9279 - Birchall Garden Suburb.

Position Statement / Statement of Common Ground on Highway and Transportation Matters.

Between DTA on behalf of Tarmac and Hertfordshire County Council as Highway Authority.

Context

The Birchall Garden Suburb (BGS) site, located on the Eastern side of Welwyn Garden City, is being promoted by Tarmac to deliver a significant element of the housing requirements in the Welwyn Hatfield (WHDC) and East Hertfordshire (EHDC) District Councils' Local Plans. The site is in sole ownership and Tarmac also have wider interests in the local area including Panshanger Park. David Tucker Associates (DTA) are advisors to Tarmac on matters of transport and access in relation to the site. Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) are the highway authority responsible for the main local transport networks.

The development of the transport strategy and the appraisal of the accessibility, and wider traffic impacts have been subject to ongoing discussions between DTA and HCC for a number of years. This has included agreement of development appraisal parameters, testing of the development through HCC's own traffic models and the sharing of draft Transport Assessments (TA) with HCC. DTA have also engaged with the local community, through Tarmac initiated events, to understand their issues and aspirations.

The latest draft TA was reviewed by HCC in August 2017. Subject to minor clarifications and updates to the report to reflect the final scheme proposals, the broad conclusions of the TA are agreed such that HCC confirm they have "no objection to the proposed development in principle, subject to additional information to support that the proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on the local highway network".

Site Access

The proposed site access arrangements are shown on DTA Drawings 9279-37B and 9279-38. These have been developed in line with current design guidance and tested to ensure that the individual accesses would operate efficiently. These are attached at **Appendix A** and are agreed in principle but will be subject to further detailed assessment and in particular a Road Safety Audit prior to the submission of the application. An alternative access arrangement using a series of traffic signals instead of roundabouts remains an option for further consideration should it be demonstrated that wider sustainable benefits can be provided.

The cycle and pedestrian strategy is set out on the plan at **Appendix B**. The local area currently benefits from a good level of pedestrian and cycle infrastructure including the strategic route from Welwyn Garden City and Hertford. It is essential that the development proposals provide effective and safe pedestrian and cycle linkages between the site and the wider area.

As part of the wider Birchall Lane access works, it is envisaged that formal pedestrian crossings will be provided as indicated on the masterplan and the site access arrangement drawings. These will link the development to existing routes, into adjacent areas and through to Welwyn Garden City.

HCC and DTA / Tarmac continue to explore options to improve/provide additional linkages from East Welwyn to areas such as Hatfield.

Traffic Modelling and Impact

The site has been identified within strategic models for Welwyn including the Diamond model and more recently the current WHASH model. These are wide scale assignment models.

The TA provides analysis of the traffic impact on two levels, firstly a first principles assessment of distribution and assignment and secondly modelling using the County Councils WHASH model.

The findings of WHASH have also been input into the modelling work that supports the East Hertfordshire and Welwyn Hatfield Local Plan evidence base. The headline conclusions of the modelling work are that:

- The majority of the impact will be to the west of the site. The Infrastructure Development Plan (IDP) published by WHDC sets out a full list of schemes to address the Local Plan impacts and it is expected that BGS will provide a proportional contribution towards those, either through CIL or via S106
- 2) There are a number of local junctions which BGS will improve as set out in Appendix A. Some of these are also in the IDP but these will be covered by S278 agreement and implemented by the developer.
- The impact of the development to the east is forecast to be modest, particularly in the early phases. The first 500 units are expected to increase flows on the A414 through Hertford by less than 25 vehicles in the AM peak and less than 100 two way in the full development scenario. No specific mitigation is proposed at this stage but proportionate contributions will be made towards sustainable transport and/or capacity improvements in accordance with NPPF tests.

Public Transport

The access strategy has been developed to provide for bus access through the site and therefore the internal roads will be laid out to accommodate the needs of public service vehicles.

A scheme to develop the existing public transport provision is set out in the TA and in principle it is agreed that a development of this scale will be required to provide its own public transport strategy which complements the existing network.

In this regard, DTA envisage an overall aim of providing buses of at least 30 minute frequencies on peak and 30-45 minute frequency off peak.

DTA is envisaged that the main route to serve the site could be an extension to the 403, coupled with a new direct linking service between the site and Welwyn Garden City railway station.

