially) long term management will be to achieve the target habitat. Perhaps additional consideration should be given to other wetland habitat types (ponds, scrapes, ditches and reed beds). Some of these habitats may, in some locations be easier to achieve and cheaper to manage.
- The document uses the terms “grassland”, “pasture” and “meadow” interchangeably. Pasture and meadow are differing management regimes for grassland, resulting in differing habitat types. Unless the intent is to specify a management regime, we advise the term “grassland” is used.
- Developers should be encouraged to undertake any works around hedge restoration, hedgerow tree planting or coppicing.
- Developers should be required to ensure there is no gap in management between management under agriculture and management as green infrastructure. Significant extra costs may arise if land is left unmanaged.
- Developers should be encouraged to undertake measures to enhance biodiversity as early as possible in the development process so that the biodiversity benefits can flow as early as possible.
- Delivery by village - 4.2.1. In area 1 it is important the green feel of the approach to Nightingale Wood along the Public right of way from the south is preserved.

- Para 4.6.3 says “Trees along retained boundary features”. We suggest this should be a principle throughout the NEV, both in the built and green areas.

The Council’s response

- 5.11 The Council agree that there is more scope to deliver GI within the proposed developable / built areas within the villages. Appropriate areas of GI and open space will be expected as part of each development proposal, in accordance with Policies EN1 and EN3. These will be designed and programmed through a landscape strategy to be submitted through the planning process
- 5.12 The delivery of an extensive network, integral to the design and layout of development proposals will help to deliver a range of open spaces that contribute to the GI network i.e. ‘street level’ provision of trees and play parks to the strategic provision of the green routes that connect villages to major open spaces, local schools, shops, community facilities and services.
- 5.13 All maps have now been reviewed to improve their clarity and presentation.
- 5.14 In relation to the undertaking of landscape works and tree planting, the Council consider that the submission of Landscape Visual Impact Assessments (LVIAs) by developers and as part of development proposals should include details of maintenance and restoration works that are required for all GI assets existing and proposed on site and will be dealt with at the planning application stage.
- 5.15 With regards to tree planting to form an important element of landscape mitigation in terms of views from the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), proposed avenue tree planting has now been included as part of the review of the NEV GI Masterplan to help mitigate and create new woodland areas; positively contributing to the views from the North Wessex Downs (NWD) AONB.
- 5.16 The document has been reviewed to ensure consistency of references to ‘grassland’ areas, unless related specifically to a management regime.
- 5.17 In accord with Policy NC3 high levels of connectivity and a strong relationship with Nightingale Wood will be encouraged throughout the detailed planning stage (xi).
- 5.18 In accord with Policies EN1, EN4 and EN5 the retention of hedgerows and existing landscaping is sought and the design and layout of individual boundary treatments will be assessed through the detailed planning process.
- 5.19

5.20 In summary, comments made from **Sport England** related to the following:

- Sport England supports the Council's intention to provide new residents with a range of open spaces
- It is not clear what built sports facilities (including indoor facilities), if any will be provided with the development.
- As the Masterplan for the site takes shape, Sport England recommends that the Council ensures the developer adheres to the 10 principles for Active Design set out in Sport England's Active Design, with cross reference to resources online at www.sportengland.org/activedesign
- A suggested model development plan policy is attached.

The Council's response

5.21 The Council acknowledge the support from Sport England. The SPD has been reviewed to provide more detail on the delivery of the built sports facilities. The Council will continue to engage with Sport England on sports related matters related to the NEV. The SPD has been updated to include a reference to the Active Design document.

5.22 In summary, comments from the **Canal and River Trust** related to the following:

- The canal route is recognised as important GI and afforded protection in this strategy.

The Council's response

5.23 The Council note the support from the Canal and River Trust.

5.24 In summary, comments from **Wiltshire and Berkshire Canal Trust** related to the following:

- Highlighted details in relation to the aspirations for the canal with no specific comments on the GI strategy.
- Figure 16 of the Green Infrastructure Strategy is unclear but is perhaps trying to depict the potential pedestrian routes across the A420 and mainline railway, which would presumably involve overbridges and tunnels
- Apart from a few references, the strategy document tends to ignore one of the major green infrastructure amenities, namely the Wilts & Berks Canal and Policy EN11
- The proposal to use the canal line in part as a flood defence barrier will make it prominent in some parts of the green space.
- WBCT believes that the developers should construct the canal as an integral part of the flood protection and drainage measures and for its green benefits.
- Figure 16 is unclear but is perhaps trying to depict the potential pedestrian routes across the A420 and mainline railway, which would presumably involve overbridges and tunnels
- Meanwhile the Wilts & Berks Canal would automatically give the opportunity to provide a pedestrian route and wildlife corridor linking the River Cole catchment north and south of the road and railway line.

