

## **APPENDIX A.** Proposed Site Plan



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Rev Date By Chk Description



**Roberts Limbrick**  
 03333 405 500  
 mail@robertslimbrick.com  
 robertslimbrick.com  
 Registered Office: England No. 09558229

**Project Name**  
 Birdworld & Haskins Forest Lodge  
 Farnham Road, Holt Pound,  
 Farnham GU10 4LD

**Client Name**  
 Birdworld & Haskins Garden Centre  
 -

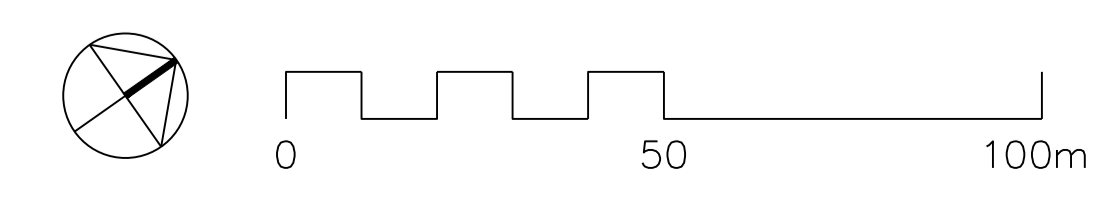
**Drawing Title**  
 Proposed Site Plan  
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## **APPENDIX B.** HCC Pre-Application Meeting Minutes

# Meeting Agenda

Project No: ITB16329  
Project Title: Forest Lodge Garden Centre and Birdworld  
Date: 26 July 2022  
Venue: Microsoft Teams – 1pm

## Attendees

Chris Hirst	— Hampshire County Council (CH)
Holly Drury	— Hampshire County Council (HD)
Matt Dyer	— Hampshire County Council (MD)
Sophie Osbourne	— Hampshire County Council (SO)
Julian Winfield	— Haskins (JW)
Warren Haskins	— Haskins (WH)
Simon Webb	— i-Transport (SAW)
Duncan Findlay	— i-Transport (DF)
Matt Craddy	— i-Transport (MC)
Harry Cherrill	— i-Transport (HC)

Item	Actions
<b>1.0 Introductions</b>	
<b>2.0 Haskins and Project Background</b>	
2.1 WH provided an overview of Haskins as a business, outlining how Haskins' Garden Centres operate, detailing the strategic importance of the redevelopment of Birdworld to secure its long-term future.	
2.2 DF briefly summarised the planning history of the Forest Lodge / Birdworld site.	

Item	Actions
<p><b>3.0 Access</b></p>	
<p>3.1 DF outlined existing sub-standard T-junction accesses to both Birdworld and Forest Lodge noting the constraints regarding horizontal/vertical visibility, lack of right turn lanes and the confusion with the layby bus stop at the Birdworld access.</p>	
<p>3.2 DF summarised the previously agreed 3-arm signalised junction, noting that it now no longer works for Haskins given the wider changes to the proposed development.</p>	
<p>3.3 DF outlined the proposed four arm roundabout and detailed how it complies with design guidance. DF also set out the following benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved walking/cycling provision (including access to bus stops on the A325).</li> <li>• Dedicated access to both Birdworld and Forest Lodge with efficient operation of both sites (including access by service vehicles).</li> <li>• Reducing the number of junctions on the A325 and closing the sub-standard current Birdworld access.</li> <li>• Speed reduction measure on the A325.</li> </ul>	
<p>3.4 CH requested further information on why a revised scheme is now to be progressed and why the previous scheme no longer works for Haskins, in particular requesting an evidence base as to why the proposal has changed from the 3-arm signalised junction to the 4-arm roundabout.</p>	i-T
<p>3.5 DF/SAW agreed to produce a Technical Note for onward forwarding to HCC setting out the access options reviewed for the proposed development, detailing the evidence base for progressing the 4-arm roundabout.</p>	
<p>3.6 HD/CH/MD noting the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The previous signalised junction could be programmed to allow a more constant flow on the A325;</li> <li>• It would be beneficial to see the internal context with regards to the site, to ensure pedestrian permeability;</li> <li>• The vertical profile of the proposed access arrangements needs to be checked against recorded speeds and SSD calculator (TG3);</li> <li>• A smaller roundabout design will reduce maintenance and build costs. MD suggested reviewing a compact roundabout.</li> <li>• Vehicle tracking should be provided and an RSA will be required once an access strategy is agreed in principle.</li> </ul>	i-T
<p>3.7 SAW/DF agreed to consider the above points as part of the Technical Note.</p>	
<p><b>4.0 Sustainable Transport</b></p>	
<p>4.1 DF briefly summarised the site's location to sustainable travel modes, referring to local PROWs and the nearby bus stops.</p>	

Item	Actions
4.2 DF noted that we have surveyed the use of the bus stops and that current usage is very low (less than 10 people per day).	
4.3 DF outlined that a Travel Plan will be prepared to accompany the application, but that it will reflect the nature and location of the site, primarily focusing on staff as customers are still likely to drive to the site due to the bulky nature of goods sold at Forest Lodge.	
4.4 CH stated there is potentially a suppressed demand to the bus stops due to the existing pedestrian infrastructure between the site and the bus stops. An improved connection could increase bus service use.	
4.5 CH requested that upgrades for southbound bus stop, (including tactile paving and waiting facilities) are reviewed as part of the development proposals. DF/SAW agreed.	
4.6 HD noted that the walking route from Alice Holt could be a viable active travel opportunity for future customers / café customers, with a potential leisure route through site from Alice Holt to the PROW to the east of the A325.	i-T
<b>5.0 Traffic Generation and Impact</b>	
5.1 DF set out the proposed traffic impact assessment methodology for the proposal and note that this is in line with the previously agreed methodology. Traffic data has been collected in May on this basis as this is a 'peak' month.	
5.2 CH agreed to the assessment methodology, distribution and assignment, and data collection in principle, but requested evidence that May is a peak month. DF agreed to provide as part of any further assessment work.	i-T
5.3 CH stated junction assessment years typically required are the year of opening plus a further 5 year assessment. Currently this is planned for 2026 and 2031. DF agreed.	
5.4 CH will clarify committed developments to consider in formal response.	HCC
5.5 HD noted that further clarification may be needed with regards to the use of historic cross-visitation and pass-by data. This could include re-surveys, sensitivity tests or the use of a 'worst case' assessment. i-T to consider further.	
5.6 HD will clarify any public transport or highways improvements in the vicinity of the site.	HCC
5.7 HD asked whether SCC as the neighbouring highway authority would be consulted. SAW said that from memory they had not been consulted on the previous applications. DF/SAW to consider, subject to the outcome of the trip generation analysis.	HCC
5.8 HD to confirm the nearby Bordon development junction improvement contributions (4).	
<b>6.0 Structure and Content of the TA</b>	
6.1 CH to confirm TA structure requirements in HCC's formal response, but noted that it is acceptable in principle.	CH

Item	Actions
<b>7.0 Timescales / Next Steps</b>	
7.1 CH/HD to prepare a formal HCC response following receipt of additional technical note.	HCC
7.2 SAW/DF to prepare a Technical Note reviewing the site access options to provide context for the proposed 4-arm roundabout access.	i-T
7.3 Following the submission of the access options Technical Note a further meeting is to be held to discuss matters. HD suggested that this takes place in September.	ALL
<b>8.0 AOB</b>	

## Meeting Record

Project No: ITB16329  
Project Title: Forest Lodge Garden Centre and Birdworld  
Date: 6 October 2022  
Venue: Hampshire County Council Office, Winchester – 1:30pm

### Attendees

Chris Hirst — Hampshire County Council (CH)  
Matt Dyer — Hampshire County Council (MD)  
Julian Winfield — Haskins (JW)  
Warren Haskins — Haskins (WH)  
Matt Hill — Haskins (MH)  
Simon Webb — i-Transport (SAW)  
Matt Craddy — i-Transport (MC)  
Harry Cherrill — i-Transport (HC)

CC Mary Davidson — MDA  
CC Duncan Findlay - i-Transport

Item	Actions
<b>1.0 Introductions</b>	
<b>2.0 Overview of Access Options Appraisal</b>  2.1 SAW provided an overview of the access options appraisal (ITB16329-006B TN – Access options [ISSUE], detailing the seasonality of both sites' operations, scope of the traffic surveys undertaken in May 2022 and the observed peak hour flows, sensitivity tests undertaken, and subsequent proposed trip generation flows and distribution. He briefly summarised the ARCADY and LINSIG junction assessment outputs as well as outlining the pros and cons of each access option. The work had been undertaken at a high level for optioneering and CH said this was acceptable.  2.2 CH commented on the LINSIG outputs, stating the pedestrian phasing could be slightly adjusted to allow greater vehicle volumes throughput however, he stated that HCC was 'more onboard' with the roundabout options.	



<p><b>3.0 Access</b></p> <p><b>3.1</b> The roundabout options had been presented as single or double lane entry options, with each lane of the roundabout having either one or two lane entries. SAW suggested that the 4-arm roundabout design could be refined to incorporate single lane entries on the Forest Lodge and Birdworld arms and two lanes entries on both the A325 north and south arms.</p> <p><b>3.2</b> MC confirmed a 4-arm roundabout design incorporating single lane entry on the Forest Lodge and Birdworld arms but two lanes of entry on both the A325 north and south arms would have a greater ICD than the single lane entry design, but less than the all double entry design. It could be delivered if HCC so desired.</p> <p><b>3.3</b> CH shared no preference of roundabout access design at this stage however, noted the signalised junction design offers a potentially safer option for pedestrian and cyclist connectivity between the site and Alice Holt Forest (PRoW 50) to the south of the site albeit one with a lower capacity. Also, with the current roundabout access designs, pedestrians would have to cross two lanes of the A325, which is currently subject to a 50mph speed limit in the vicinity of the site. An extension of the 40mph speed limit was then discussed, as well as noting that the implementation of the roundabout would likely result in reduced vehicle speeds across the stie frontage on the A325.</p> <p><b>3.4</b> JW noted that the Parish Council had shown that they were in favour of reducing speeds in the area and along the A325.</p> <p><b>3.5</b> CH confirmed an extension to the 40mph speed limit would be a positive for pedestrian crossing safety but would need to be discussed with the HCC traffic management team. CH also suggested the possibility of planting / landscaping in the middle of the roundabout. It would reduce vehicle speeds but its impact on forward visibility would need to be considered.</p> <p><b>3.6</b> MD confirmed the maintenance of the roundabout planting would be the responsibility of the local area team.</p> <p><b>3.7</b> MC queried if the forward visibility of the roundabout junction arms are required to be provided in accordance with DMRB, noting the planting may impact this. MC also confirmed vertical alignment not an issue albeit subject to further work.</p> <p><b>3.8</b> CH confirmed the principle of a roundabout is accepted based on the further work and that HCC is comfortable in principle with what is being shown.</p> <p><b>3.9</b> CH outlined HCC’s view on the 4-arm roundabout option:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4-arm roundabout agreed in principle.</li> <li>• Comfortable with junction assessment modelling results.</li> <li>• Applicant needs to explore measures to be introduced to reduce speeds at the access/ site frontage.</li> <li>• Applicant needs to explore how to shift away from vehicle dominance for accessing the site.</li> </ul>	<p>i-T</p>
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Item	Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicant needs to look at the soft modes connectivity of the site to the existing infrastructure provision.</li> <li>• Applicant needs to explore the feasibility of linking to the National Cycle Network.</li> </ul> <p>3.10 SAW agreed greater focus on the pedestrian and cycle links will be undertaken once the masterplan has been updated.</p> <p>3.11 CH confirmed applicant to engage with LPA for pre-application advice while HCC considers the two lane / one lane approaches matter.</p>	
<p><b>4.0 Timescales / Next Steps</b></p> <p>4.1 CH to advise the applicant on the need or otherwise for two lane approaches on the A325 arms. SAW said that this could be done by Teams or over the phone.</p> <p>4.2 CH to prepare a formal HCC response.</p> <p>4.3 JW is to look at booking in LPA pre-application advice service with the LPA.</p>	<p>HCC</p> <p>HCC</p> <p>Haskins</p>
<p><b>5.0 AOB</b></p>	

