(7)Application No PAP/2011/0259

Outline application for the development of a business/technology campus comprising replacement MIRA Headquarters, office, research, and manufacturing facilities, hotel and local facilities including retail/café/restaurant, indoor and outdoor leisure facilities, ancillary energy generation plant/equipment, internal access roads, car parking, landscaping, drainage and associated work and creation of new and improved points of access, widening of A5, associated earth works and landscaping, for

MIRA Technology Park Ltd.

Introduction

Members will recall the recent presentation given to the Council by the applicant in respect of this major planning application. Pre-application consultation has been extensive with exhibitions in Hinckley, Nuneaton and Atherstone as well as media involvement at the regional level. The outline application has now been submitted to the Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (HBBC).

HBBC will now determine that application and North Warwickshire has been formally invited to forward its representations on the overall proposal. Additionally, as was pointed out to Members at the time of the presentation, part of the application site is located within North Warwickshire, and thus this Council will determine the proposals which fall within its area. That part of the application site within North Warwickshire is essentially the whole length of the A5. The access proposals are thus within North Warwickshire, and the Borough Council's remit as Local Planning Authority extends over this area alone.

Two plans are attached at Appendices A and B. The first shows the whole application site and the second illustrates that part of the overall site that is in North Warwickshire.

This report will continue by first describing the existing MIRA site and then outline the overall development proposal such that Members can become acquainted with its scope, content and scale. It will then describe in more detail the proposed access arrangements and how these would be accommodated along the A5 frontage.

Relevant policies within the Development Plan will then be referred to along with a schedule of other material planning considerations. The report will conclude with a number of issues which the Board will need to consider when it comes to determine the proposals within North Warwickshire, and also to refer to when it considers what its representations are to be in respect of the overall proposals.

Officers are working closely with their colleagues at HBBC, such that there will be an exchange of consultation responses and coordination of reports being prepared for our respective Planning Boards.

The Application

The submission is an outline planning application but with access details and arrangements included.

It is accompanied by an Environmental Statement with Supplementary Statements outlining the planning case; the sustainability issues involved together with a Design and Access Statement and a full Transport Assessment. As is the case with all applications accompanied by an Environmental Statement, a non-Technical Summary has also been submitted and a copy is appended to this report at Appendix C.

Whilst Members will be aware that the main application will be determined by the HBBC, it is being treated as a departure from the Development Plan, and thus if HBBC is minded to support the proposals, the matter will be referred to the Secretary of State to see whether he wishes to determine the application himself following a Public Inquiry. North Warwickshire can still determine the proposals within its area – namely the access arrangements – without the need for referral.

The Site

The existing MIRA complex is located on the north side of the A5 between the Red Gate junction at Caldecote where the A444 crosses the A5, and the Higham Lane roundabout in Nuneaton. It covers a total area of 340 hectares. The application site itself covers 71 hectares of this holding and is predominantly at the A5 end of the overall site. It is essentially a rural location. Indeed part of the existing holding as well as the application site itself is agricultural land. There are nearby farmsteads. Higham-on-the-Hill is the closest village. The southern boundary is the A5 and to the east is the line of the former Ashby and Nuneaton Joint Railway which passes under the A5 just to the east of site. There is agricultural land to the south of the A5. The existing development sits within a slight “hollow” in terms of ground levels.

The nearest settlement in North Warwickshire is the hamlet of Caldecote - just over a kilometre distant - although there are detached houses along the A5 and the A444.

The existing MIRA complex consists of several distinct areas. The main campus fronts the A5 over a length of around 235 metres, and consists of interlinked brick office buildings dating from the 1940’s and 50’s interspersed with more recent steel and brick sheds. The average height of these buildings is around 10 metres and the buildings here amount to some 21000 square metres of floor space and in planning terms, its use falls with Use Class B1 (offices and light industrial).

The second area sits behind this frontage campus but is physically divided from it by open land and hedgerows. It is less dense with more open space between the buildings. This has 3800 square metres of B1 floor space and

contains a mix of larger brick and steel structures used as testing chambers and laboratories which were formerly agricultural buildings.

The third area is within the test track and includes a number of more recent workshops, sheds, wind tunnels, and more modern structures, as well as older structures being former airfield hangers and Nissen huts. They amount to around 20000 square metres in total and the average height is some 7 metres.

The fourth area is the Proving ground which accommodates a number of different test tracks, converted from the former Second World War airfield. In total there are over 60 kilometres of track here.

Around these areas are agricultural fields

These various areas are illustrated as areas A to D on Appendix D.

The Proposals

a) General Overview

An outline Master Plan has been submitted covering some 71 hectares of the total MIRA land holding as described above, and in essence the proposals are to completely redevelop the frontage of the site with a replacement MIRA headquarters, together with a business technology park based on the automotive trade. The total floor space proposed is 132,716 square metres all falling within Use Class B1. When allowance is made for demolitions, the gross increase in floor space would be 115,000 square metres – almost a 300% increase over the existing total floor space.

The application site is divided into five zones – see Appendix E.

Zone 1 would be to the west of the existing frontage campus on present agricultural land, and become one area of the “Technology Park”. This would consist of a range of new office, research and development units and laboratories. It is envisaged that the building footprint would cover some 40% of the ground area, and that the tallest buildings would be around 15 metres tall. A substantial landscaped area is proposed for the western boundary.

Zone 2 would be on the site of the existing frontage campus. It too would include offices and laboratories of similar scale to those in Zone 1, but the main ancillary and support accommodation is proposed for this Zone – the hotel, the small retail and restaurant and indoor leisure facilities.

Zone 3 would provide for the remainder of the Technology Park and is located between the existing access and the former railway line to the east. Buildings here would be generally lower at 10 metres in height.