The Council's response

5.25 The Council notes the comments made by the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust. Amendments have now been made to the SPD to reference the Wilts & Berks canal and Policy EN11, where appropriate, throughout the SPD. With regards to the canal line forming part of flood protection, please refer to the recently adopted Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Vision for New Eastern Villages (NEV) SPD (adopted February 2017) which provides further guidance on the management of surface water by the use of SuDS.

5.26 With regards to the NEV GI Masterplan (formerly Figure 16), this has now been reviewed to ensure that opportunities to deliver GI at the NEV are in accord with the adopted NEV Masterplan (October 2016). The canal safeguarded alignment currently extends to Acorn Bridge and does not cross the railway line. Thus, further work would be required to review the canal route and would need to inform the review of the Local Plan 2026.

5.27 In summary, comments from **Wiltshire, Swindon & Oxfordshire Canal Partnership** related to:

- SPD fails to incorporate the provisions in Policy EN11 which seeks to safeguard canals. The response recommends inclusion of this into the Strategy.
- Proposal for use of the Wilts & Berks Canal for land drainage and flood alleviation - Technical Note already submitted to Swindon Borough Council and included in Bridge Vision Consultation.

The Council's Response

5.28 The Council notes the comments made. References to Policy EN11, have now been included to throughout the SPD where necessary. Furthermore, a cross reference to the recently adopted NEV Bridge Island Vision SPD is now also included in the NEV GI SPD which is accompanied by the W&BCT's 'Technical Note - Flood Protection of the NEV' (2016).

5.29 In summary, comments from **Wiltshire Wildlife Trust (WWT)** related to:

- It will be important to provide for some areas of sanctuary for species which require relatively quiet areas and that are less disturbed;
- The strategy articulates the important role and responsibility that developers have to play in consulting with communities, and potential partner organisations in helping to achieve the integrated GI objectives;
- Support the ambition to create a new network of green spaces and green routes based around species rich grasslands and central river meadows, interconnecting all of the villages;
- WWT is delighted to see proposals to include a new Visitor Centre at the heart of the River Meadows Nature Reserve, as a place where people can engage and be involved with nature conservation, the natural environment and local heritage;
- Agree that developers should be expected to deliver and provide for the long term management and maintenance of GI that is required as a result of development at NEV;
- So far no one has approached the Trust to discuss and consider either GI provision or proposals for enhancement of Biodiversity;

- WWT endorse the requirement that developers design and enhance natural water management features;
- Planning obligations secured for GI at the NEV will be directed towards priority habitats and ecological habitats, which should be reconciled with SuDs and other key considerations;
- The Trust has a great amount of ecological expertise and would like to be involved in the development of the proposals for the habitats network. The creation of economically sustainable and viable grazing units requires significant integration and careful thought across the River Meadows Nature Reserve;
- Village Master plans should be consistent with and contribute directly the overall vision for GI across the NEV. They should integrate across individual village development boundaries.
- It would be helpful to integrate the planning for schools provision, in with the GI network, enabling school children to have easy access to nature, building on the opportunity that GI provides for a unique educational setting for all age groups.

The Council's Response

- 5.30 Swindon Borough Council note the supporting comments from the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust and Council welcome the Woodland Trust's offer as a potential partner to help facilitate and deliver GI at the NEV.
- 5.31 With regards to provision of areas to provide sanctuary for species and creation of economically sustainable and viable grazing land requiring significant integration as part of the River Meadows, the Council consider such points are pertinent to the delivery of an effective network and reiterates the importance of working in partnership with the key stakeholders including the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust.
- 5.32 Support noted with regards to the Visitor Centre, the Council will work with delivery partners and stakeholders to determine appropriate specifications for the Visitor Centre including flexible shared space, and provide the long term management and maintenance required. The Visitor Centre should be sustainable in the broadest sense of the word, including financially.
- 5.33 With regards to planning for schools, the SPD recognises the potential that an extensive green infrastructure network can deliver to facilitate easy access

and movement to local services and facilities including local schools, open spaces and play areas. The GI Masterplan reflects this integrated approach.

5.34 In summary, comments from the **Woodland Trust (WT)** related to:

- The WT strongly welcome the development and publication of a GI SPD for the NEV.
- It is important to be mindful of the complexity of a development scheme on this scale which includes multiple landowners and developers. It is essential that appropriate phasing and delivery mechanisms are in place
- Concern that some of the green corridors identified on the Masterplan may be too narrow to enable the full benefits to be realised.
- The WT support the explicit commitment to achieve a net increase in woodland cover, with a focus on strategic locations which create nature corridors and enhance biodiversity. The Woodland Trust believes that trees and woodland are an essential element of place making as they can deliver such a wide range of benefits. Our publication Residential Development and Trees highlights the key issues for developers to consider. We would welcome a reference to this publication in the SPD.

The Council's response

5.35 Swindon Borough Council note the supporting comments from the Woodland Trust and the Council welcome the Trust's offer as a potential partner to help facilitate and deliver GI at the NEV. The Council will continue to proactively work with landowners and developers to understand the opportunities to mitigate the impact of development and including the creation of new woodland areas where opportunities exist, both on and off site.