# Meeting Agenda

Project No: ITB16329  
Project Title: Forest Lodge Garden Centre and Birdworld  
Date: 17 July 2023  
Venue: HCC Offices – 1pm

## Attendees

Chris Hirst — Hampshire County Council (CH)  
Matt Dyer — Hampshire County Council (MD)  
Julian Winfield — Haskins (JW)  
Matt Hill — Haskins (MH)  
Simon Webb — i-Transport (SAW)  
Duncan Findlay — i-Transport (DF)  
Matt Craddy — i-Transport (MC)

Item		
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Introductions</b>	
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Planning Update</b>	
2.1	MH/JW provided an update on planning matters following a positive meeting with East Hants during w/c 10/07/2023 and noted that officers at East Hants were receptive to the highways work undertaken to date (in particular regarding the PROW connections).	
2.2	MH/JW confirmed that a planning application is planned for submission in November 2023.	N.B.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Summary of Previous Discussions to Date</b>	
3.1	DF summarised the previous technical discussions with HCC as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>July 2023</b> – Submission of initial scoping note and preliminary discussions with HCC. Following these discussions, HCC requested further clarification on the decision to proceed with a site access roundabout.</li> <li><b>October 2022</b> – Submission of a site access options appraisal and subsequent discussions with HCC. Further to these discussions, the following was agreed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access, in principle, via a new roundabout was acceptable;</li> <li>Traffic assessment parameters (including trip generation, distribution and assignment);</li> <li>The scope and structure of the Transport Assessment; and</li> <li>Further work on sustainable transport was to be undertaken.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
3.2	CH confirmed agreement to the above.	N.B.



Item	
<p><b>4.0 Revised Access Arrangements – 3-Arm Roundabout</b></p>	
<p>4.1 DF outlined the reasons behind the change in access arrangement from 4-arm to 3-arm roundabout (as set out in Technical Note ITB16329-005B TN) and confirmed that there is no change in the quantum of development. Principal reasons for the change include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amended internal layout allows for slight reorientation of a building enabling sufficient space to include an internal junction;</li> <li>• Significantly reduced ICD in line with previous HCC comments;</li> <li>• Reduced construction and maintenance costs; and</li> <li>• More direct pedestrian access.</li> </ul>	N.B.
<p>4.2 CH confirmed agreement to the above.</p>	N.B.
<p>4.3 MC/MD then discussed HCC’s technical review of the design issued on 6 July 2023.</p>	
<p>4.4 MC/SAW queried MD’s request to use 100kph design speed in the technical review, given the results of the speed surveys which showed that dry weather 85<sup>th</sup> %ile observed speeds are less than 85kph. MC/SAW said that the results accorded with the requirements of both DMRB and HCC’s TG3 – Stopping Sight Distances and Visibility Splays. Further, application of HCC’s own speed calculator further confirmed a design speed of 85 kph was appropriate.</p>	N.B.
<p>4.5 MD then confirmed that subsequent checking of the recorded speeds through HCC’s Stopping Sight Distance (SSD) calculator confirms that the design speed should be 85kph. The design speed of 85kph (160m SSD) was then agreed by all.</p>	N.B.
<p>4.6 MD requested that drawings showing the 160m forward visibility envelopes are provided in both the horizontal and vertical planes (including 1.5 x SSD 2.00m to 0.26m object height). MC agreed to re-provide.</p>	i-T
<p>4.7 MC thanked MD for his comments and confirmed that all other matters raised in the technical review are acceptable and/or can be addressed at the appropriate stage (e.g. utilities, extension of adopted highway). MC confirmed that a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA) will be provided as part of the application submission.</p>	N.B. i-T
<p>4.8 CH/MD confirmed that the proposed 3-arm roundabout arrangements are acceptable in principle and agreed, subject to the provision of the visibility information detailed at 4.6 above.</p>	N.B.
<p>4.9 CH confirmed that ‘design check’ comments in line with the above will be included in HCC’s formal pre-application response (once visibility information provided).</p>	
<p><b>5.0 Sustainable Transport Improvements</b></p>	
<p>5.1 Further to the October 2022 discussions, DF outlined that a review/audit of the local walking routes and facilities had been undertaken (set out in Technical Note ITB16329-009 TN).</p>	

Item	
<p>5.2 As a result of the review, the following improvements were proposed in conjunction with the site access arrangements (details set out in Technical Note ITB16329-005B TN):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved A325 crossing to Footpath 50; and</li> <li>• Improvements to the Gravel Hill Road bus stops.</li> </ul> <p>5.3 CH confirmed agreement to the above improvements.</p> <p>5.4 CH noted that he is awaiting comments from HCC passenger transport regarding the proposed improvements to the bus stops (in relation to the provision of real time information and shelters). CH to provide these comments when available.</p> <p>5.5 CH/DF also agreed that no improvements are required to the route to Bentley railway station which is of high quality.</p> <p>5.6 All noted that Active Travel England (ATE) is likely to be consulted on the application. CH noted that HCC is aware of an ATE contact for the area.</p>	<p>N.B.</p> <p>HCC</p> <p>N.B.</p> <p>N.B.</p>
<p><b>6.0 Traffic Generation and Impact</b></p> <p>6.1 CH confirmed that all traffic assessment parameters presented in presented in the Technical Notes ITB16329-005B TN remain agreed including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic generation (including the assessment scenarios accounting for the seasonality of the proposed development);</li> <li>• Traffic distribution/assignment (based on observed turning proportions);</li> <li>• Study area (comprising solely the site access roundabout); and</li> <li>• Future year assessment (2031) and TEMPRO growth factors.</li> </ul> <p>6.2 CH confirmed that no committed developments are required to be included in the assessment from HCC's point of view.</p> <p>6.3 CH/DF agreed that SCC would need to be consulted for their view given the proximity to the County border.</p>	<p>N.B.</p> <p>N.B.</p> <p>N.B.</p>
<p><b>7.0 Timescales / Next Steps</b></p> <p>7.1 CH confirmed that a formal pre-application response from HCC will be issued once the additional drawings confirming vertical visibility splays have been received. This will include 'Design Check' comments.</p> <p>7.2 Noted that a planning application submission is targeted for November 2023. DF confirmed that this would be accompanied with a full Transport Assessment (including a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit) and Travel Plan.</p>	<p>HCC</p> <p>i-T</p>
<p><b>8.0 AOB</b></p> <p>8.1 MD advised that in terms of construction and timing, the principal issues will be in regard to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilities;</li> </ul>	<p>N.B.</p>

Item	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Christmas embargo on construction works; and</li><li>• Possible summer construction restrictions in July/August due to a religious event to the south at the car boot sale site.</li></ul> <p>8.2 MD noted that Haskin’s development programme will need to allow sufficient time for the service diversions and processing of the S278 Agreement, detailed design and technical approvals which will be subject to internal consultations at HCC.</p>	

**Circulation**

- Attendees plus Harry Cherrill (i-Transport), Holly Drury (HCC), Sophie Osbourne (HCC) and Mary Davidson (MDA Planning).



## **APPENDIX C. HCC Pre-Application Responses**



**Duncan Findlay**  
**I-Transport**  
[Duncan.Findlay@i-transport.co.uk](mailto:Duncan.Findlay@i-transport.co.uk)

Enquiries to	Chris Hirst	My reference	6/3/6/450
Direct Line	0370 779 0563	Your reference	ITB16329
Date	1 <sup>st</sup> November 2022	Email	Chris.Hirst@hants.gov.uk

## For the attention of Duncan Findlay

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your pre-application enquiry into the proposed expansion of Birdworld and Forest Lodge garden centre located to the north of Bucks Horn Oak.

A Scoping Note (SN) has been provided, alongside initial site access drawings for a proposed roundabout on the A325. A meeting was held between the Highway Authority, I-Transport and Haskins (the applicant) on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2022 to discuss the scoping note and access proposals in more detail ahead of the pre-app response being issued. Following this meeting, a Technical Note (TN) was produced to provide further details regarding the access option appraisal process. A further meeting was held between the aforementioned parties on 6<sup>th</sup> October to discuss this appraisal note in more detail and to begin reviewing which access option could come forward.

Following a review of the submitted pre-app material and the subsequent discussions, the Highway Authority has formulated the following pre-app response to set out its position.

### Planning History

Birdworld and Forest Lodge have been subject to a number of planning applications to redevelop the site and provide a new joint site access in the form of a signal junction with the A325.

Throughout these planning proposals, the new point of access into the site was consistently provided as a signal junction. From the original planning application through to the most recent proposal (granted permission in December 2018), the Highway Authority had accepted the principle of the signal junction, subject to approval through the Section 278 process.

The TN provides rationale behind the change in access form. The changes in access have been dictated by the internal site layout and the need to disaggregate movements between Forest Lodge garden centre and Birdworld. The previously approved signal junction does not allow for the segregation required by the applicant between the two sites. The alternative access proposals have been presented in the form of a new 3 or 4 arm roundabout with the A325.

During the initial meeting, the Highway Authority queried the size of the roundabout and asked the applicant to investigate a scheme which provided a reduced ICD whilst maintaining capacity across the junction. Further commentary is provided on these points within this response.