Zone 4 would be the site of the new MIRA head quarter building taking up some 76000 square metres of the total proposed floor space – around 60%. It

would be separated from the new frontage development by a new Linear Park. The main building would be tallest on the new campus – around 16 metres tall.

Zone 5 is the existing Proving ground and test tracks which will remain as existing, but with minor replacements and new buildings just to service these existing facilities – under 10% of the total new floor space, with heights generally lower than proposed elsewhere.

The proposal is to phase this redevelopment scheme. The new MIRA head quarters would be in the first phase together with Zones 1 and 3. Zone 2 has to await completion of Zone 4.

Illustrations of how the development might appear are set out in the Design and Access Statement. Examples are attached for the benefit of Members in Appendix F, and these show modern buildings typical of Technology and Business Parks.

The applicant considers that these development proposals would generate some 2300 new jobs, which when added to existing employment provision would provide around 3100 jobs at the site. The demolition and construction phases would also involve around 400 employment opportunities. The applicants also point out that there would be a multiplier effect in that existing local businesses, contactors and services would also benefit through the opening up of new business contacts or to sustain existing services over a far longer period. The applicants have already announced a new working link with the North Warwickshire and Hinckley College to commence and engage in the setting up of apprentice schemes.

b) The Access Arrangements

The development proposals would be served solely from the A5.

A new roundabout is proposed to be constructed at the site of the present access drive into the site. This would have a diameter of 50 metres, and provide three main arms, but retain a minor access point to the existing farmstead to the south - The Elms. The A5 to the east of this roundabout would need widening for some 260 metres between it and the rail bridge in order to accommodate the approach to this new road feature. To the west of this roundabout, the A5 would be dualled, extending over some 560 metres so as to meet the currently dualled section. A new secondary access into Zone 1 of the redevelopment proposals as described above would be located on this stretch of the new dual carriageway. This would be a “left in “and “left out”

junction. Two new ‘bus stops are to be provided and the design would include new pedestrian/cycle routes.

All of the widening proposed for the A5 to accommodate these proposals would be to the south – in North Warwickshire – and amount effectively to an 18 to 20 metre wide corridor being utilised, in order to provide the new carriageway, new earth works and new hedgerow planting, because of the scale of the proposals and the drop in ground levels.

These proposals are shown at Appendices G and H.

c) Additional Road Mitigation Measures

The applicants acknowledge that their proposals will worsen traffic conditions along the A5. Apart from the issue of having to design new access arrangements to actually access the new development itself, a number of mitigation measures are proposed elsewhere along the A5. Whilst only one is in North Warwickshire, they are all described below.

At the A444/A5 Red Gate junction, improvements are proposed to remove the present cross-overs, by making an elongated roundabout to link with the new dual carriageway proposals at MIRA. All these works would be within the A5 highway limits. They are illustrated at Appendix I.

At the present Wood Lane T-junction to Higham from the A5, all cross over movement would be removed through the provision of a central reservation as illustrated at Appendix J. Widening would be needed to the south of the A5.

Higham Lane roundabout is to be improved giving wider “flares” and longer “approaches” in order to better segregate traffic – see Appendix K.

The Long Shoot traffic signalled T-junction would remove the left turn out of the Long Shoot into the A5 and adjust carriageway widths – see Appendix L.

At the Dodwells Roundabout, new lights would be added together with a new signalled eastbound central lane together with carriageway width alterations – Appendix M.

The applicant is proposing measures to reduce the use of the private car. It would sponsor new public transport links into and through both Nuneaton and Hinckley, providing potentially three different routes in both centres, linking them with the MIRA site. Additionally, substantial improvements are to be provided to enable links to the former railway line so as to enhance cycling linkages from the site into Nuneaton.

The Applicant’s Case

The applicant sets out the background to the present day MIRA. It points out that MIRA was originally conceived to serve the UK Motor Industry and for three decades was supported by the Government. However since the mid-1970's, it has operated as an independent and self funding commercial operation. It has ventured into Europe and further overseas contacts range to China, Korea, India, Brazil and Turkey. Although MIRA's brand was synonymous with automotive testing, that now only accounts for 40% of its operations. The majority of activity is focussed on vehicle and transport engineering and research, supporting vehicle manufacturers to design and develop their future products. This has widened into the rail, aerospace and defence sectors, and into other technologies such as low-carbon vehicles, intelligent mobility and autonomous control.

In short the applicant wishes to expand and replace its outdated buildings. There has been increasing growth but there are several existing site constraints – the visual image of the main façade is not conducive to a potentially a global market; the outdated buildings are not designed for large teams of engineers or flexible enough to accommodate modern office and laboratory demands and the site is at 98% capacity with potential occupiers being turned away particularly in the last few years. The applicant says that this interest reflects an increased turnover of around 32% since 2008, particularly in the research and development sector.

MIRA's case is thus that it is outgrowing its dated and inefficient facilities and can no longer support further growth. There has been consistent demand over the last few years and there is firm interest in global companies setting up at MIRA in order to utilise the facilities presently at the site. It is also being turned away – a Chinese Company wished to set up its European headquarters here in 2010, but had to go elsewhere.

MIRA argue that the site provides a unique automotive environment that is not provided elsewhere in the UK with over 60 kilometres of specialist test tracks and over 35 different specialist laboratory facilities within a secure environment. It therefore is a major attractive location for the automotive trade, and to the broader transport community, particularly as MIRA increasingly enables research space for different technologies.

In short as indicated above, the reason for the proposal is to redevelop and to expand outdated infrastructure around a unique research and test facility and support structure that is already in place at MIRA, which offers national and increasingly international linkages and growth potential in a highly skilled and technology based industry.

Development Plan

Members should be aware that the common boundary between North Warwickshire and HBBC runs along the northern side of the A5 in this location. Not only are there different Development Plans affecting the overall application site, but this boundary also marks the division between the West Midlands and East Midlands Region. Whilst the respective Regional Planning

Strategies might now carry less weight given recent Government announcements, they are still relevant and are thus included below.