5.36 With regards to the green corridors, the GI Masterplan has been reviewed to improve consistency and clarity and to ensure that opportunities to deliver GI at the NEV are in accord with the adopted NEV Masterplan (October 2016).

5.37 A reference to the 'Residential Development and Trees' publication is now included in the SPD.

5.38 In summary, comments from **Councillor Gary Sumner (Ridgeway Ward)** related to:

- Should include the SCR and an explanation of how the Wanborough Road will be managed as a key 'non-coalescence' route.

- Development does not appear to be phased and will not be softened by flat farmland unless the land is acquired and woodlands are planted before building commences
- Require certainty of delivery of a key piece of landscaping to soften the impact of development in Redlands and nearby parcels
- Bearing in mind the cost of delivery, combined with the damage to sports from relying on playing pitches which are inaccessible year round - this should be reconsidered
- Sports hub is shown in floodplain
- No detail of how the SCR will be screened or softened? What landscaping and planning will be required to achieve noise pollution restrictions (the site immediately adjoins the busy A419 and the Western boundary and SCR to the South).
- Table 2: Visual Impact Assessment is not up to date
- As a Roman road there should be no damage to the ditches and hedgerows but there must be detail on who will maintain both once farmers no longer farm the adjoining land?
- Plan should reflect potentially increased housing numbers as officers have indicated the overall number could reach 10,000 homes
- Early planting should take place to mitigate views from the AONB and the South

The Council's Response

- 5.39 The LPA acknowledge that the SCR will pass through a sensitive landscape and in relative proximity to residential properties. It will be designed to minimise visual intrusion, noise and pollution from vehicle emissions. The planning application for the SCR will be submitted as a full application to include landscaping and other mitigation measures and be subject to full public consultation, including pre-submission consultation with directly affected land and property owners.
- 5.40 The Council's indicative approach to phasing at the NEV is set out in the Local Plan and as part of Policy NC3 and accompanying Figure 11. It is appreciated that proposed development may come forward out of phase. The adopted NEV Planning Obligations SPD will ensure that development provides mitigation and provide for interim measures until such time infrastructure is built.

- 5.41 Outside of the NEV allocation, the Council will seek to work with landowners to identify opportunities to deliver community tree planting in appropriate areas.
- 5.42 Sports Hubs will be located outside of high risk flood risk areas. Detailed design, including additional drainage provision and use of artificial “3G” surfaces will ensure that pitches are useable all year round.
- 5.43 With regards to Table 2, this has been removed from the SPD.
- 5.44 The Council acknowledge that important hedgerows should be protected. Details of off-site improvements (provision of footway) to existing roads, including Wanborough Road, will be carefully considered at the detailed planning stage.
- 5.45 In accord with Policy NC3, the SPD will support the NEV allocation in line with the requirement to deliver about 8,000 dwellings as part of a mixed use development. The SPD acknowledges that in the event that the number of dwellings exceeds 8,000, there will be a need to consider any additional GI requirements. Additional wording has been added to end of this paragraph to make it clear that the mechanism to do this would be through a review of the NEV IDP.
- 5.46 The Council will seek to work with landowners and developers to identify opportunities to deliver community tree planting in appropriate areas.

Parish Councils

- 5.47 In summary, comments from **Liddington Parish Council** relating to:
- Endorse the comments made by Councillor Gary Sumner in his letter attached (dated 30th March 2017).
 - Highlight the importance of para 1.0.18 detailed in the document.

The Council's Response

- 5.48 The Council note the comments made by Liddington Parish Council. Please refer to the response provided at paragraphs 5.38 to 5.46 of this report.
- 5.49 In summary, comments from **Bishopstone Parish Council** relating to:
- The Council support the comments made by Councillor Gary Sumner (Ridgeway Ward).

The Council's Response

5.50 The Council note comments made by Bishopstone Parish Council. Please refer to the response provided at paragraphs 5.38 to 5.46 of this report.

5.51 In summary, comments from **Haydon Wick Parish Council**, relating to:

- The Council expressed concern as to the adverse impact the housing and retail development may have on the environment, in relation to the effects of pollution caused by the increased volume of traffic.
- The congestion on the A420 can only exacerbate the situation.

The Council's response

5.52 The Council note comments made by Haydon Wick Parish Council. The SPD will serve to deliver an extensive GI network which will serve to mitigate the impacts of development. The adopted NEV Planning Obligations SPD (October 2016) provides further information on the Strategic Highway schemes that will be delivered to minimise the impacts of increased volume of traffic.