### **Existing Conditions**

Birdworld and Forest Lodge are located to the north of Bucks Horn Oak and approximately 5km southwest of Farnham, close to the county boundary. Access is currently provided to the sites via two priority junctions onto the A325, each serving a separate car park. It is noted that the visibility splays for the Birdworld access are substandard as a result of the crest of the hill to the north and the boundary wall to the south which both restrict the access from achieving DMRB compliant visibility splays.

The A325 is subject to a 50mph speed limit stretching from the north of Bucks Horn Oak to the north of Birdworld as you head down the hill. To the east of the site and the A325, Footpath 50 branches off through Forestry Commission land towards Alice Holt.

### **Sustainable Transport Provision**

#### Walking and Cycling

The SN considers that people are unlikely to walk to the site given that purchases made at the garden centre will consist of bulky goods, making it more important to focus on the pedestrian linkages to the bus stops on the A325, surrounding recreational areas and between the two sites. Whilst the Highway Authority agree that it is important to provide direct and continuous connections to the local bus stops, it is not agreed that pedestrians will only choose to visit the garden centre to purchase bulky goods as experience of other sites operated by Haskins shows a more diverse offer than bulky goods.

As noted above, there are a network of local public footpaths to the east of the site which connect to Alice Holt to the south. Pedestrians may therefore choose to combine recreational activities at Alice Holt with a visit to the garden centre to use the café facilities or browse the store. There are opportunities through the existing footpath connections to facilitate these linked trips sustainably. To the north of the existing access into Forest Lodge garden centre, there is an informal pedestrian route through to the A325 which could be utilised to provide a pedestrian connection point to these footpaths.



Potential linkages into the footpath were discussed with the applicant during the first pre-app meeting. A footway connection was subsequently incorporated into the roundabout design work presented in the access appraisal note, shown in drawing number ITB16329-GA-011. The Highway Authority will require this connection to be provided as part of the eventual access junction which is brought forward as part of the planning application.

Alongside the proposed roundabout, a new footway is proposed to the south of the existing Forest Lodge access to connect to the northbound bus stop, which the Highway Authority agrees would be beneficial for improving access to this facility. To the south of the bus stop, there is an existing footway which continues along the western side of the A325 before terminating at the junction with Gravel Hill Road, at which point it crosses to the eastern side of the road to access the bus stop. It is noted that the existing pedestrian crossing point at this location is substandard and should be improved to provide access to the nearest southbound bus stop to the south of the junction between the A325/Gravel Hill Road. The applicant should therefore investigate improving the crossing point to include within the Section 278 works package for the site.

There are no dedicated cycle facilities in the vicinity of the site, meaning cyclists are required to travel on carriageway should they wish to reach the facilities. However, NCN 224 runs in an east-west alignment to the south of the site, providing wider cycle access to Bentley train station and leisure routes around the Alice Holt area. The improved facilities at Forest Lodge are likely to attract cyclists who are on a longer cycle route to stop and utilise the facilities. The applicant should therefore investigate what improvements can be made to better facilitate this desire line from NCN 224.

### Bus

As discussed under the pedestrian and cycle facilities, the nearest bus stops to the site are located on the A325, south of the access into Forest Lodge. However, there is currently no footway connection between the northbound bus stop and the garden centre, making the facility inaccessible. There are both northbound and southbound bus stops available to the south of the existing Birdworld access, although these would not be utilised by visitors to the site should the new access be implemented in its current location.

The proposed footway will help to facilitate pedestrian access to the northbound stop and the improved crossing point would cater for pedestrians wishing to utilise the southbound facility. Based on the current location of the garden centre, the stops are located a circa 325m and 430m walking distance from the site.

The southbound bus stop currently consists of a flag pole and timetable only. The applicant should investigate whether it is possible to provide a bus shelter in this location which would help to encourage the uptake of bus provision by providing dedicated waiting facilities. This would be especially beneficial given the current infrequency of the bus service.

### Rail

The SN notes that the nearest rail facility to the site is located within Bentley, circa 2km west of the site. As noted within this response, the applicant should investigate improved pedestrian and cycle links around the site to nearby areas, such as Bentley.

### **Personal Injury Accident Data**

Personal Injury Accident (PIA) data will be obtained from Hampshire Constabulary for the most recent five year period. The scope of the data (between Bucks Horn Oak and south of Wrecclesham) is considered acceptable.

It should be noted that there was a recent serious accident to the north of the Birdworld access involving 4 vehicles which will not appear on the accident statistics. HCC's Safety Engineering team have been monitoring a wider safety improvement scheme which was implemented in September 2018. Whilst the scheme is still being monitored, it has been noted that the frequency of accidents has decreased since the scheme went live, notwithstanding the most recent accident on the A325.

### **Proposed Development**

The proposed development is described as the redevelopment and expansion of Forest Lodge garden centre and enhancement of Birdworld. No specific details are given in terms of the scale of expansion, but it is understood that Forest Lodge garden centre will be located to the south west corner of the site, Birdworld will be reorientated to maximise efficiency within the site and new car parking arrangements will be implemented to improve internal circulation. The development will be accessed via a new junction onto the A325 which combines the existing separate accesses into the two sites.

### **Site Access**

The site access proposals have developed through pre-application discussions with the applicant. Through the original SN, access into both Forest Lodge and Birdworld was proposed via a new 4-arm roundabout located to the south of the existing priority junction into Forest Lodge. The south western and north western arms of the roundabout would provide internal access to the two sites, meaning the access which currently serves Birdworld would be closed. The Highway Authority raised initial concerns with the size of the junction and the requirement for a roundabout given the previously approved signal junction,

The follow up TN went on to re-evaluate the merits of providing the previously approved signal junction, alongside a 3-arm roundabout, a 4-arm, 2 lane entry roundabout and a 4-arm, single entry roundabout. All parties acknowledged during discussions that any in principle preference given to a certain access option would be subject to further design work and a Road Safety Audit to demonstrate that a workable engineering solution could be provided.

The TN determined that the signal junction access arrangement was no longer considered suitable by the applicant as a result of the internal queuing and lack of stacking capacity back to the internal roundabout. The Highway Authority acknowledges the rationale behind the applicant seeking to improve the internal operation of the site but also notes that the Linsig model for the signal scheme could be optimised by reducing the frequency of the pedestrian phase, bringing the junction operation more in line with the outputs shown for the roundabout proposals. This scheme would maximise the safety for pedestrians looking to cross the A325 via the provision of dedicated signal crossing facilities.

Notwithstanding the above, the roundabout access proposals were reviewed and discussed at the most recent pre-application meeting. It was acknowledged that the roundabout options worked in modelling terms but concerns were raised over the size of the ICD and whether a smaller scheme could be provided which maintains two lane approaches on the A325. Whilst the roundabout can still incorporate uncontrolled pedestrian crossing facilities, the provision is a step back from the signalised crossing proposals previously being provided.

To help improve the safety for pedestrians crossing the roundabout, the Highway Authority has raised the potential for reducing the speed limit on the A325. During the planning application stage, the applicant will therefore need to investigate an extension to the 40mph speed limit to the south of Fullers Road which is located north of the development. Additional speed surveys will need to be undertaken as part of this process in between Fullers Road and the access into Birdworld and in between the access into Forest Lodge and Bucks Horn Oak. The speed surveys should be undertaken roughly in the middle of the stated locations to gauge the mean average speeds in support of the speed limit reduction.

Furthermore, and as noted above, there are wider pedestrian and cycle improvements which should be investigated to offset the disbenefits provided by moving from the signal junction. These improvements should be outlined as part of the planning proposal.

At this stage, the Highway Authority's still considers the signal junction option to provide the best crossing provision for pedestrians on the A325 and therefore remains the preference in accordance with HCC's emerging LTP4 policy. In terms of potential access options which include the roundabout, a 4-arm roundabout with the A325 which provides two lane entry on both the northbound and southbound approaches to the A325 is currently the preferred option. The Highway Authority expects the ICD for this roundabout to be less than the 60m shown on drawing number ITB16329-GA-004 Rev B whilst maintaining the two-lane approaches. Revised modelling outputs will need to be provided to demonstrate that the A325 still operates with minimal queuing across the scenarios provided within the Trip Generation note. As noted previously, further details regarding improved pedestrian and cycle links to the site should be provided as part of the planning application given the move

away from the signalised crossing facilities on the A325 secured through extant planning consents.

As part of the planning process, the Highway Authority will require further engineering details which have previously been set out in the pre-application meetings. For clarity, this has also been listed below:

- Dimensions for the roundabout included on all drawings;
- Visibility will need to be demonstrated to 332m for the northbound and southbound approaches;
- The SSD for northbound traffic may be reduced by potential overgrown vegetation. Landscape drawings should be provided to demonstrate that the visibility will remain unobstructed;
- Planting within the centre of the roundabout will need to be considered to reduce vehicle speeds on the approach to the roundabout. The planting regime will need to be agreed with the Highway Authority.
- Swept path drawings for all movements at the new roundabout;
- A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit supported by a Designer's Response;
- Any potential overrun area will need to be agreed with Hampshire County Council's Asset Management team;
- Existing shallow ditches may require realignment either side of the carriageway which will require Ordinary Watercourse Consent;
- Provision of a drainage design to account for the increase in surface water run off; and
- Consideration towards street lighting on the approaches to the roundabout.

Based on the provision and review of the above information, further details and clarity may be sought by the Highway Authority. Drawings should also be provided to demonstrate the wider context of the access arrangement with the re-developed site, including how the pedestrian facilities will connect to Forest Lodge and Birdworld.

### **Car Parking**

In their capacity as local parking authority, East Hants District Council should confirm whether the proposed quantum of parking meets adopted parking standards.

### **Trip Generation**

To ascertain the trip generation associated with the proposed development, the original SN proposed to undertake traffic surveys in May 2022, which was considered to be the peak period, with the view to uplifting the surveyed flows to take account of the increased footfall generated by the expansion. The Highway Authority accepted this approach, subject to the provision of further rationale from the applicant to demonstrate why this was considered to be the peak period for operation.

The subsequent Trip Generation note further set out the justification behind the May surveys and outlined the scenarios to be utilised for the modelling work. Following a review of the note, it was agreed that May represented a 'busy' month for the two businesses which provided a sufficient basis for calculating the trip rates. The surveys looked at a typical bank holiday, weekday and weekend and also took account of the turning movements to derive the trip distribution from the site. No pass by or cross visitation allowances have been made within the assessment, partially to ensure a robust assessment but also because the surveys undertaken in May will have accounted for an element of pass by and cross visitation between the existing sites. The Highway Authority accepts this approach.