It is first proposed to outline the relevant policies of the Development Plan as it affects that part of the application site within the Borough, and then to outline the relevant Development Plan matters which HBBC will have to consider. This is done so that Members will be able to understand the planning policy background in which HBBC will be determining the application.

a) West Midlands Regional Strategy 2009

One of the Strategy's spatial objectives is to "support the diversification and modernisation of the Region's economy whilst ensuring that opportunities for growth are linked to meeting needs and reducing social exclusion".

b) Saved Policies of the North Warwickshire Local Plan 2006

Core Policy 1 (Social and Economic Regeneration); Core Policy 2 (Development Distribution), Core Policy 3 (Natural and Historic Environment), ENV4 (Trees and Hedgerows), ENV11 (Neighbour Amenities), ENV12 (Urban Design), ENV13 (Building Design), ENV14 (Access Design), TPT1 (Transport Considerations), TPT 3 (Sustainable Travel and Transport)

c) East Midlands Regional Plan 2009

Regional employment land studies have highlighted a particular shortage of sites suitable for science and technology users and this is reflected in Policy 20 which confirms that the needs of high technology and knowledge based industries are provided for.

d) Saved Policies of the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan 2001

Policy EMP1 generally identifies existing employment sites in Hinckley and Bosworth and seeks their retention for employment purposes. The majority of the MIRA site is included in the schedule of identified sites. The MIRA site itself however is the subject of a more site specific policy purposes. Policy EMP5 says that proposals for industrial and research purposes which are related to the MIRA test facility will be granted planning permission within the existing "building" complexes on the site. Priority should go to the A5 frontage. Elsewhere, that is to say basically the proving ground and test tracks, Policy EMP6 says that only new surface testing facilities will be allowed.

Policy NE5 says that the countryside will be protected for its own sake. However planning permission will be granted for built and other forms of development in the countryside provided that it is important to the local economy and can not be provided within or adjacent to an existing settlement;

does not have an adverse effect on the appearance and character of the landscape, is in keeping in scale and character of existing buildings and general surroundings, where it can be screened and will not generate traffic likely to exceed highway capacity.

e) HBBC Core Strategy 2009

Spatial Objective 1 is to strengthen and diversify the economy and to encourage appropriate sectors with growth potential including high value manufacturing businesses.

f) HBBC Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies DPD 2009

This is not yet adopted but carries weight as it has already been open to public consultation. The MIRA complex is identified as an employment site to be protected.

Other Material Planning Considerations

Government Planning Policy Guidance and Statements

PPS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development); PPS4 (Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth), PPS7 (Sustainable Development in Rural Areas), PPG13 (Transport), PPS 22 (Renewable Energy), PPS 23 (Planning and Pollution Control), PPS 24 (Planning and Noise), PPS 25 (Development and Flood Risk)

Written Ministerial Statement - Planning for Growth (March 2011)

Observations

a) The Principle Development Proposal

This major application is located in HBBC's area and thus it will be the determining Authority in respect of the principle of the development proposed. North Warwickshire has been invited to make representations to HBBC on the principle of the overall scheme as described in this report.

In this regard, this is a substantial proposal right on the boundary of the Borough which will have significant impacts on North Warwickshire. The Board will have to consider the scale of the impact of these on North Warwickshire's interests and to balance these against any benefits that it might consider arise from the overall development proposals. There is considered to be one overriding issue and three main broad impacts that will need examination. The main issue is,

i) whether the scale of new development proposed can be shown to be essential at this location, given that the site is in an unsustainable location, in open countryside and outside of any settlement whether in North Warwickshire or Hinckley and Bosworth.

The main impacts are:

ii) Whether the overall proposal would supplement or compromise the delivery of North Warwickshire's own employment strategy and future provision of skills and opportunities.

iii) Whether the new built form is visually intrusive or in keeping with the appearance and character of its surroundings.

iv) Critically, whether the development is likely to have an adverse impact on highway capacity through increased traffic generation both in the immediate vicinity and throughout the length of the A5 between the M42 and M69 Motorway junctions, and on the local road network where it joins the A5.

It will be seen that the key issue is significant. This is because the three impacts might well be lessened, or easier to mitigate if the scale or quantum of the development proposed is less. This is important for North Warwickshire as it will have to absorb major visual and traffic impacts of any development that may be permitted here. At this stage, given the documentation received, it is not considered that there is a sufficiently evidence based argument to support the scale of development proposed. It is thus recommended below that HBBC be requested to challenge the applicant to provide that base, and forward the response to North Warwickshire for consideration.

Members will have noted too that there is no reference in this report to any Section 106 Agreement. It is understood that a draft Agreement is to be prepared for consideration by HBBC at determination stage. It is recommended below that North Warwickshire should be represented in any such discussions. In particular, following on from recent examples in North Warwickshire, this Council's interests would be the need for extended and sustained public transport provision particularly along the A5 corridor, and secondly, the opportunity for North Warwickshire residents to access and to train for the job opportunities that would become available.

b) The Access Arrangements

North Warwickshire will be the determining Authority in respect of the access arrangements. Clearly, the Board will need to see the consultation response from the Highways Agency in respect of impact of the proposals on the capacity on the A5; additional future developments sited along the A5, highway safety at present junctions, the effectiveness of the proposed access arrangements and the off-site mitigation measures proposed at nearby junctions. It will also need to see the response from the Warwickshire County Council as Highway Authority on the impact of the proposals on the capacity and safety of the local road network. In particular, that interest will be not only

be where there are junctions with the A5, but also the potential for increased traffic flows on the local and minor road network itself. The representations that are received from the local communities will also be significant. All of these consultation responses will be reported to Board for it to consider in its determination of these arrangements.