5.53 In summary, comments from **South Marston Parish Council**:

- The Landscape Visual Impact is focused mainly on views affected from outside the NEV, with just one internal viewpoint facing outwards from the main development.
- 'Anti-coalescence' land, as described for south of the expanded South Marston village, is particularly inappropriate.
- The first sections from 3.1.14 to 3.1.19 are largely irrelevant as is Table 2 on page 23
- Consider that Key Principle 1 (Landscape Character) should specifically mention the need for developers to consider the detailed visual impacts identified for new and existing residents, as well as users of proposed new and existing rights of way, to enable formulation of an appropriate landscaping plan for each of the proposed developments.
- We consider that there is a need for significant screening from public viewpoints, particularly of new roads passing through open countryside, as proposed within the planning applications for the expansion of South Marston

- Concern is raised in relation to the provision of a centralised strategy, based around an expensive Visitor Centre situated outside the settlements and divorced from South Marston and Rowborough,
- The River Meadows concept is said to form the 'green heart' of the NEV development and to provide an integrated GI solution. No reference is made to the fact that the NEV is split in two by the A420/railway.
- Anti-coalescence' land, as described for south of the expanded South Marston village, is inappropriate.
- Concern that the document fails to reflect the proposed 'green wedges' outlined in the draft South Marston Neighbourhood Plan, and which are already enshrined in the relevant planning application covering the expansion of South Marston.
- It is worth noting that, the green wedges, together with the anti-coalescence area and the fields between Oxleaze Wood and the main expansion will all have public access, and this will affect their potential use and maintenance costs
- The GI Masterplan requires attention. It is rudimentary in outlining the relevant housing areas as identified in the SBC NEV Masterplan.
- Consideration should be given to designating the green wedges, together with the anti-coalescence area and the fields between Oxleaze Wood and the expanded village (all of which are proposed to have public access) as GWCF land.
- SBC needs to decide whether NEV planning applications will, via conditions, designate areas of GI land which will be given public access as Community Forest.
- Potential for extending woodland at South Marston is not reflected by the introduction of a small copse at an arbitrary location to 'strengthen the buffer' between the railway and the open spaces.
- The term 'Sports Hubs' seems to be allied to pitches in village centres as well as out of settlement multi pitch hubs such as south of Rowborough.
- The Playing Pitch Strategy (which is expected to show a radical decline in demand for pitches) is mentioned. It would be useful to know how its findings will be incorporated into this GI strategy
- In particular we suggest that the maintenance requirements for the GI within the housing areas, such as LEAPs and LOSs, are of a different

order to the challenges of delivering and maintaining the wider area of GI and the possibility of a differentiated approach to future maintenance arrangements should be explored

The Council's Response

- 5.54 The Council note the comments made by South Marston Parish Council. Information relating to Visual Impact Assessment, including Tables 1 and 2 have been removed from the SPD.
- 5.55 Development proposals will be expected to provide Landscape Visual Impact Assessments to fully assess landscape impacts and mitigation.
- 5.56 There is a requirement for a village centre within South Marston to support the village. The Council will work with delivery partners and stakeholders to determine appropriate specifications for the Visitor Centre. The Visitor Centre should be sustainable in the broadest sense of the word, including financially.
- 5.57 Following consultation, all maps have been reviewed and updated to improve consistency and clarity. In particular, the NEV GI Masterplan has been reviewed to ensure that opportunities to deliver GI at the NEV are consistent with policy and accord with the adopted NEV Masterplan (October 2016).
- 5.58 The SPD is in accord with the draft South Marston Village Neighbourhood Plan and the 'Proposed Strategic Routes' (Plan 6 as detailed in the Draft Neighbourhood Plan) has been included in the SPD.
- 5.59 There is now further explanation regarding the specification of the sports hubs in the SPD. In accord with Policy RA3, the SPD acknowledges that South Marston will deliver improvements to recreational facilities of an appropriate type and scale to support the village. A draft of the Playing Pitch Strategy for Swindon Borough will be available for public consultation at the end of July 2017.
- 5.60 In summary, comments from **Wanborough Parish Council** relate to:
- How will SBC ensure that these woodlands are implemented when the land is privately owned?
 - All future maintenance of SuDs should be covered by a management company for the area, they should not become the responsibility of Local Councils who will be unable to cover the additional financial burden.
 - How will Wanborough road be protected with proposed access from Redlands site onto Wanborough Road, and also the SCR will have to cross over the road.

- The play pitch strategy needs to be strengthened to include more open spaces, village greens and areas where children can go and play.
- Flood zones should not be used to provide open spaces and sports facilities, these need to be allocated outside the flood zone areas.