In total, 5 scenarios were investigated which took account of a range of conditions at different times of the week. This included consideration of a 90<sup>th</sup> percentile operation sensitivity test in the morning and afternoon peak hours to understand the operation of the network when assuming a higher level of activity at both sites. The Highway Authority agreed that the methodology was robust for considering the future traffic implications of the site.

### **Trip Distribution**

Trip distribution from the site has been determined by utilising the existing turning count data gathered from the site accesses during the May surveys. This approach has been accepted through previous applications and is considered suitable for determining the distribution of traffic from the redeveloped site.

### **Traffic Impact**

To growth the baseline traffic flows, the SN proposes to utilise TEMPRO data which is considered acceptable. Table 5.1 of the TN forecasts the growth to 2026; however, this will need to cover a predicted year of opening + 5 year scenario, rather than 2026 which does not cover a future 5 year period even if it was assumed that the site was opened following expansion this year. The growth factors will therefore need to be revisited to reflect the required scenario above.

To begin formulating a preference on access options, the Highway Authority reviewed the range of modelling outputs submitted within the Access Options note. This modelling work assessed the 5 scenarios against each access option to provide a comparison between junction operation. Scenario 4 was taken as a reasonable assumption for future junction operation given that it represents 90<sup>th</sup> percentile operation of both sites during the AM and PM peak hours. This scenario identified that the signal junction would create a 19 PCU queue on the A325 southbound approach in the AM peak future year scenario. The queueing in the PM peak was not as pronounced but still demonstrated that 13 and 11 PCU's would queue on the respective northbound and southbound approaches on the A325.

In comparison, the 4-arm, two lane entry roundabout was forecast to operate with minimal queueing on the mainline, with the worst case queueing across



any scenario 4 PCU's. Whilst it was identified that the Linsig model for the signal junction could be tweaked to optimise the performance, the initial modelling work demonstrates that the 4-arm, two lane entry roundabout operates with minimal queueing when compared to the signal junction.

The revised roundabout design will need to demonstrate that the queuing on the A325 remains comparable to the initial results presented within the TN. The correct future year scenarios should also be applied to forecast the operation of the junction 5 years post occupation of the re-developed site.

Whilst the Highway Authority appreciates that a robust assessment has been undertaken to demonstrate that the roundabouts would operate in capacity terms, an appropriate assessment criteria will ultimately need to be considered at the planning stage to ensure that an over engineered design solution is avoided which would come at the detriment of the crossing facilities on the A325.

### **Structure of the Transport Assessment**

Section 6 of the SN sets out the proposed structure for the Transport Assessment which is considered suitable.

### **Summary**

Based on the information presented to date, the Highway Authority's preferred option for access into the re-developed Forest Lodge and Birdworld development out of the roundabout options presented is a 4-arm roundabout, containing two lane entries on the A325 northbound and southbound approaches. A revised scheme should be presented as part of any planning application which reduces the size of the ICD whilst meeting the engineering requirements outlined within this response. Acceptance of this access option is predicated on the modelling outputs demonstrating minimal queueing on the A325 and the provision of a suitable scheme to progress through a Section 278 design check with the Highway Authority. A pedestrian and cycle strategy should also be provided to demonstrate how improved sustainable transport infrastructure can be provided as part of the application to reduce reliance on travel to the site via the private car.

Yours Sincerely,

Chris Hirst – Senior Transport Planner.



**Duncan Findlay**  
By email only

Enquiries to	Chris Hirst	My reference	6/3/6/450
Direct Line	0370 779 0563	Your reference	ITB16329
Date	28 <sup>th</sup> September 2023	Email	Chris.Hirst@hants.gov.uk

## For the attention of Duncan Findlay

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your pre-application enquiry into the proposed expansion of Birdworld and Forest Lodge garden centre located to the north of Bucks Horn Oak.

The pre-app submission follows on from the original discussions held with the Highway Authority in 2022, which culminated in a response dated 1<sup>st</sup> November 2022. The response summarised that the Highway Authority's preference for access to the site was a 4-arm roundabout which included two lane entries from both approaches on the A325; however, the applicant was requested to investigate a design which reduced the size of the ICD, and to develop a pedestrian and cycle access strategy to the re-developed site.

The second pre-app submission includes the provision of a Scoping Note (SN) which includes an NMU audit, along with updated site access drawings. This information was discussed at a meeting between the Highway Authority, I-Transport and Haskins on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023, which led to further discussions around the SSD at the roundabout.

Following a review of this information, and with consideration to the previous pre-app response, the Highway Authority wishes to make the following comments.

### Previous Pre-App Response

Within the Highway Authority's previous pre-app response, a number of assessment parameters were agreed, including:

- The requirement to assess the most recent accident data from Hampshire Constabulary;

- The approach to trip generation by utilising existing trip rates to the sites and uplifting this based on additional forecast footfall figures;
- The approach to trip distribution by utilising existing turning count data;
- The principle of the access strategy working within capacity, subject to further investigation into the design to ensure that an over engineered solution is not being provided; and
- The scope of the Transport Assessment as part of any future planning application.

The second pre-app does not look to change the scale of the proposed development, meaning that the trip generation and distribution approach remains valid. The changes pertain to amendments to the internal site layout, which has led to subsequent changes to the site access strategy and the modelling work previously undertaken. This response will therefore focus on the latest changes to the proposed development, namely: the pedestrian and cycle access strategy and the vehicular access strategy.

### **Pedestrian and Cycle Access Strategy**

An NMU audit has been undertaken to review the walking and cycling routes nearby to Forest Lodge and Birdworld, primarily covering Footpath 50 which provides access to the footways in and around Alice Holt, and Footpaths 44 and 45 which provide access to Bentley train station.

Access to Bentley train station is provided via Gravel Hill Road which is a wide, shared surface road. Whilst no formal footway facilities are provided, it is acknowledged that the route is subject to low vehicle speeds and the good visibility available to pedestrians provides a pleasant walking environment. Alongside the improvements proposed in the vicinity of the site (discussed later on within this section) the Highway Authority are satisfied that the existing route does not have to be upgraded to provide pedestrians with safe and suitable access to the A325.

Access to the wider footpath network around Alice Holt is provided via Footpath 50, which currently terminates at the point at which it connects to the A325. Footpath 50 itself is unsurfaced but can offer a future walking route to Forest Lodge, alongside the improvements discussed below.

Alongside the proposed roundabout on the A325, the latest scoping note provides new footway facilities on the A325 to connect to the Footpaths noted above, and the existing bus stop facilities to the southwest of Forest Lodge.

A new footway is proposed on the southern side of the A325 which connects to the point at which Footpath 50 joins the road to the crossing facilities provided on the northern arm of the roundabout, shown in drawing number ITB16329-GA-100. The footway is proposed at a width of 2m and whilst it requires pedestrians to cross two lanes of traffic on the A325, the Highway Authority notes that good visibility is afforded at the crossing point to anticipate any approaching vehicles. Furthermore, the Highway Authority requires any future planning application to be supported by a TRO to reduce the existing

50mph speed limit on the A325 to 40mph, extending the existing 40mph limit at Holt Pound to the south past Forest Lodge and Birdworld. The TRO will need to be supported by additional speed surveys to the south of Fullers Road and in between Forest Lodge and Buck Horns Oak to confirm whether the mean speeds are conducive for supporting a speed limit reduction along the route. By reducing the speed limit along this section of the A325, pedestrian safety at the crossing point will be improved further.

To connect to the bus stops to the south of Forest Lodge, the applicant is proposing a further footway connection from the roundabout. The footway provides access to the northbound stop before crossing at an upgraded tactile paving/dropped kerb crossing point to access the southbound stop. The NMU also proposes to upgrade both of the bus stops to bus shelters, with RTI also provided. These measures have been discussed with Hampshire County Council's Passenger Transport Team who agree with the principle of the works, but have also requested that an additional southbound bus stop facility is provided as part of the roundabout design. By implementing a southbound stop near to the roundabout, bus patrons will have a reduced walking distance to both sites. Given the low level of future queuing at the roundabout identified through the junction modelling, the Highway Authority accepts that a dedicated layby may not need to be provided depending on the constraints of the design adjacent to the ditch. The applicant is therefore required to investigate the provision of an additional southbound bus shelter near to the roundabout as part of any future planning application. The future maintenance of the improved bus facilities will be subject between discussions between HCC and EHDC.

The proposed pedestrian access strategy will provide new continuous facilities to Footpath 50 to the north and the existing bus stops and Gravel Hill Road to the south. The Highway Authority is therefore satisfied that the proposed improvements would sufficiently encourage the uptake of sustainable modes of transport to the site, alongside a Travel Plan for both businesses.

### **Site Access**

Following changes to the internal layout, the proposed access to the site has been revised from a 4-arm to a 3-arm roundabout which maintains two lane approaches from the north and south on the A325. Upon entering the site, traffic is split between Forest Lodge and Birdworld via a smaller roundabout which can now be provided given the separation available between the two junctions.

By reducing the number of roundabout arms, the size of the ICD has also reduced to 44m from the 60m previously proposed as part of the 4-arm design. SSD to the roundabout has been demonstrated in accordance with recorded speeds i.e. 260m northbound and 235.5m southbound. Swept path drawings have also been provided for an articulated vehicle navigating the junction which confirms that there is sufficient space around the circulatory for these manoeuvres to be undertaken.

To support the revised junction form, updated junction modelling has been undertaken to a future year of 2031 which is taken as the year of opening +5 years, as requested by the Highway Authority. Within the updated modelling, the worst case RFC across the roundabout is observed on the A325 (S) within the bank holiday peak hour with an RFC of 0.59, relating to a queue of 1 PCU. The updated junction modelling therefore demonstrates that the 3-arm roundabout works in modelling terms with minimal delay on the A325.

The Highway Authority is therefore satisfied with the principle of the 3-arm roundabout design shown within drawing number ITB16329-GA-100. A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit for the whole scheme will need to be undertaken to confirm whether there are any safety issues which need to be addressed through the design. Further details such as material usage, tree loss, potential re-alignment of existing ditches and drainage will also need to be addressed.

### **Recommendation**

Following the second round of pre-app discussions, the Highway Authority are satisfied with the principle of a 3-arm roundabout which provides two lane approaches to the north and south on the A325. Furthermore, the new footways will help to link the site to the Alice Holt public footpaths and the nearby bus stops. Given that there is an opportunity through the roundabout design to reduce the walking distance for bus patrons to the sites, the applicant is required to investigate the provision of an additional southbound bus shelter prior to the southbound entry to the roundabout.