As indicated earlier, the scale of the development here is critical. It may very well be that this might have to be re-visited if the respective Highway Authorities have substantive concerns.

c) General Issues

Work is presently being undertaken in a fully co-operative way with colleagues from HBBC. Consultation has just commenced with North Warwickshire residents and the adjoining Parish and Town Councils, together with the appropriate agencies and consultees. A similar process is now underway in Hinckley. There will be an exchange of all consultation responses and replies between the two Authorities and a regular series of project meetings has been set up with the applicant in order to keep all parties abreast of issues as they arise. Because of the significance of the issues involved, it is not anticipated that a determination report for that part of the application site in North Warwickshire is likely until the Autumn. Officers will however report on progress as appropriate, particularly on the outcome of the principal issue as raised above in respect of scale

In the interim it is considered that with the agreement of the applicant, a visit to the site would be worthwhile in order to appreciate the scale and extent of the proposals particularly in respect of the assessment of the likely visual impact.

Recommendations

a) That the applicant be requested to enable a site visit for Board Members.

b) That HBBC be requested to challenge the applicant to provide the evidence base that supports the quantum of development that is currently being proposed, and that the outcome is referred to the Board for further consideration.

c) That HBBC be requested to fully involve North Warwickshire in the drafting of a Section 106 Agreement with reference to the issues referred to in this report.

d) That progress reports be brought to the Board as appropriate.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

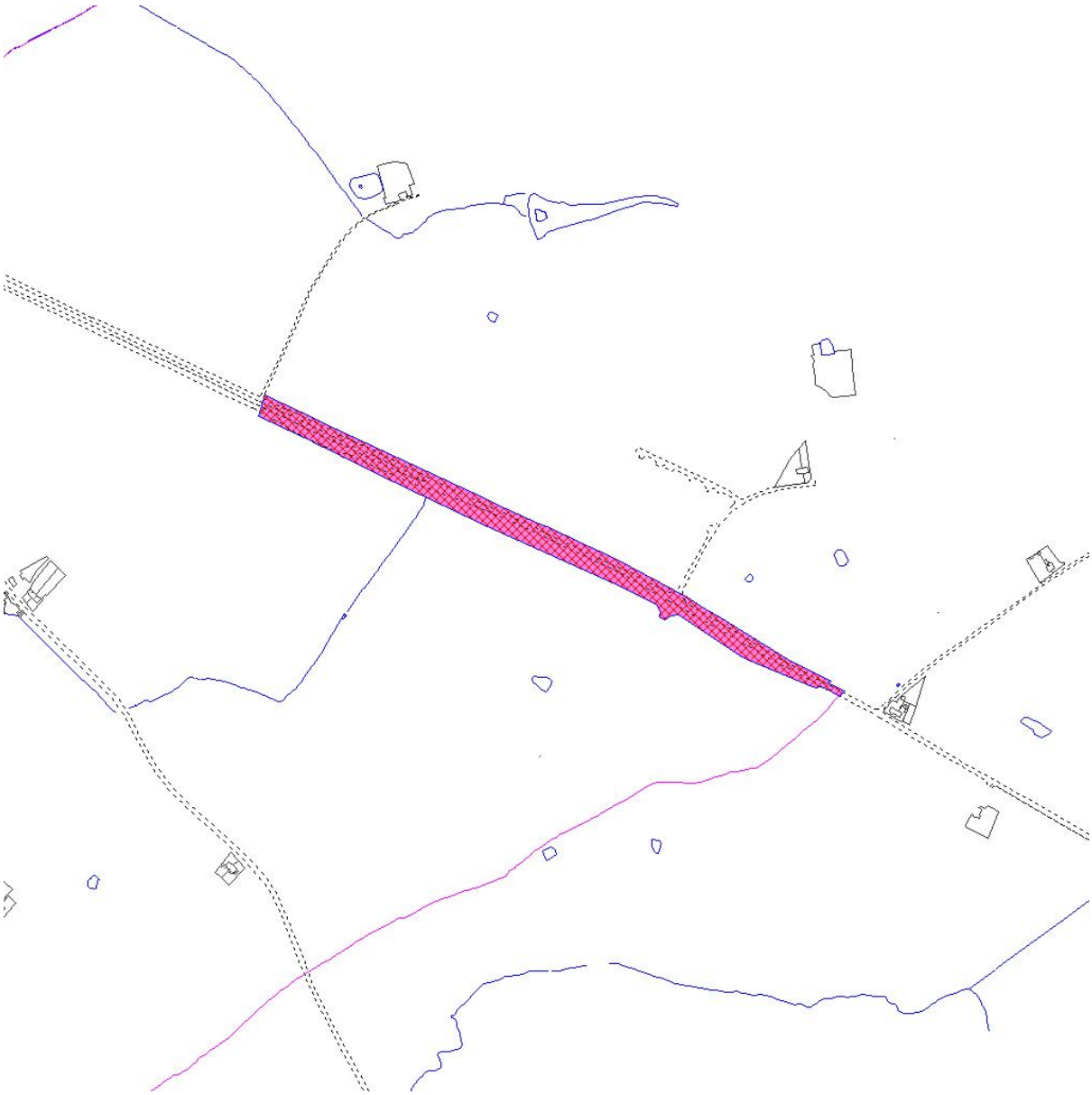
Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D, as substituted by the Local Government Act, 2000 Section 97

Planning Application No: PAP/2011/0259

Background Paper No	Author	Nature of Background Paper	Date
1	The Applicant or Agent	Application Forms and Plans	27/5/11

Note: This list of background papers excludes published documents which may be referred to in the report, such as The Development Plan and Planning Policy Guidance Notes.

A background paper will include any item which the Planning Officer has relied upon in preparing the report and formulating his recommendation. This may include correspondence, reports and documents such as Environmental Impact Assessments or Traffic Impact Assessments.