The Council's Response

- 5.61 The Council will continue to proactively work with landowners and developers to understand the opportunities to mitigate the impact of development and create new woodland areas where opportunities exist, both on and off site.
- 5.62 Wanborough Road provides an opportunity to enhance the existing footpath and cycleway network and provide improvements to connectivity between Wanborough and the NEV development. However, it is accepted that Wanborough Road is inappropriately referenced as 'key non-coalescence corridor'. The annotation has now been removed from the map.
- 5.63 The draft playing pitch strategy focuses upon the provision of formal playing pitches (both natural turf and artificial surfaces) that accommodate pitch based sports, namely football, rugby, cricket and hockey. It does not explicitly address open spaces that facilitate informal play. However, can help to inform an update to the open space audit and assessment to identify future demand etc..
- 5.64 Agree. The design and layout of open spaces should be in accord with the Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) Vision for NEV SPD adopted in February 2017. The SPD recognises that through careful design and in line with Health and Safety considerations SuDS can be designed as part of public open space.
- 5.65 In summary, comments from **Stratton St Margaret Parish Council** relating to:
- Concern that the NEV development will mean inevitable traffic congestion and its attendant for pollution.
 - The new bridge at the end of Covingham Way is/was going to be a "green" bridge for cyclists and then for service vehicles only (Great Stall Bridge)

The Council's Response

- 5.66 The Council note the comments made. The new bridge referred to by Stratton Parish Council is the Great Stall Bridge. The provision of this bridge is identified in the NEV Planning Obligations SPD as part of the strategic transport package at the NEV and will provide a new link across A419 to

facilitate public transport, walking and cycling and to integrate the new District Centre with the existing communities in East Swindon.

5.67 In summary, comments from **Historic England** (HE) relating to:

- HE emphasise the need to avoid conflict between tree planting and buried archaeology
- HE is anxious to ensure that the recent surveys showing how the Roman Town extends beyond the limits of the scheduled area is reflected in the SPDs, and informs the proposed villages of Foxbridge and Upper Lotmead.
- Paragraph refers to Scheduled monument and recent discoveries but doesn't confirm how such nationally significant archaeology will be safeguarded.
- Historic England would emphasise the need to ensure a conflict between tree planting and buried archaeology is avoided

The Council's Response

5.68 The Council notes the comments made by Historic England. All maps have been reviewed and updated to improve consistency and clarity. In particular, the NEV GI Masterplan has been reviewed to ensure that opportunities to deliver GI at the NEV are in accord with the adopted NEV Masterplan (October 2016). Archaeological surveys will inform any subsequent review of the SPD and development proposals at the planning application stage.

5.69 Paragraph 3.4.9 (formerly 3.5.9) references SBLP Policy EN10 which seeks to safeguard Scheduled Monuments and nationally significant archaeology. A reference to nationally important archaeological sites has been added to paragraph 3.5.

5.70 In summary, comments from **Great Western Hospital** relating to:

- Population growth without investment will compromise the delivery of high quality, safe service delivery, and this is particularly so given that the system is already under pressure
- Building design should take in to consideration walking and play surfaces...this space could also provide a meeting area for older people to socialise, have coffee and develop as activity hubs.

The Council's Response

- 5.71 Unless directly related to development at the NEV there is no policy basis to secure contributions towards the GWH. Such evidence can inform the Local Plan Review in response to planned development at Swindon post 2026.
- 5.72 There are a number of principles that relate to health and well-being. These can help to inform emerging work on design codes for the NEV.
- 5.73 In summary, comments from **Public Health (SBC)** relating to:
- Generally in relation to active travel there is a very positive approach to movements within and between the villages
 - It would be valuable to see greater detail on how the outcomes of GI delivery and maintenance will be achieved with a clearer model of long-term sustainability.
 - 'health and well-being' could be added to the list which is 3.0.1
 - The quality of a number of the maps are poor and the legend is very difficult to read
 - There is little discussion of people coming to the NEVs for recreation and use of GI
 - In general the current strategy does not convince the reader that active or green transport is going to be achievable for most people in the NEV to/from work
 - Clearer descriptions of the anticipated impact of the GI on active travel could add weight to this aspect of GI
 - There is no discussion of direct effect on biodiversity or health and wellbeing during the building process
 - Greater clarity about the woodland planting (both on and off-site) would be valuable, along with how the village masterplans fit into off-site GI.
 - A general explanation of the Great Western Community Forest including what it is, how it functions and future plans would help those not familiar
 - Inclusion of some rough area values for these specific GI areas may be beneficial but needs to be weighed against the potential that this may cause difficulties for wider GI delivery or limit delivery of these specific types to stated values

- An emphasis on local products and sustainability would tie this strategy into wider sustainability considerations and increase the benefits as well as long-term sustainability
- There are quite a large number of acronyms and references to policies, which a glossary/signposting may assist with.