Yours Sincerely,

Chris Hirst – Senior Transport Planner  
Hampshire 2050



## **APPENDIX D. Technical Note ITB16329-009 TN**

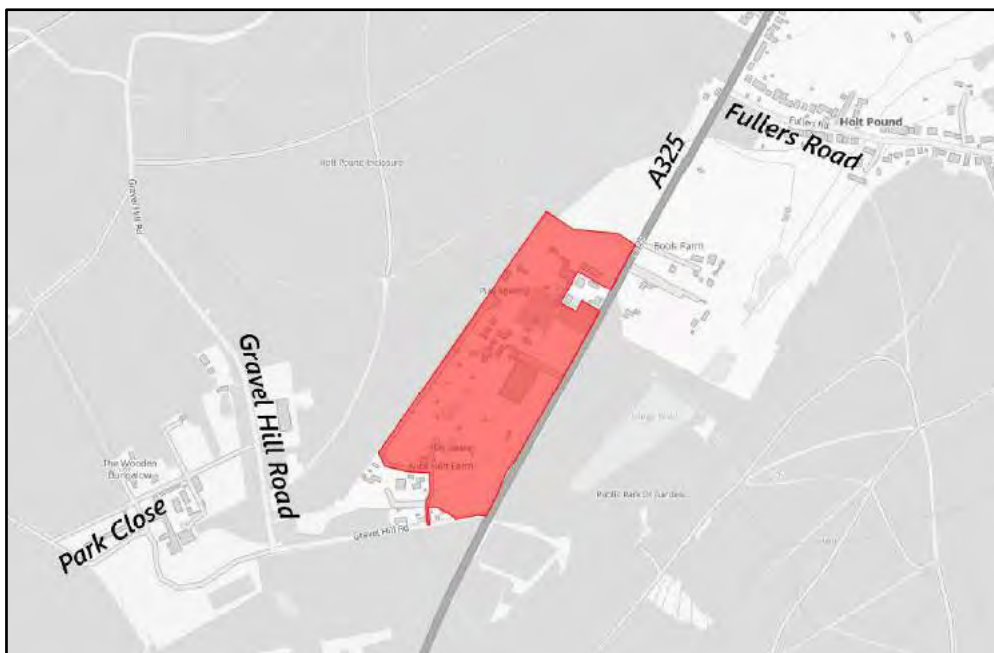
## Technical Note

Project No: ITB16329  
Project Title: Forest Lodge Garden Centre and Birdworld  
Title: NMU Review and Potential Improvements  
Ref: SAW/DF/ITB16329-009 TN  
Date: 21 June 2023

### SECTION 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Haskins Garden Centres Ltd (Haskins) is proposing to redevelop the visitor attraction 'Birdworld' alongside their existing Forest Lodge Garden Centre site 'Forest Lodge'. Haskins acquired both businesses in February 2020 and both fall within the wider Haskins Group.
- 1.2 The site is located some 5km to the southeast of Farnham. A site location plan is reproduced below.

**Image 1.1: Site Location Plan**



1.3 The proposal has been subject to pre-application discussions with Hampshire County Council (HCC), as the local highway authority, at meetings on 26 July 2022 and 6 October 2022 following the submission of the following technical reports:

- A Transport Assessment Scoping Note (TASN) (*ref: ITB16329-005A TN*); and
- An Access Options Appraisal (*ref: ITB16329-006B TN*).

1.4 Further to the pre-application discussions with HCC the following matters were agreed:

- Access, in principle, via a new roundabout from the A325;
- Traffic assessment parameters (including traffic generation, distribution and assignment); and
- The structure of a Transport Assessment (TA) to accompany a future planning application.

1.5 However, officers at HCC also requested consideration and clarification on the following:

- Improved pedestrian connections to Footpath 50 (a Public Right of Way (PRoW)) for routes to Alice Holt Forest;
- Improved pedestrian access to the Gravel Hill Road bus stops on the A325 (including a crossing facility);
- Improved waiting facilities at the Gravel Hill Road bus stops;
- Improved pedestrian and cycle connections to Bentley railway station; and
- Improved cycle connections to National Cycle Network route 224 (NCN224).

1.6 This note therefore provides a review of the existing walking, cycling and public transport facilities in the vicinity of the site with regards to the above and sets out potential improvements where feasible or appropriate. The remainder of this note is structured as follows:

- Section 2 details and reviews the existing sustainable transport provision and Footpaths;
- Section 3 sets out proposed improvements (to be delivered in conjunction with the proposed access arrangements); and
- Section 4 provides a summary and conclusions.

## SECTION 2 Existing Sustainable Transport Provision and Footpaths

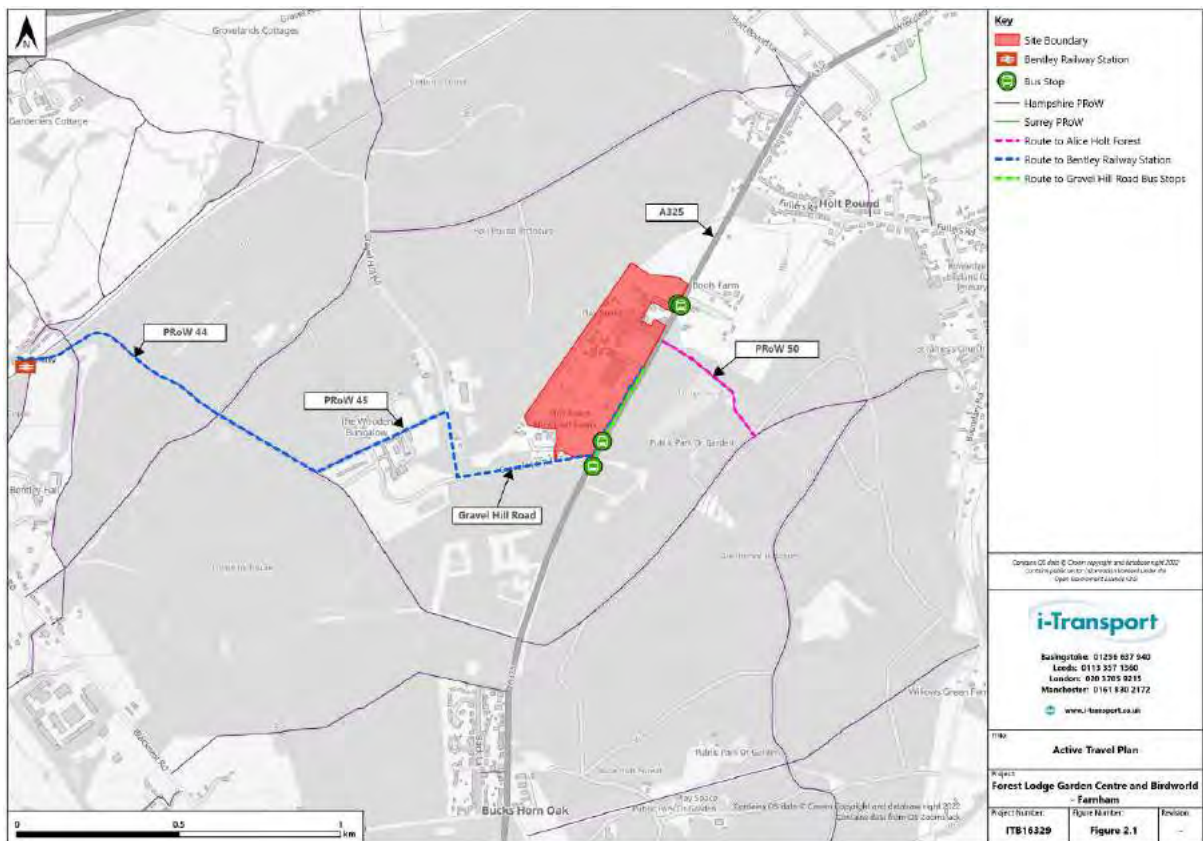
### 2.1 Overview

2.1.1 This section of the note reviews the following sustainable transport provision and routes in the vicinity of the site:

- Pedestrian/cycle facilities along the site frontage (including the facilities in place at the Gravel Hill Road bus stops);
- The walking route to Bentley railway station via Gravel Hill Road, Footpath 45 and Footpath 44 (this section of Footpath 44 is also designated as NCN224); and
- The walking route to Alice Holt (via Footpath 50).

2.1.2 The above routes are shown on **Figure 2.1** (an extract is provided below).

**Image 2.1: Routes**



2.1.3 A detailed review of the routes is set out in the following paragraphs. This review has been informed by a site visit on 8 February 2023.

## 2.2 A325 Site Frontage and Gravel Hill Road Bus Stops

2.2.1 There is currently very limited pedestrian provision along the A325 site frontage, with no footways on either side of the carriageway linking the site to the Gravel Hill Road bus stops.

2.2.2 The northbound bus stop is a layby with a shelter and short, narrow footway. There is a 1.2m wide footway in front of the bus stop which extends southwards to Gravel Hill Road, with an embankment and drainage ditches situated to the west (some 1m – 1.5m below the footway). The northbound bus stop and footway is shown on **Image 2.2**.

**Image 2.2: Northbound Gravel Hill Road Bus Stop (Looking North)**



Source: Consultant's Photographs (08/02/2023)

2.2.3 To the north of the Gravel Hill Road junction with the A325 there is an informal dropped kerb crossing of the A325 to provide pedestrian access to the southbound Gravel Hill Road bus stop (see **Image 2.3**). The footway on the eastern side of the carriageway is 1.2m wide and there is a steep embankment some 2m down to a drainage ditch to the east of the footway.



**Image 2.3: Gravel Hill Road Dropped Kerb Pedestrian Crossing (Looking North)**



Source: Consultant's Photographs (08/02/2023)

- 2.2.4 The southbound bus stop is also a layby, however there is no shelter in place and the footway further narrows to 1m in front of the bus stop. The southbound bus stop is shown at **Image 2.4**.

**Image 2.4: Southbound Gravel Hill Road Bus Stop (Looking South)**



Source: Consultant's Photographs (08/02/2023)

### **Summary**

**2.2.5** Whilst there are footways and dropped kerbs in place to link the Gravel Hill Road bus stops, the overall pedestrian provision is poor as the footways are narrow and the highly trafficked nature of the A325 can be intimidating to pedestrians. Furthermore, and importantly, there is no direct footway connection to the site.