In due course detailed discussions will be required with both HCC and bus service operators to define the precise arrangements. It is likely that significant early investment will be required (pump priming) by the developer, but in the long term a development of this scale should be able to support a high quality public transport network without the need for ongoing subsidy.

Overall, the strategy is shown at **Appendix C.** Detailed discussions regarding phased delivery of the strategy are ongoing and will be secured, along with funding, through Section 106 contributions and commitments.

Phasing

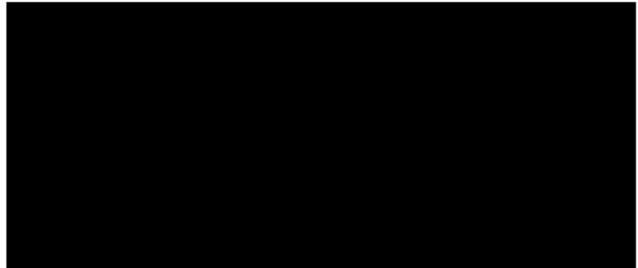
Work on the phasing of development is ongoing and will continue as an application is progressed. It is envisaged that there will be an overarching Transportation and Phasing Strategy prepared which

will be secured by condition and against which future development parcels and areas can be planned and assessed.

<u>Signed</u>



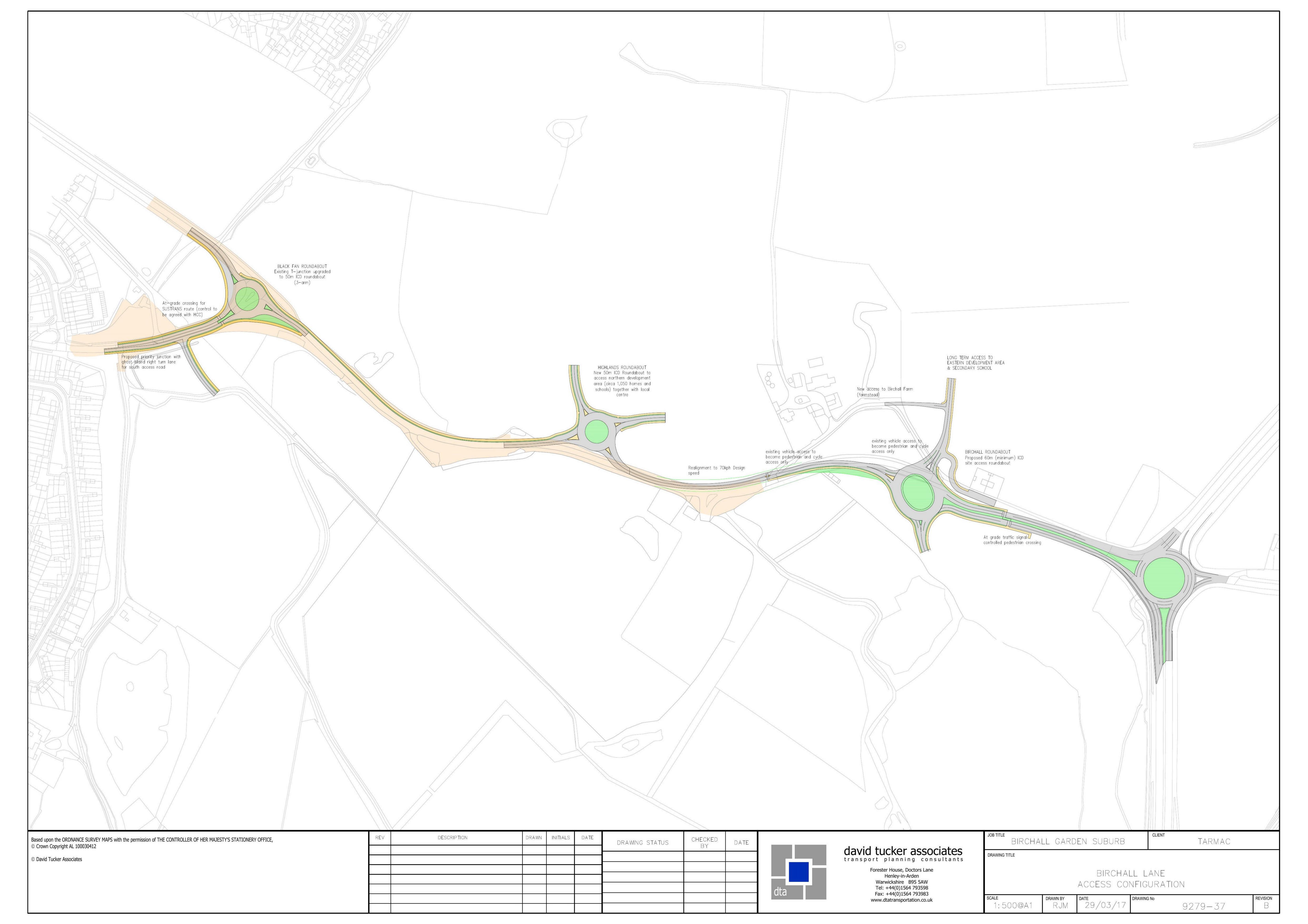
Simon Tucker on behalf of DTA for Tarmac