The Council's Response

- 5.74 The overall NEV proposals provide for improved travel routes into Swindon, including a prioritised bus link and associated footpath-cycleway link across the A419 via the proposed Great Stall Bridge (as shown on the Illustrative NEV Masterplan).
- 5.75 The document proposes a comprehensive network of new footways and cycleways both within green corridors and alongside primary streets which will provide connectivity within the NEV.
- 5.76 The overarching GI strategy is planned against the background of the Local Plan 2026 (Natural and Built Environment policies) which set out a comprehensive set of policies that the NEV will achieve. Delivery and maintenance of GI will be secured by legally binding agreements between developers and the LPA (or relevant Parish Council to ensure long-term sustainability).
- 5.77 A description of the GWCF and its purpose within the context of delivering GI at the NEV is now detailed in the SPD.
- 5.78 Detailed design, specification and management of the proposed GI will help to ensure that it is multi-functional.
- 5.79 Following consultation, all maps have been reviewed and updated to improve consistency and clarity. In particular, Figure 16 has been reviewed to ensure that opportunities to deliver GI at the NEV are in accord with the adopted NEV Masterplan (October 2016)
- 5.80 A reference to Health and Well-being is added to paragraph, as relates to the provision of public open space.
- 5.81 Partnership working will be a key platform and developers will be required to demonstrate that their GI proposals (which will be subject to reserved matters approval) are well designed and sustainable.
- 5.82 GI provision must be in accordance with Local Plan 2026 policy requirements. The nature of the NEV land, with a network of flood risk corridors which cannot be built on will result in open space provision in excess of policy

requirements; the potential for about 300 hectares of GI translates to over 40% of the total NEV “red line” area of 724 hectares.

- 5.83 With regards to open space standards, the reference to ‘1000 per population’ omitted in error has now been added to the text for clarity.
- 5.84 Opportunities for food production through the provision of allotments; the retentions of land for agricultural use will be explored, particularly at the River Meadows. There may be limited opportunity for willow coppicing or similar timber production (for energy) in the future.
- 5.85 The opportunities for sustainability initiatives will be explored in detail at Design Coding/Reserved Matters stage(s).
- 5.86 A glossary of terms has now been provided to improve clarity of the document.
- 5.87 In summary, comments from **Thames Water** relating to:
- Any flood risk strategy/policy should include reference to sewer flooding and an acceptance that flooding could occur away from the flood plain as a result of development where off site infrastructure is not in place ahead of development.
 - It is vital that sewerage/waste water treatment infrastructure is in place ahead of development if sewer flooding issues are to be avoided.
 - It should also be recognised that SuDS are not appropriate for use in all areas [they] also require regular maintenance to ensure their effectiveness.
 - Limiting the opportunity for surface water entering the foul and combined sewer networks is of critical importance to Thames Water. Thames Water have advocated an approach to SuDS that limits as far as possible the volume of and rate at which the surface water enters the sewer system.

The Council's Response

- 5.88 The Council note the comments made by Thames Water. The comments relate more specifically to the adopted NEV SuDS Vision for the NEV SPD (February 2017). However, it is important to note that the Council will ensure that new development in the NEV can provide adequate infrastructure (Wastewater and Water Supply) to ensure it will not impact on any existing infrastructure that could lead to problems for existing users or that development is not carried out until Thames Water have provided the necessary strategic infrastructure as planned.

5.89 The Council will continue to consult Thames Water on any development proposals for the NEV.

5.90 In summary, comments from Turley's on behalf of **Ainscough Strategic Land** relate to:

- It is reasonable that the GI plan submitted by Ainscough is a suitable starting point to develop the wider NEV GI Masterplan.
- Our client makes this representation to ensure that the proposed GI SPD does not inadvertently prejudice the future development of Lotmead Farm or place an unreasonable burden on developers which could in turn impact viability.
- At a number of junctures the draft SPD seeks to facilitate the delivery of GI outside of the NEV allocation boundary
- This woodland falls outside the NEV allocation boundary and therefore falls outside the scope and remit of the SPD; the imposition of additional planting beyond the NEV would unnecessarily increase the levels of infrastructure investment and result in disproportionate financial burdens.
- It is not clear how the proposed areas or volume of new woodland have been identified as suitable, particularly as no such woodland was identified at a time when the NEV allocation was proposed/made within the adopted Local Plan
- The Proposed GI Masterplan for the NEV completely disregards the innovative design solution put forward by the willing landowner. The introduction of a sports hub within the draft GI SPD is overly prescriptive and, in the absence of any design rationale or consultation with the landowner, it places an unreasonable burden on developers, such that this prevents competitive returns.
- Further justification for the proposals contained within the draft GI SPD is required, particularly with regard to viability, and to ensure the SPD is not overly prescriptive it is advised that all figures and maps are identified as 'indicative' rather than 'proposed'.
- It is requested that the Council does not move to adopt the SPD until it has been substantially revised, such that it accords with its stated scope and sets out policies which can be considered to be properly justified and reasonable.