**2.2.6** Improved pedestrian facilities and access to the bus stops along the A325 could therefore be provided as part of the proposed site access arrangements. Subject to level differences and the extent of public highway, there is the opportunity to provide:

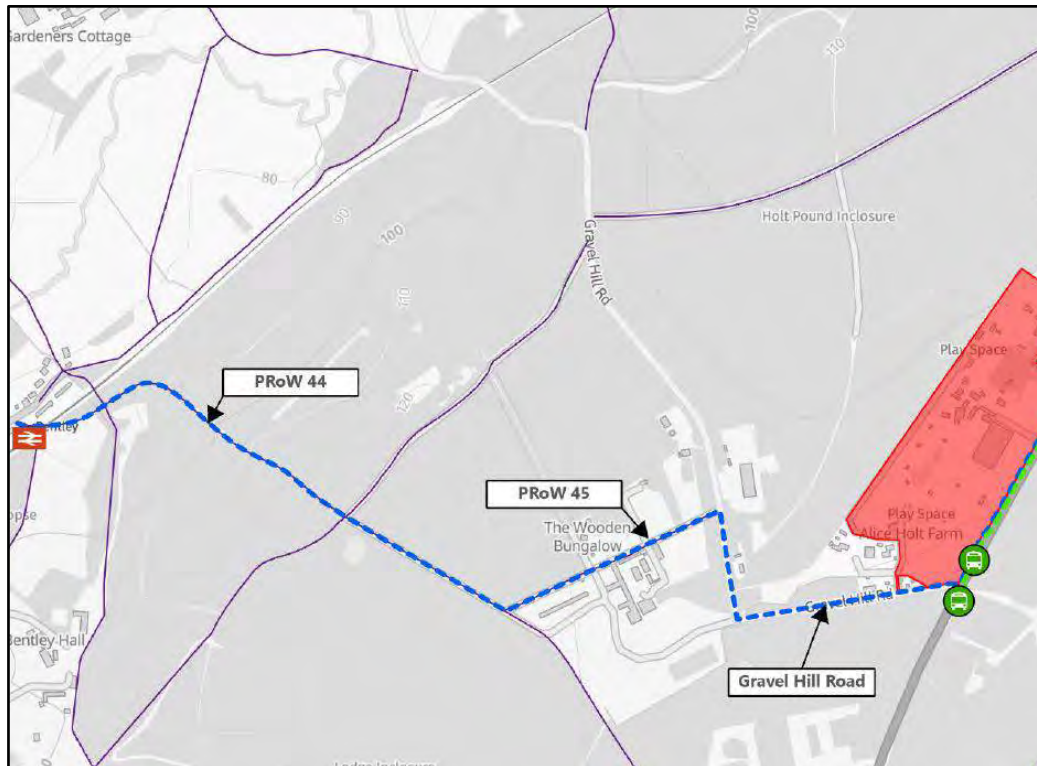
- A new footway connection to Forest Lodge and Birdworld (to tie into the new site access arrangements);
- An upgraded northbound bus stop;
- Improved crossing facilities of the A325 in the vicinity of Gravel Hill Road;
- A new bus shelter for the southbound bus stop; and
- Real time information on services at the bus stops.

**2.2.7** Further detail is set out at Section 3 of this note.

## 2.3 Walking Route to Bentley Railway Station

2.3.1 Bentley railway station can be accessed from the site on foot via Gravel Hill Road, Footpath 45 and Footpath 44. It is circa 2.4km in length. The route is shown on **Figure 2.1** with an extract included below. As identified above, there is currently no footway access from the garden centre to Gravel Hill Road.

**Image 2.5: Route to Bentley Railway Station**



2.3.2 It should be noted that the section of the route at Footpath 44 is designated as NCN224.

### Gravel Hill Road

2.3.3 Gravel Hill Road is a lightly trafficked, tarmacked single carriageway typically between 6.5m – 7m wide. There are no footways and it effectively operates as a shared surface. It provides a route to the Forest Research Centre, as well as access to a number of residential properties in the vicinity of the junction with the A325. Part of the route is also signed as the Forest Research Adaptation Trail walking route (details are included at **Appendix A**).

2.3.4 Whilst it is subject to the national speed limit of 60mph and is unlit, it is a pleasant rural walking and cycle route as it is lightly trafficked, vehicle speeds were observed to be low and there is good pedestrian visibility (even at bends). Gravel Hill Road is shown at **Images 2.6** and **2.7**.



**Image 2.6: Gravel Hill Road Near A325 Junction (Looking West)**



Source: Consultant's Photographs (08/02/2023)

**Image 2.7: Gravel Hill Road (Looking East)**



Source: Consultant's Photographs (08/02/2023)



**Image 2.8: Forest Research Adaptation Trail Sign at Gravel Hill Road**



Source: Consultant's Photographs (08/02/2023)

### **Footpath 45**

- 2.3.5 Footpath 45 routes through the Forest Research Centre and connects Gravel Hill Road to Footpath 44. In addition to comprising a PRoW, it also provides vehicular access to the Forest Research site and is of sufficient width to safely accommodate vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists as a good quality shared surface.



- 2.3.6 The eastern part of the route is tarmacked (see **Image 2.10**) and the western part is formed of compacted hoggin (see **Image 2.9**).

**Image 2.9: Footpath 45 (Looking East – Hoggin)**



Source: Consultant's Photographs (08/02/2023)



**Image 2.10: Footpath 45 (Looking East – Tarmacked)**



Source: Consultant's Photographs (08/02/2023)

#### **Footpath 44 (NCN 224)**

- 2.3.7** Footpath 44 provides a route to Bentley railway station from Footpath 45. It is also designated as NCN224 and as the local 'Shipwrights Way' walking route. Part of the route is also signed as the Forest Research Adaptation Trail.
- 2.3.8** Footpath 44 is typically an unlit traffic free route<sup>1</sup> comprised of compacted hoggins. Site observations indicate that it is well used for recreational use by dog walkers, walkers and cyclists. It is generally flat however it slopes downhill on approach to Bentley railway station. Whilst typically rural in nature, it is a high-quality recreational walking and cycling route and does provide the opportunity to connect to rail services at Bentley.

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<sup>1</sup> There are some locations where occasional vehicle access is required for Forestry Research maintenance. There is also a car park accessed from Gravel Hill Road that is used by walkers.

**Image 2.11: Footpath 44**



Source: Consultant's Photographs (08/02/2023)

### [Access to Bentley Station](#)

- 2.3.9 Bentley railway station is served by twice hourly services between Alton and London Waterloo via Farnham and Woking. Footpath 44 connects to Bentley railway station via an uncontrolled pedestrian level crossing. There are currently plans to upgrade this crossing to a pedestrian bridge (details are included in **Appendix B**).

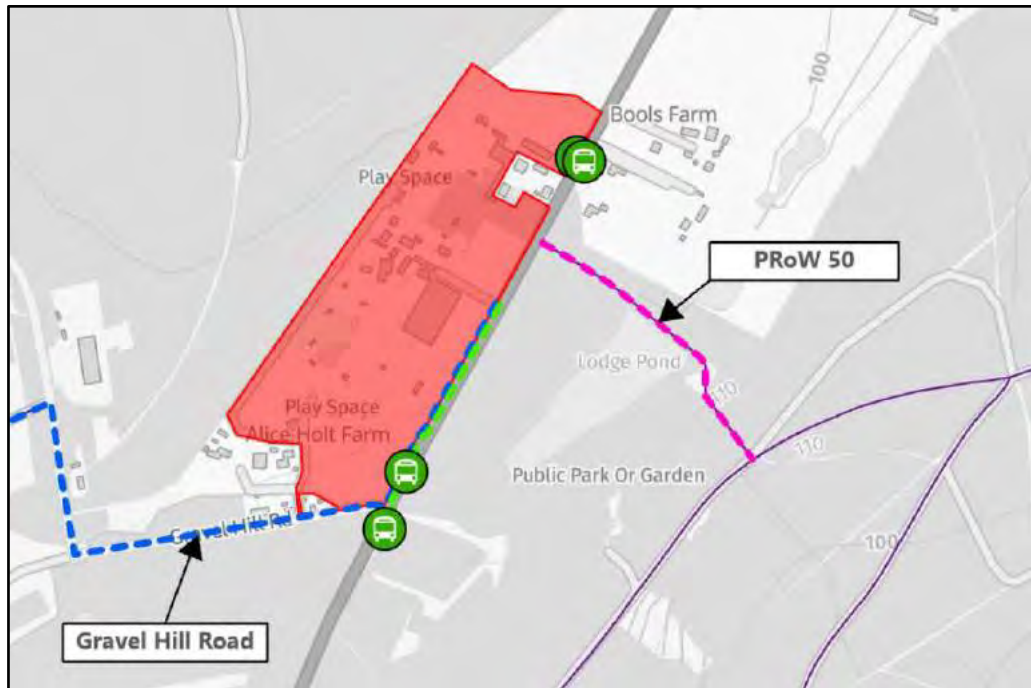
### [Summary](#)

- 2.3.10 Bentley railway station is accessible from the site via Gravel Hill Road, Footpath 45 and Footpath 44 which provide a predominantly traffic-free route to Bentley railway station via good quality rural footpaths (including the connection to NCN224 at Footpath 44). Whilst there are no dedicated facilities on Gravel Hill Road, and it operates as a shared surface, it remains a good environment for pedestrians/cyclists as it is wide, lightly trafficked, vehicle speeds are observed to be low and there is good pedestrian visibility. This is confirmed by the fact that part of Gravel Hill Road is signed as the Forest Research Adaptation Trail walking route.
- 2.3.11 No improvements are therefore proposed to the footpaths and connections that comprise the route to Bentley railway station as there are already sufficient facilities provided.

## 2.4 Walking Route to Alice Holt Forest

2.4.1 Pedestrians may choose to combine a recreational visit to Alice Holt Forest with visits to both the redeveloped Forest Lodge Garden Centre and Birdworld. Alice Holt Forest can be accessed on foot from the site via Footpath 50 routing east from the A325. The route is shown on **Figure 2.1** with an extract included overleaf.

**Image 2.12: Route to Alice Holt Forest**



2.4.2 Footpath 50 is a relatively wide and level path comprising compacted hoggin. Whilst it is unlit, it provides a pleasant recreational walking route as shown at **Image 2.13**.



**Image 2.13: Footpath 50 (Looking East)**



Source: Consultant's Photographs (08/02/2023)

- 2.4.3** Whilst Footpath 50 is a good quality pedestrian rural footpath, there are no dedicated crossing facilities where it meets the A325 (see **Image 2.14**) with sub-standard pedestrian visibility constrained by a large tree on the western side of the carriageway and a fence to the north on the eastern side of the carriageway (this is shown at **Image 2.15**).



**Image 2.14: Footpath 50 Connection with the A325 (Looking North)**



Source: Google Streetview (April 2021)

**Image 2.15: Pedestrian Visibility at Footpath 50 Connection with the A325 (Looking North)**



Source: Consultant's Photographs (08/02/2023)

2.4.4 There is therefore an opportunity to provide improved crossing facilities on the A325 as part of the proposed site access arrangements which would provide a dedicated and attractive pedestrian route to the redeveloped Forest Lodge and Birdworld. Further detail on this is provided at Section 3.