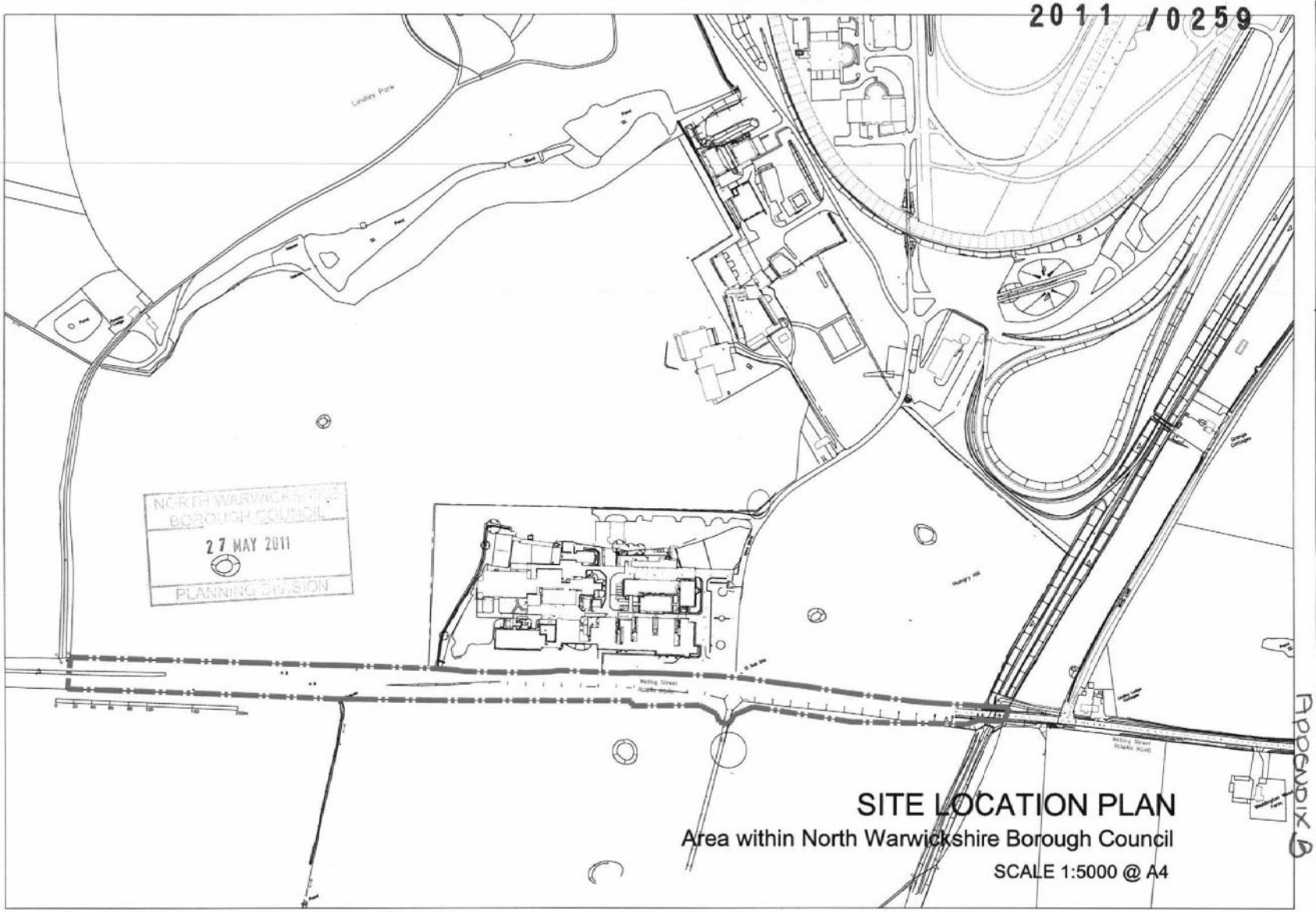
2011 /0259
Appendix A

27 MAY 2011

SITE LOCATION PLAN

SCALE 1:10000 @ A3

2011 /0259



SITE LOCATION PLAN

Area within North Warwickshire Borough Council

SCALE 1:5000 @ A4

Appendix B

Appendix C

2011/0259

MIRA
TECHNOLOGY PARK

Environmental Statement

Non-Technical Summary

Date: May 2011

MIRA LTD

MIRA TECHNOLOGY PARK

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

MAY 2011

TURLEY ASSOCIATES

CONTENTS

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Date of Issue: May 2011

TURLEYASSOCIATES

1. Introduction

1.1 The Environmental Statement is submitted on behalf of MIRA Ltd in support of an outline planning application to create a MIRA focused Technology Park at land adjoining the A5 at Higham on the Hill.

1.2 The outline masterplan planning application proposes the following:

"Development of business/technology campus comprising replacement MIRA headquarters, office, research and manufacturing facilities, hotel and local facilities including retail/café/restaurant, indoor and outdoor leisure facilities, ancillary energy generation plant/equipment, internal access roads, car parking, landscaping, drainage and associated work and creation of new and improved points of access, widening of A5, associated earth works and landscaping".

1.3 Means of access are submitted for approval. Details in respect of design, external appearance, siting and landscaping are reserved for future consideration but will be in accordance with parameters set out in Parameter Plans and accompanying regulatory text that fix the key overarching principles for the development.

1.4 The key objective of the application scheme is to design a world class technology campus which integrates the development with its rural location and provides an attractive amenity for all users of development.

1.5 This document provides a Non-Technical Summary of the main ES (Volume I) and Technical Appendices (Volume II). For a further detailed review of the Proposed Development's environmental effects, regard should be had to Volumes I and II.