The Council's Response

- 5.91 The Council note the comments made by Ainscough Strategic Land. The costings associated with the delivery of GI are set out in the adopted NEV Planning Obligations SPD (adopted October 2016). The Council consider that the SPD cannot be confined to the NEV boundary or dealt with in isolation from the rest of the Borough. This is to ensure that the potential opportunities for delivering an extensive network at the NEV and to connect to the wider network can be realised. It will be given its own weight in the consideration of any future planning application.
- 5.92 The Council will continue to proactively work with landowners and developers to understand the opportunities to mitigate the impact of development and create new woodland areas where opportunities exist, both on and off site.
- 5.93 All figures have been updated to reflect that the plans are for 'illustrative' purposes. The SPD has been reviewed since public consultation.
- 5.94 In summary, comments from **Barberry (Swindon) Ltd** relate to:
- There is no justification for the provision of GWCF on site
 - The planning application at Redlands provides a hierarchy of on-site GI but it should be noted that formal sports provision is not to be included in the Redlands allocation
 - Art, heritage and education are separate policy issues and should not be included in the draft SPD.
 - Observe that the final costing of any individual element will need to be agreed between the Council and Applicant, and will have an impact upon the viability of a particular phase.
 - It is apparent from discussions with the local planning authority that the overall infrastructure costs are excessive and are causing problems with viability
 - It is also apparent that some of the infrastructure requirements are not justified when considered in respect of the CIL regulations and relevant policies in the Framework.

The Council's Response

- 5.95 The Council note the comments made by Barberry (Swindon) Ltd.
- 5.96 The costings associated with the delivery of GI are consistent with policy and set out in the adopted NEV Planning Obligations SPD. The document

recognises the contribution that art and heritage can deliver as part of a comprehensive GI network at the NEV. Following consultation, all maps have been reviewed and updated to improve consistency and clarity. In particular, Figure 16 has been reviewed to ensure that opportunities to deliver GI at the NEV are in accord with the adopted NEV Masterplan (October 2016).

5.97 In summary, comments from **Bluestone Planning** relating to:

- The requirement to submit LVIA's must relate proportionately to the location and/or scale of development proposed.
- This SPD should not be used to require applicants to provide additional technical information where not otherwise appropriate.

The Council's Response:

5.98 The Council notes the comments made by Bluestone Planning. Information relating to Visual Impact Assessment has now been removed from the SPD. The purpose of the SPD is to provide further guidance on the delivery of GI at the NEV.

5.99 In summary, comments from **Hallam Land Management Ltd, Hannick Homes & Developments Ltd. and Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd. (HHT)** relate to:

- Extensive survey work and technical analysis on land north of the A420 and can confirm that ancient marshland is not present in the areas south of South Marston.
- Page 33 includes an extract from the draft South Marston Neighbourhood Plan. This has not been 'made' and as such should not be included in the draft SPD.
- The draft SPD is not consistent with the planning context in which it sits and does not clearly articulate its evidence base
- The draft DPD exceeds the scope that is appropriate in a SPD by seeming to draft new policy appearing prescriptive in approach without considering the reasonableness of the impact on the financial burdens on the development
- The draft SPD does not clearly articulate to an Illustrative Masterplan, that is acknowledged to be iterative
- The national nor local policy position justifies the approach set out in the SPD and no reference is made to PPG.

- The SPD focuses on the creation of new habitats with no regard to resources that already exist which should form the starting point of any such GI framework, and should form part of any such quantum/provision that might be required through policy
- The wording "indicative" accepts that the precise boundaries of the development parcels are to be refined through the development through the development management process in combination with detailed master planning and design for those specific areas.
- The draft SPD does not make implicit that GI is not solely related to the provision of new landscape habitats retained features can contribute significantly to the overall quantum of GI to be provided as part of the development of the NEV.
- The draft SPD refers to the provision of a visitor centre that seeks to support visitor attraction that is aligned to a leisure and nature function. There is limited information available in respect of this element, certainly HHT are not aware of any detail in relation to such a resource.
- There is no clarity as to who would deliver the woodland and from what funding sources
- The figures contained within the document do not appropriately reflect the policy extent of the NEV "development islands" and whilst it is understood that this document has a GI focus, presentationally, it could be considered misleading.
- The inclusion of art, heritage and education within a GI focused document is unsubstantiated. It has the effect of applying prescription across a number of areas that are not directly relevant to the principal scope of the document.
- The inclusion of plans Figure 11 (recreation) and Figure 13 (art, heritage and education) prejudices the masterplan and imposes and applies a level of prescription that is not supported in the Local Plan
- Landscape management companies can provide long-term management solutions for a variety of open space and biodiversity resources. Formal and informal open space resources can also be passed to local community groups and/or town and parish Council to secure their long-term management therefore additional text should be included in the document that supports an option to consider third party management strategies
- Figure 2 identifies significant woodland that is no longer present (just south of 'W3'). This should be amended not just on this figure, but within all

figures in the SPD which incorrectly identify woodland at the eastern extents of Rowborough.

- Rowborough - References to greenway links should be more generalised.
- There is no clarity as to who would deliver the woodland and the funding streams available to enable delivery.
- Additional text should be provided at paragraph 2.0.21 that reflects that the masterplan is evolving as are the development proposals associated with the NEV.

The Council's Response

5.100 The Council notes the comments made by HHT. The policy framework for the SPD is based upon a robust and evidence base. There are significant opportunities to deliver 'an extensive green infrastructure network' as detailed in Policy NC3. The SPD provides further detail and guidance on how this can be delivered.