## 2.5 Summary

2.5.1 The following sustainable transport provision and routes in the vicinity of the site have been reviewed:

- Pedestrian/cycle facilities along the site frontage (including the facilities in place at the Gravel Hill Road bus stops);
- The walking route to Bentley railway station via Gravel Hill Road, Footpath 45 and Footpath 44 (this section of Footpath 44 is also designated as NCN224); and
- The walking route to Alice Holt (via Footpath 50).

2.5.2 The pedestrian facilities and Gravel Hill Road bus stops along the A325 site frontage are of poor quality and currently do not provide direct pedestrian access to the site from the bus stops. As part of the site access works, there is the opportunity to provide:

- A new footway connection to Forest Lodge and Birdworld (to tie into the new site access arrangements);
- An upgraded northbound bus stop;
- Improved crossing facilities on the A325 in the vicinity of Gravel Hill Road;
- A new bus shelter for the southbound bus stop; and
- Real time information on services at the bus stops.

2.5.3 Bentley railway station is accessible from the site via Gravel Hill Road, Footpath 45 and Footpath 44 which provide a predominantly traffic-free route to Bentley railway station via good quality rural footpaths. Whilst there are no dedicated pedestrian/cycle facilities on Gravel Hill Road, it provides a suitable connection as it is wide, lightly trafficked, vehicle speeds are observed to be low and there is good pedestrian visibility. It is also an existing signed route. No amendments are therefore proposed to this route at this stage.

2.5.4 Footpath 50 provides a direct route to Alice Holt Forest which could be used to combine a recreational visit to Alice Holt Forest with visits to both the redeveloped Forest Lodge Garden Centre and Birdworld. Footpath 50 is a pleasant recreational route however there are no dedicated crossing facilities where the route meets the A325. Improved crossing facilities can therefore be brought forward as part of the site access arrangements.



2.5.5 Details of proposed improvements are set out in Section 3 of this note.

## SECTION 3 Possible Proposed Improvements

### 3.1 Overview

3.1.1 This section sets out possible proposed improvements to the existing walking, cycling and public transport facilities in the vicinity of the site (where feasible and appropriate). These improvements include:

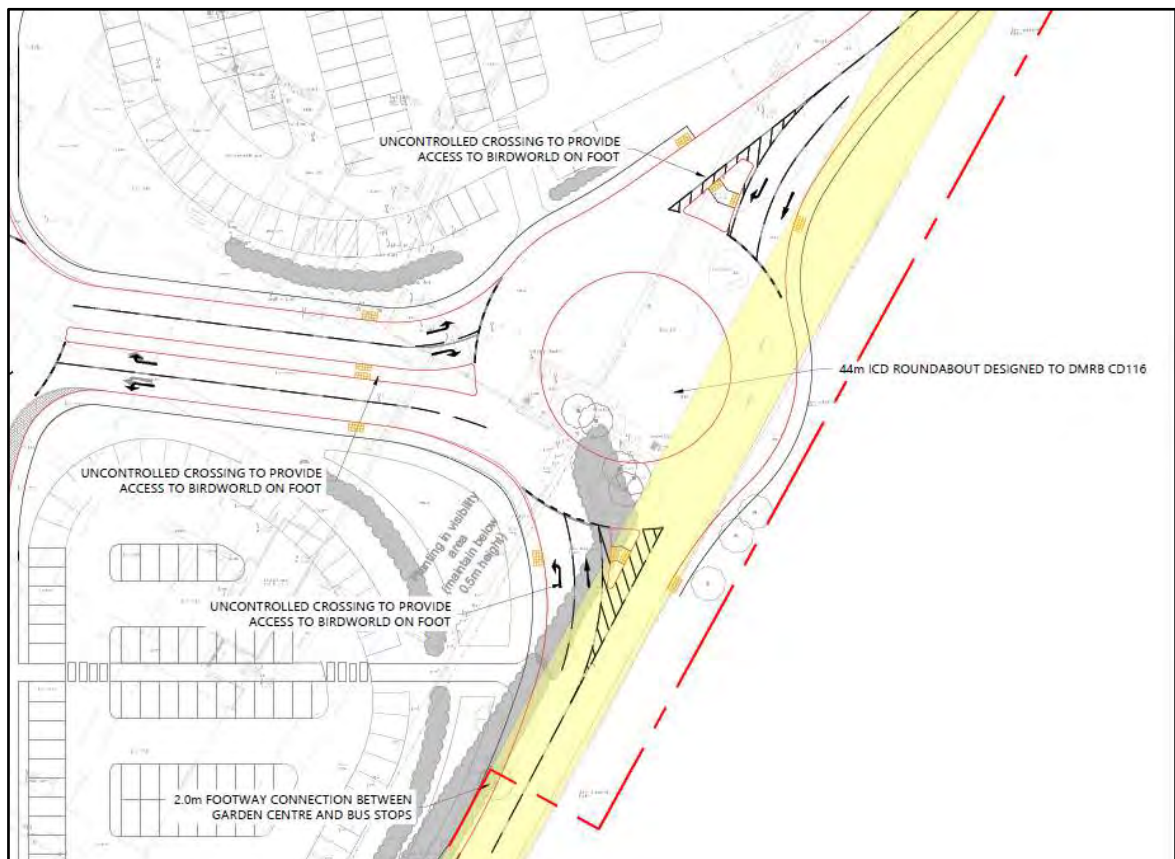
- Improved crossing facilities to the Footpath 50 connection to the A325 to provide a direct route from the site to Alice Holt Forest; and
- Improvements to the Gravel Hill Lane bus stops as well as improved pedestrian connections to the bus stops.

3.1.2 These are set out in conjunction with the proposed access arrangements to the site (a new 3-arm roundabout).

### 3.2 Site Access

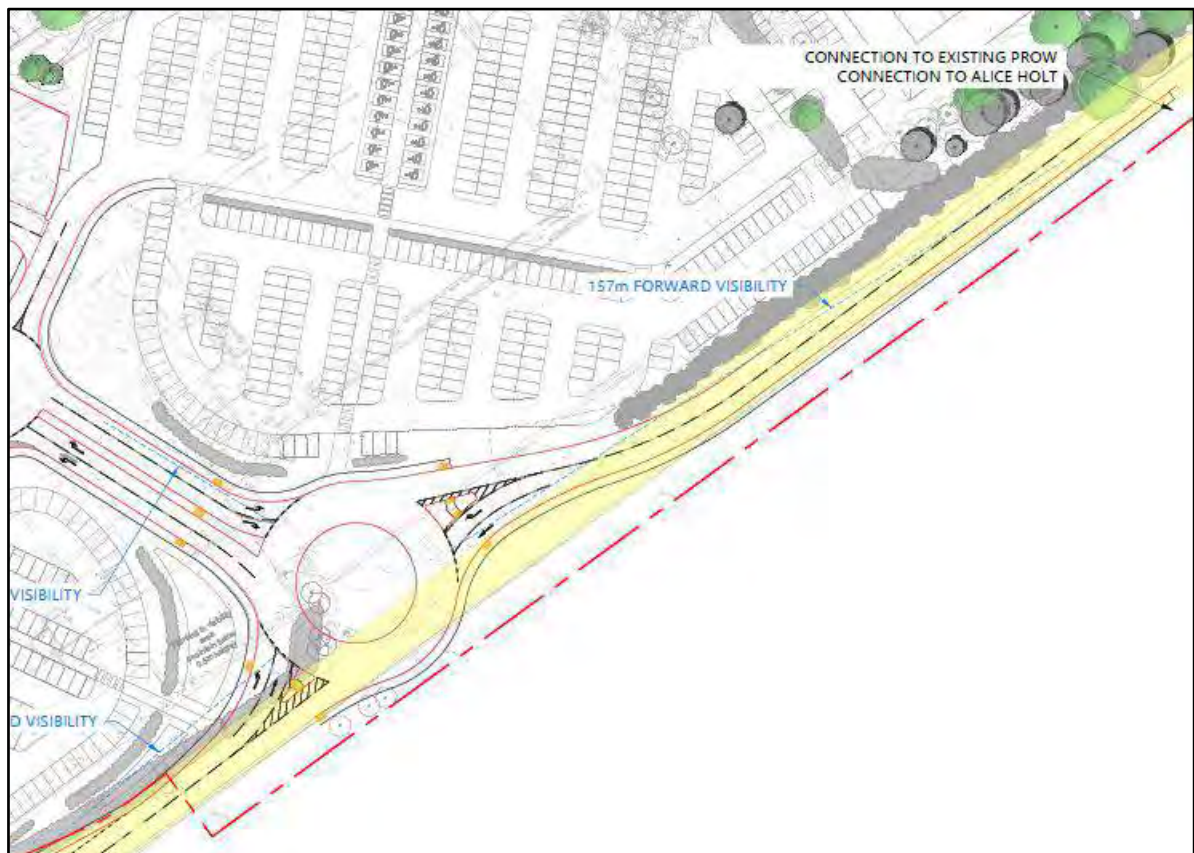
3.2.1 Access to the site is proposed via a new roundabout shown on **Drawing ITB16329-GA-100** with an extract included below.

**Image 3.1: Proposed Site Access Arrangements**



- 3.2.2 The site access has been designed in line with the prevailing design guidance with sufficient visibility splays and deflection.
- 3.2.3 Footways and pedestrian crossings have been provided on all arms. This will enable direct pedestrian access to both Forest Lodge and Birdworld, as well as access to Footpath 50 and the Gravel Hill Road bus stops (see below).
- 3.3 **Improved A325 Crossing to Footpath 50**
- 3.3.1 To improve pedestrian access to Footpath 50, as part of the site access arrangements a new footway has been provided on the eastern side of the A325 within land controlled by Haskins. This will provide a direct connection between the site and Footpath 50 and is shown on **Drawing ITB16329-GA-100**, with an extract provided overleaf.
- 3.3.2 The provision of pedestrian crossing points at the new roundabout in conjunction with the new footway on the eastern side of the A325 will mean that pedestrians will no longer need to cross the A325 at the existing sub-standard crossing.