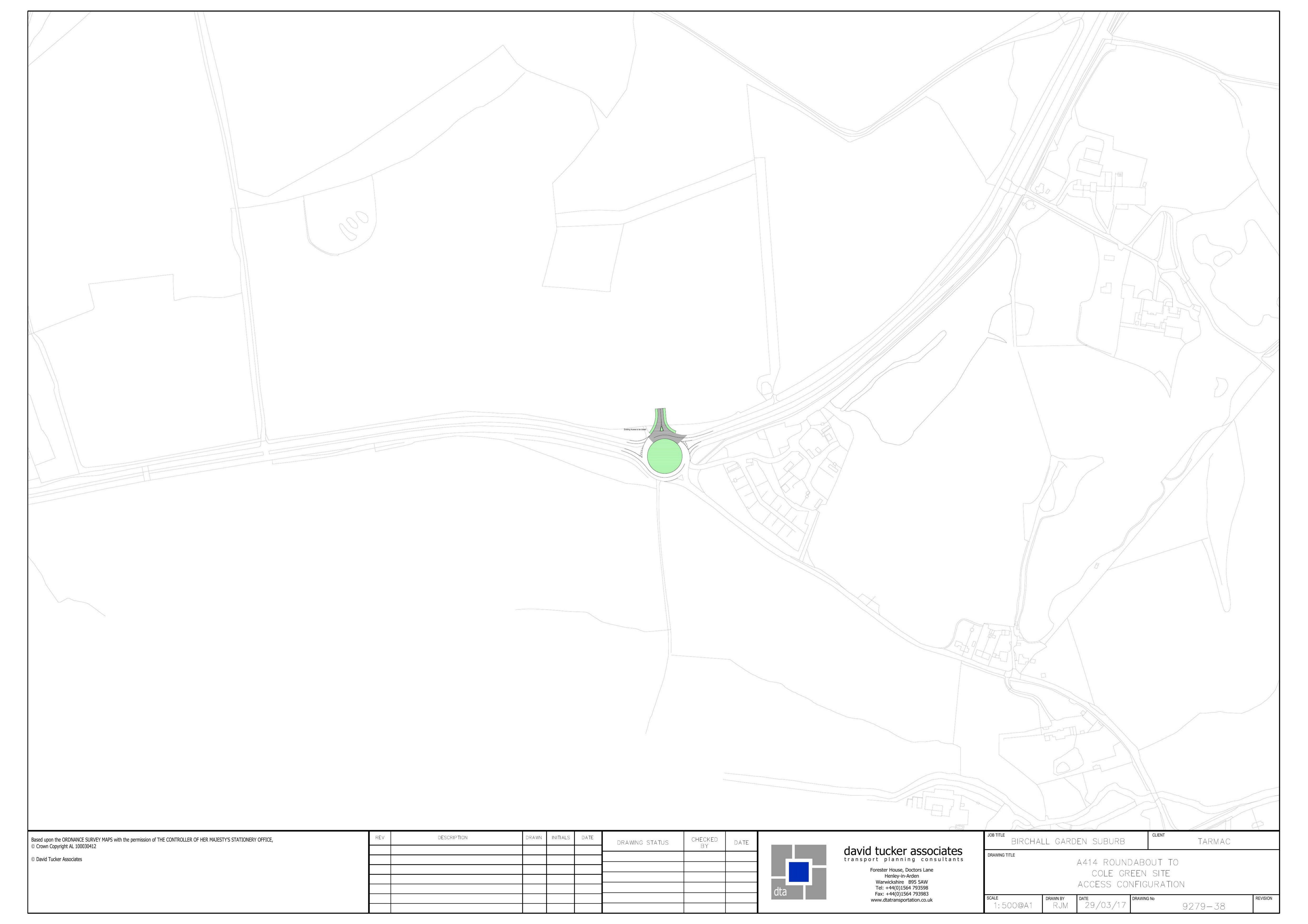


James Dale for Hertfordshire County Council