5.101 Following consultation, all maps have been reviewed and updated to improve consistency and clarity. In particular, Figure 16 has been reviewed to ensure that opportunities to deliver GI at the NEV are in accord with the adopted NEV Masterplan (October 2016)

5.102 The GI Masterplan considers both existing and proposed GI at the NEV. It is important that development seeks to protect and enhance both existing GI assets together with delivering the GI requirements as a result of development.

5.103 Section 1 makes reference to PPG as it relates to GI.

5.104 The map serves to identify opportunities for community woodland planting as part of proposals. The map does not reflect existing woodland areas.

5.105 Reference to the status of the document has now been made in both the policy section and the extract from the draft SMV NP.

5.106 All maps are illustrative with the key principles consistent with policy

5.107 In summary, comments from **The Blatchford Family** related to:

- In its present form the GI SPD is seeking to allocate sites and form land use policies not in accordance with the Local Plan and without the basis of adopted land use policies.
- Viewed from the perspective of my client's land, the NEV GI SPD is seeking to make it an entirely GI site to serve other developments with absolutely no mechanism for equalisation of the infrastructure burden making my client's land worthless with no mechanism to recoup the uplift values from the sites that rely upon it
- Throughout the SPD the plans are very poor quality and it is difficult to determine the details that apply to sites.
- Whilst commendable in theory this whole approach to GI is poorly presented and unrealistic and without any mechanism to equalise land values, or capture land value uplift through CIL. It is doomed to failure as it has no monetary mechanism for land identified as GI held by parties (over and above the Nature Reserve and GWCF) who do not have land that will contain built development.
- There is a similar mechanism used elsewhere in the planning system whereby the provision of Green Space (SANG) for Habitat mitigation is set out in policy and must be brought forward before development is occupied to allow proper monetisation of the GI to support development when the sites are in different ownerships.

The Council's Response

5.108 The Council notes the comments made. The land forms part of the land allocation of the NEV and as identified by Figure 11 of the Local Plan 2026 (Policy NC3), but is not identified for a specific use within the Local Plan. For this reason the Illustrative NEV GI Masterplan has been amended to remove the proposed land use designation (proposed woodland).

5.109 The NEV will be developed by a number of land promoters / developers who will be required to provide GI as part of their development proposals in line with Local Plan 2026 Policy (NC3, RA3 and EN policies). The NEV GI SPD is underpinned by the Local Plan.

5.110 Following consultation, all maps have been reviewed and updated to improve consistency and clarity. In particular, Figure 16 has been reviewed to ensure that opportunities to deliver GI at the NEV are in accord with the adopted NEV Masterplan (October 2016).

5.111 In summary, comments from Turleys (on behalf of Wasdell Commercial Properties) relate to:

- Land at Inland Farm which is being promoted for economic development.
- The site is situated outside of the New Eastern Villages Local Plan allocation, but is located in close proximity to it.
- Further, our client's land interest is related to the allocation by virtue of the Southern Connector Road and the proposed new alignment of the Wilts & Berks Canal, which potentially intersects the site, and which could be facilitated as a result of its development.
- Accordingly, our client submits these representations to ensure that the proposed Green Infrastructure SPD does not inadvertently prejudice the future development of the manufacturing facility (and the 800 local jobs that depend upon the success of that proposal). Conversely, the representations seek to identify how the proposed development of land at Inland Farm would extend Green Infrastructure provision east of Swindon.
- As currently prepared, the draft New Eastern Villages Green Infrastructure SPD does not fully comply with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Nor can the proposals contained within the draft document be said to entirely align with the adopted Local Plan.
- The draft SPD seeks to implement policies and proposals that go beyond the scope boundary of the allocation and which alter the meaning of adopted Local Plan policies. There may also be opportunities to revisit and enhance some of the proposals such that Green Infrastructure to the east of Swindon is more holistically provided.

The Council's Response

5.112 The Council notes the comments made by Turleys on behalf of Wasdell Commercial Properties. The site is not within the identified strategic allocation of the NEV and is not directly relevant to the SPD. Such proposal will need to be considered as part of the review of the Local Plan 2026.

5.113 The SPD is consistent with the Local Plan and the adopted NEV Masterplan (October 2016), providing further guidance with regards to the delivery of GI at the individual village level. The key principles set out are consistent with the policy position.

Post consultation changes made to the NEV Green Infrastructure SPD

5.114 As a result of comments made to the revised draft SPD, the following key changes have been made to the NEV GI SPD are:

- A review of the Illustrative NEV GI Masterplan and illustrative maps to improve clarity, consistency including the presentation and annotation of maps;
- Amendments to reflect partnership working from the Woodland Trust and the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust;
- Removal of Table 1 and 2 and all text related to the Landscape Visual Impact Assessment;
- Amendments to ensure consistent references to local plan policy and other NEV and GI related documents;
- A Glossary of terms is appended to the document to help understanding of green infrastructure related terms; and
- Amendments made throughout the document to improve the consistency of terms used with green infrastructure typologies.