2. Site & Surrounding Area

2.1 The site measures approximately 71.51 hectares and sits within the wider MIRA estate, which itself measures some 340 hectares.

2.2 The site lies within the parish of Higham-on-the-Hill around 5 miles southeast of Atherstone and primarily falls within the Borough of Hinckley and Bosworth. The site extends across Watling Street (A5) to the south. Since the northern extent of this road demarcates the border between North Warwickshire Borough and Hinckley and Bosworth Borough a small part of the application site lies in North Warwickshire.

Existing Developed Areas

2.3 The existing MIRA complex can be characterised by three distinct areas as follows:

- The Main Campus Area fronting the A5;
- The Electro Magnetic Compatibility (EMC) Area;
- The Proving Ground Estate comprising recent shed construction and poorer quality brick and corrugated iron structures from the Second World War. This falls outside the application site but is intrinsically related to it.

2.4 Beyond these built areas lies the Proving Ground itself. The existing built up areas within the application site cover an area (which excludes Area C) of 13.5 hectares.

Application Site Description

2.5 The description of the application site is provided below and is referenced by Plan 1 attached at Appendix 1. Although Area C does not form part of the planning application to which the Environmental Impact Assessment relates, traffic assessment work allows for some potential future development, and as such, a full description is included.

Area A

2.6 Area A is characterised as relatively flat and measures approximately 6.3 hectares and houses the main Mira campus area fronting Watling Street (A5). The area currently comprises 20,694 square metres of Use Class B1 floorspace and 365 car parking spaces.

2.7 The site levels for this area range from 84-88 metres AOD.

2.8 Access is derived via Watling Street along MIRA Drive which is the principal route through the application and wider MIRA site.

2.9 Mira Drive runs along the eastern boundary of the area comprising a grassed area with a gradual decrease in level to surface level car parking with the site along Park Way.

2.10 Park Way is the main route that services the eastern and southern surface car parking areas on the site, including the main access to the MIRA complex along the Watling Street frontage.

2.11 The main MIRA complex comprises a series of interlinked 2 storey red brick buildings running some 235 along the Watling Street frontage. These accommodate the main reception, meeting rooms, engine laboratories, vehicle dynamics chambers, workshops, store rooms, meeting rooms and offices.

2.12 Behind the main MIRA building, a series of warehouse style buildings run along Central Way, which runs through the centre of the MIRA complex. At the junction of Central Way and Park Way is a 2 storey brick building that house, the complex canteen and customer rooms.

2.13 To the north of the Central Way complex is a line of buildings running parallel, that comprise the crash vehicle storage impact simulation and maintenance rooms. These buildings are characterised by a mix of 1 to 2 storey brick and warehouse type structures. Access to these structures is derived from Service Road which links to MIRA Drive at the junction of which is a large surface car parking area.

2.14 The west of the complex is bounded by a series of hedgerows and mature trees. An area of green/grassed land, bounded by low hedging bounds this part of the site on its western and northern boundaries between 10metres and 50 metres at its widest point.

Area B

2.15 Area B is known as the EMC (Electro Magnetic Compatibility) site and is located some 300 metres north of the site entrance along MIRA Drive.

2.16 This area of the application site measures approximately 7.2 hectares and currently houses 3,717 square metres of Use Class B1 floorspace and 70 car parking spaces.

2.17 The site levels for this area range from 93-95.5 metres AOD.

2.18 Buildings within this area are less dense in nature than the main MIRA complex along Watling Street (A5) frontage and comprise the EMC preparatory bays, including laboratories and chambers in a series of interspersed 2 to 3 storey high bay warehouse structures with ancillary hard standing and car parking areas.

2.19 Area B is also home to the 19th Century Lindley Grange Farmhouse which sits within its own setting, comprising a lawned area to the front and group of Crack Willow Sycamore Ash trees along its eastern boundary and further east still, a small wood consisting of Sycamore Ash Alder Oak trees.

2.20 The high-pressure gas main continues its route through the site from west to east through the central portion of this area.

2.21 To the south of the farmhouse and fronting Mira Drive are the site's football pitch and tennis courts. This area is bounded by low cut hedging on its southern and western boundaries.

2.22 This are also two cottages within this area and two barns associated with the adjoining farmland.

Area C *(Outside of the Application Site)*

2.23 Area C is located within the test track and proving ground and measures approximately 24.0 hectares. The area comprises recent warehouse type sheds, together with poor quality brick garage and storage areas and corrugated iron structures from the post Second World War period.

2.24 Included within this area are a number of Second World War buildings considered of historical interest, including two Nissen Huts, a T2 Hanger which now houses the wind tunnel and the original control tower. The two Nissen Huts are joined by a cross passage.

2.25 A blast shelter is also located within Area C and is located some 100 metres north of the Nissen huts adjacent to the original perimeter road.

2.26 The average height of buildings in this area is 7 metres. The site comprises a total of 19,519 square metres of floorspace and 433 car parking spaces.

2.27 Although not forming part of the planning application or Environmental Statement, this area has been tested in traffic generation terms for the potential provision of an

additional 3,000 square metres of Use Class B1 floorspace via subsequent proposals.

Area D

2.28 Area D is bounded by Mira Drive to the west, Watling Street (A5) to the south and Wood Lane to the east. This area of the application site measures 11.26 hectares and is largely made up of agricultural land. A large proportion of this land (8.0 hectares), bounded by Mira Drive to the west, Watling Street (A5) to the south and the line of the disused Ashby and Nuneaton Joint Railway to the east is owned and farmed by the ENSOR Trust. This area is under arable production and is classified as Grade 3 agricultural land.

2.29 The site levels for this area range from 94-97metres AOD.

2.30 The remaining area, 3.26 hectares, comprises arable farmland bounded by groups of hedges/trees either side of the former railway line to the west, Watling Street (A5) to the south and Wood Lane to the east and a single residential dwelling to the north.