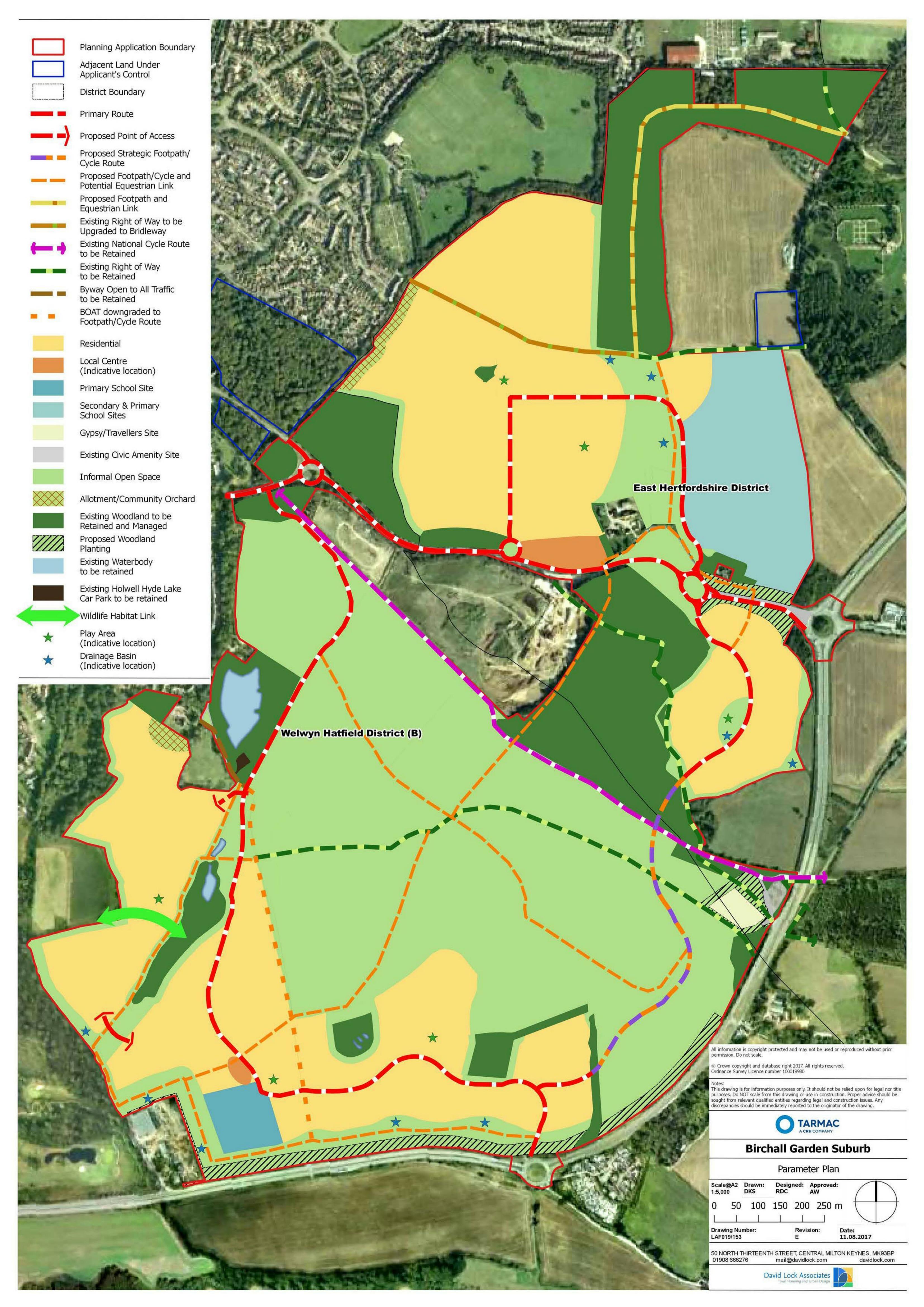
5th January 2018

Appendix A





Appendix B



Appendix C