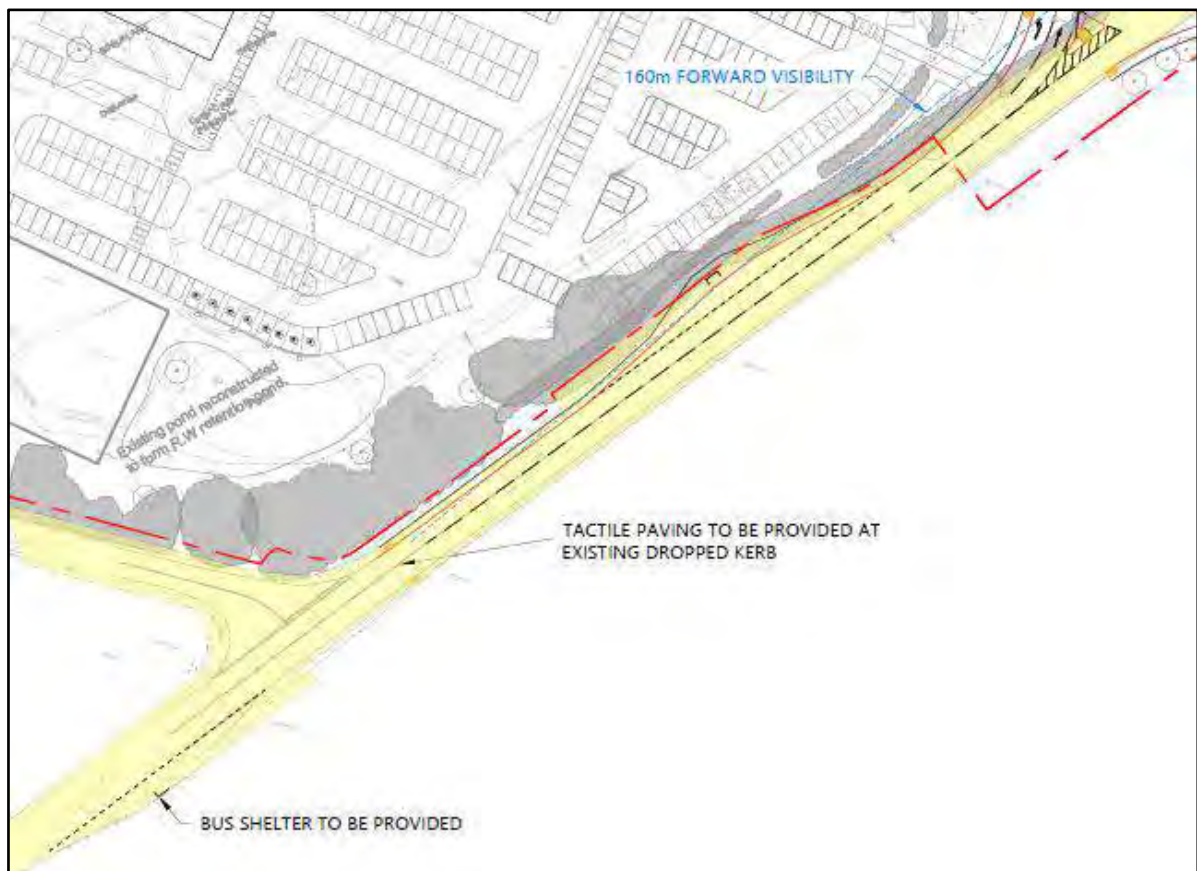
**Image 3.2: Proposed Footway Connection to Footpath 50**



### 3.4 Improved Access to Gravel Hill Road Bus Stops

- 3.4.1 The proposed access arrangements will also bring forward improved pedestrian facilities on the A325 and improved access to the Gravel Hill Road bus stops.
- 3.4.2 The northbound bus stop is proposed to be marginally realigned with a new footway connection to the north to provide direct access into the site. The existing footway behind the bus layby that routes southward can also be resurfaced and a replacement bus shelter could be provided.
- 3.4.3 Potential improvements to the southbound Gravel Hill Road bus stop and crossing are constrained by the extent of public highway at this location and the level differences/ditches. Nevertheless, there is the potential to provide upgraded crossing facilities on the A325 through resurfacing the footways and introducing tactile paving at the crossing, alongside the provision of a new bus shelter for passengers.
- 3.4.4 These improvements are shown on **Drawing ITB16329-GA-100** and on the extract below.

**Image 3.3: Improvements to the Northbound Gravel Hill Road Bus Stop**



- 3.4.5 Real time bus service information could be provided at the bus stops.

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## SECTION 4 Summary

4.1 Further to pre-application discussions with officers at HCC, this note provides a review of the existing walking, cycling and public transport facilities in the vicinity of Forest Lodge and Birdworld and sets out potential improvements where necessary, feasible or appropriate in relation to the proposed redevelopment of the site. This was informed by a site visit on 8 February 2023.

4.2 In particular this note considers the following:

- Pedestrian/cycle facilities along the site frontage (including the facilities in place at the Gravel Hill Road bus stops);
- The walking route to Bentley railway station via Gravel Hill Road, Footpath 45 and Footpath 44 (this section of Footpath 44 is also designated as NCN224); and
- The walking route to Alice Holt (via Footpath 50) which could be used to combine a recreational visit to Alice Holt Forest with visits to both the redeveloped Forest Lodge Garden Centre and Birdworld.

4.3 The pedestrian facilities and Gravel Hill Road bus stops along the A325 site frontage are of poor quality and currently do not provide direct pedestrian access to the site from the bus stops. Therefore, in conjunction with the site access works, the following can be delivered:

- A new footway connection to Forest Lodge and Birdworld which will tie into an upgraded northbound bus stop; and
- Improved crossing facilities at Gravel Hill Road through resurfacing and the introduction of tactile paving, in conjunction with a new bus shelter for the southbound bus stop. The ability to deliver improvements at this location is limited to the extent of public highway and level differences.

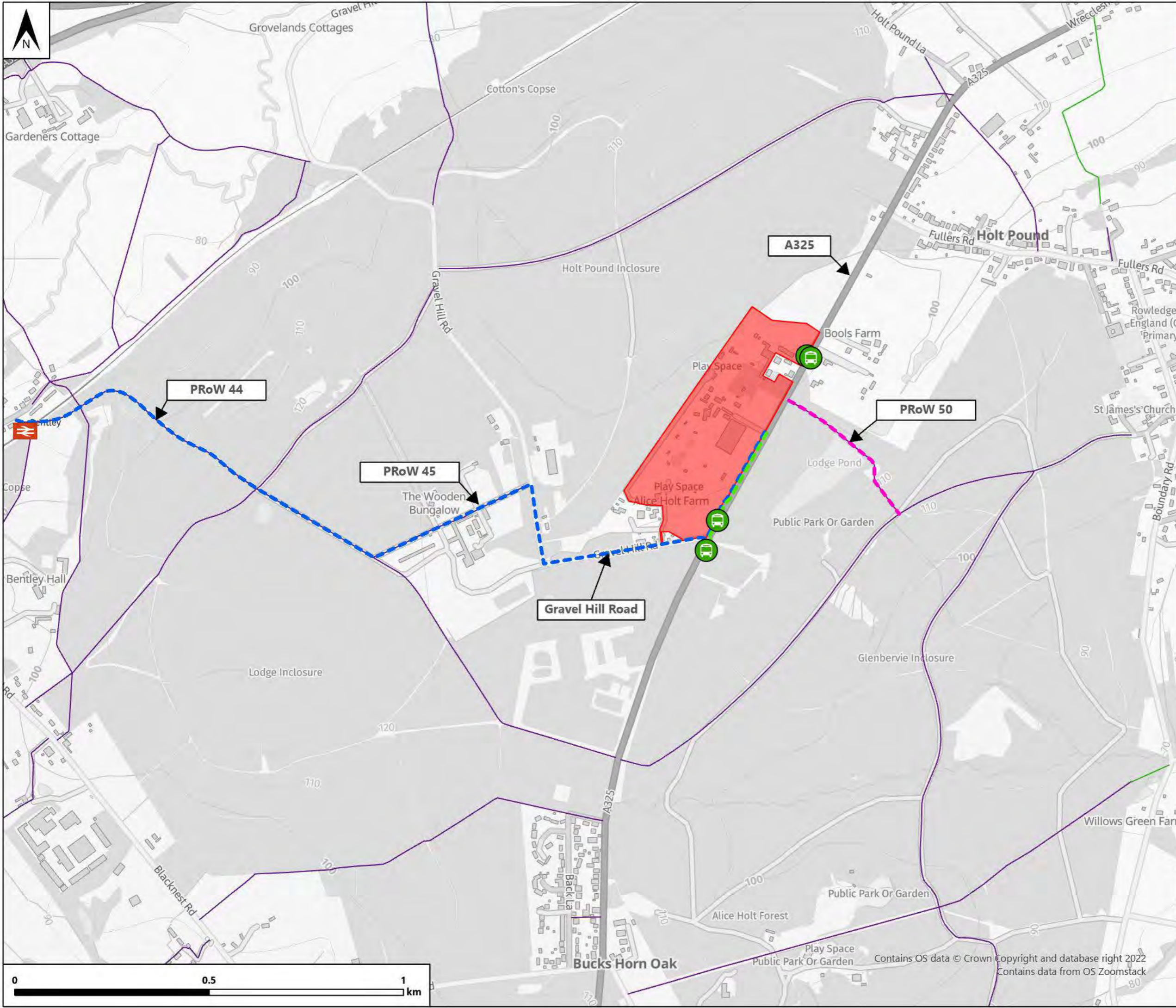
4.4 Bentley railway station is accessible from the site via Gravel Hill Road, Footpath 45 and Footpath 44 which provide a predominantly traffic-free route to Bentley railway station via good quality rural footpaths. Whilst there are no dedicated pedestrian/cycle facilities on Gravel Hill Road, it provides a suitable connection as it is wide, lightly trafficked, vehicle speeds are observed to be low and there is good pedestrian visibility. It is also part of the signed Forest Research Adaptation Trail walking route. No improvements are therefore proposed to this route.

- 4.5 Footpath 50 provides a pleasant recreational route to Alice Holt Forest, however there are no dedicated crossing facilities where the route meets the A325. As part of the site access works a new footway is therefore proposed on the eastern side of the carriageway (within land that Haskins controls) that will tie into the proposed new pedestrian crossings at the site access roundabout. This will provide a direct route between the site and Footpath 50 and eliminate the need for pedestrians to cross the A325 at the current sub-standard crossing.



## FIGURES





- Key**
- Site Boundary
  - Bentley Railway Station
  - Bus Stop
  - Hampshire PRoW
  - Surrey PRoW
  - Route to Alice Holt Forest
  - Route to Bentley Railway Station
  - Route to Gravel Hill Road Bus Stops

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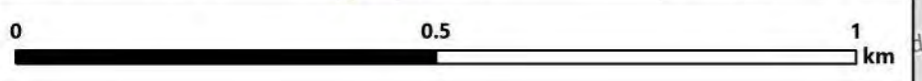
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Title: **Active Travel Plan**

Project: **Forest Lodge Garden Centre and Birdworld - Farnham**

Project Number: <b>ITB16329</b>	Figure Number: <b>Figure 2.1</b>	Revision: <b>-</b>
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