Area E

2.31 Area E is bounded by a laneway and associated hedging to the west, Watling Street (A5) to the south, Area A to the east and hedgerows and trees to the north west and tree groupings of Hawthorne, Elm, Ash and Oak to the north. Within the northern area of the site, a high-pressure gas main crosses the area and the wider site from west to east.

2.32 This area measures approximately 27.7 hectares made up solely of arable land farmed and owned by the ENSOR Trust. The agricultural grade of this land falls within Grade 3.

2.33 The site levels range from 86m AOD to the south west to 93-7 metres AOD to the north east and east of this area.

Area F

2.34 Area F is located to the north west of the site and measures approximately 7.6 hectares. Although it falls within the MIRA demise this area is currently arable land subject to an agricultural tenancy. The area is bounded by low lying hedging and tree planting on all sides. This area sits to the west of the north western outer limits of the test track.

Area G

2.35 Area G is located directly beneath Area F and measures approximately 8.0 hectares. This area is predominantly lawned and consists of some development, comprising the Free Field facility and the Climatic Wind Tunnel. The area is bounded by trees and hedges to the west, Area F to the north and the test track to the east.

3. Description of Development

3.1 The planning application proposes a replacement MIRA headquarters building together with associated Technology Park and related elements.

3.2 The outline masterplan planning application proposes the following:

> *"Development of business/technology campus comprising replacement MIRA headquarters, office, research and manufacturing facilities, hotel and local facilities including retail/café/restaurant, indoor and outdoor leisure facilities, ancillary energy generation plant/equipment, internal access roads, car parking, landscaping, drainage and associated work and creation of new and improved points of access, widening of A5, associated earth works and landscaping".*

3.3 Means of access are submitted for approval with details in respect of design, external appearance, siting and landscaping reserved for future consideration.

3.4 The development described is defined by the submitted parameter plans and their accompanying descriptions that fix the key overarching principles for the development, including the quantum of floorspace proposed, the mix of uses, building heights, landscaping, access and circulation.

3.5 There are five parameters plans with accompanying descriptions that are subject of the Environmental Impact Assessment.

3.6 The development has been divided into five zones. The main land use/s and amount of development associated with the development and respective zones are outlined in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Amount of Development

Zone	Use	Minimum	Maximum
1	B1	27,514	54,326
2	B1	12,272	38,210
	Retail/Services		500
	Restaurants		1,000
	Fitness club	2,819	1,000
	100 bed Hotel		4,500

3	B1	9,761	29,399
4	B1	31,756	76,624
5	B1	6,100	10,918
	Primary Sub-Station	n/a (plant)	n/a (plant)
Overall Maximum *		92,334	139,716

* Overall maximum floorspace proposed for the site which is less than the sum of individual zone maximae

3.7 For each zone, maximum development quantum has been calculated with reference to the maximum physical extent of the developable area and the typical estimated footprint. Allowance is also made for multi-level development via floorspace increase in those areas where a higher level of office type development is anticipated.

3.8 It is not intended that zone by zone maximae will be delivered in combination, since the overall site maximum will act as a constraint and will not allow for this. It is anticipated that the development will be phased over a period of 10 years.

Access

3.9 In order to facilitate the development, the proposals will be supported by access and highways measures/improvements, including the provision of a new roundabout at the existing entrance access. A new secondary access is proposed, left in, left out and the dualling of the existing single carriageway of the A5(T) for a distance of 500 metres.

4. Need for the Development and Alternative Sites

4.1 The site has been the home of MIRA since its inception to serve the motor industry in the late 1940's The MIRA research and development campus provides a unique environment and research and development facilities which are unparalleled in the UK, with over 58 miles of specialist test track comprising various testing facilities allowing vehicles to be developed for global markets.

4.2 Although historically, MIRA's brand was synonymous with automotive testing, this function today accounts for only 40% of its current operations. The majority of MIRA's activities today are focused on vehicle and transport engineering, supporting vehicle manufacturers to design and develop their future products.

4.3 Given the growth and diversification of MIRA's operations highlighted above, the following constraints to its continued operations and expansion have been identified:

- Improved Visual Image- The 1950's façade and main complex does not convey the visual image required in terms of sustaining and attracting global clients;
- Outdated Infrastructure and Capacity- the current buildings were not designed to house large teams of engineers and thus create operational challenges whereby teams are split across several small units. The current operating facility is at 98% occupancy with little spare capacity to expand operations.

4.4 Given the above, especially that the operations are present at the MIRA site, and that the majority of MIRA's activity is focused on vehicle and transport engineering, supporting vehicle manufacturers' design and development of their future products, the site is considered the only suitable location to modernise and extend the existing MIRA facilities whilst improving the technology park/business space offer.

5. Environmental Impact Assessment Process

5.1 This ES has been prepared pursuant to the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999 as amended (including the 2008 Amendment Regulations).

5.2 The ES has had regard to all aspects of the environment likely to be affected by the Proposed Development and includes an assessment of the extent and significance of the potential environmental effects.

5.3 The ES scope, including the assessment methodology was discussed and agreed with Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council and North Warwickshire Borough Council under Paragraph 10 of the Regulations.

5.4 In order to carry out an assessment of the likely environmental effects of the development, the existing conditions must first be defined, allowing the extent of the environmental effects to be assessed. As a starting point, the ES adopts the baseline position as being the existing site conditions.

5.5 The assessment methodology involves the identification of the potential effects of the Proposed Development and then an assessment of the extent and significance of the potential environmental effects. This process is based on the consideration of the character, duration and importance of effects, the environmental sensitivity of the site and surrounding area and any quantified thresholds or indicative criteria as set out in Government regulations and policy guidelines.

5.6 Where the assessment procedure indicates that the Proposed Development is likely to have significant adverse effects, the ES identifies appropriate mitigation measures to reduce, compensate or eliminate these effects and/or take advantage of opportunities for environmental enhancement. Such mitigation measures can either be incorporated into the proposed design and operation of the Proposed Development, or through the introduction of particular safeguards.

5.7 Table 2 sets out the effect criteria used throughout this ES.

Magnitude	Criteria
Major Adverse	The development (either on its own or with other proposals) could have a major adverse effect on the character and integrity of the site and/or the surrounding area.
Moderate Adverse	The development (either on its own or with other proposals) could have a moderate adverse effect on

Magnitude	Criteria
	the character and integrity of the site and/or the surrounding area.
Minor Adverse	The development (either on its own or with other proposals) could have a minor adverse effect on the character and integrity of the site and/or the surrounding area.
Negligible	No observable effect.
Minor Beneficial	The development (either on its own or with other proposals) could have a minor beneficial effect on the character and integrity of the site and/or the surrounding area.
Moderate Beneficial	The development (either on its own or with other proposals) could have a moderate beneficial effect on the character and integrity of the site and/or the surrounding area.
Major Beneficial	The development (either on its own or with other proposals) could have a major beneficial effect on the character and integrity of the site and/or the surrounding area.

6. Planning Policy Context

6.1 This section of the ES outlines those aspects of planning policy relevant to the development. An overview of the sources of planning policy at national, regional and local level that are of relevance to the ES is provided below:

National Policy and Guidance

- Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS 1): Delivering Sustainable Development (February 2005);
- Planning Policy Statement 4 (PPS 4): Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth;
- Planning Policy Statement 7 (PPS 7): Sustainable Development in Rural Areas;
- Planning Policy Statement 9 (PPS 9): Biodiversity and Geological Conservation;
- Planning Policy Guidance 13 (PPG 13): Transport;
- Planning Policy Statement 22 (PPS 22): Renewable Energy;
- Planning Policy Statement 23 (PPS 23): Planning and Pollution Control;
- Planning Policy Guidance 24 (PPG 24): Planning and Noise;
- Planning Policy Statement 25 (PPS 25): Development and Flood Risk.

Regional Policy

- East Midlands Regional Plan (2009);
- East Midlands Sustainability Checklist
- East Midlands RDA- Sustainable Physical Development Guide

Local Plan

- Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan (Saved 2008);
- North Warwickshire Local Plan (Saved 2006).

Emerging Development Plan Documents

- Hinckley and Bosworth Core Strategy (2009);
- Statement of Community Involvement (2006);
- Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies DPD (2009).

Supplementary Planning Documents and Evidence Base

- Employment Land and Premises Study (2010);
- Sustainable Design SPD (2008)

7. Socio-Economic Effects

7.1 The socio-economic effect of the Proposed Development upon the Application Site and the surrounding area have been assessed.

7.2 The following matters have been considered in identifying the likely effects of the Proposed Development on human beings living and/or working and/or visiting the Application Site and the area, or in close proximity to it:

- economy including the effect on employment generation and the local economy; and
- effects of demolition and construction works.

Direct Jobs Created On-Site During the Construction Phase

7.3 Throughout the demolition and construction period it is estimated that there will be approximately 400 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) jobs created during this period. This additional number of jobs will have a temporary, short to medium term moderate beneficial effect upon socio-economic factors.

7.4 On completion of the Proposed Development, a range of potential socio-economic effects are expected. These are summarised below.

In-Direct Jobs Created During the Construction Phase

7.5 There will also be a range of indirect benefits for the local economy during this period as this may bring increased demand for goods and services and associated employment opportunities.

7.6 This additional number of jobs will have a temporary, short to medium term minor beneficial effect upon socio-economic factors.

Direct Jobs Created On-Site During the Operational Phase

7.7 The Proposed Development consists of a number of uses which will generate additional employment on the Application Site after the construction phase. The assessment of employment generation is therefore based on the employment densities of each land use. The nature of each use provides an indication of the likely employment category.

7.8 The maximum number of jobs create by the proposed Development will be up to 2,391 jobs. 694 jobs are currently accommodated on the existing MIRA Technology Park which includes floorspace located within the Proving Ground located outside the Application Site boundary. Given this, the maximum number of jobs within the MIRA Technology Park will be 3,085;

7.9 The additional number of jobs directly created on-site during the operational phase will have a long term, major beneficial effect upon socio-economic factors.

In-Direct Jobs Created During the Operational Phase

7.10 The employment created by the Proposed Development would directly and indirectly enhance incomes within The Catchment to the benefit of local residents and the wider community. Increased incomes would lead to multiplier effects for shops, businesses and services, further promoted by the proposed MIRABus shuttle bus service linking the Site with Nuneaton town centre, Nuneaton railway station, Hinckley town centre and Hinckley railway station.

7.11 The additional number of jobs in-directly created during the operational phase will have a long term, minor beneficial effect upon socio-economic factors.

7.12 There are no significant adverse environmental effects arising from the Proposed Development in socio-economic terms. On this basis, as the effects of the Proposed Development are predominately positive, there is no requirement for mitigation.

7.13 This Chapter has summarised and reviewed the socio-economic effects of the Proposed Development.

8. Agricultural Land

8.1 This chapter evaluates the significance of the proposed MIRA development's impact upon existing areas of agricultural land. The area that would be affected by the development extends to some 71.51 hectares of which some 43.6 hectares is currently arable farmland that would be lost, although this would be in phases..

8.2 Guided by land use development policies and guidelines that are intended for the protection of productive farmland, the rural economy and soil resources, the assessment addressed impact upon the loss of the land taken out of agriculture in terms of both quality and scale; its impact upon agricultural business; and upon farm buildings and infrastructure.

8.3 Consultation was undertaken with the three parties who currently farm the areas concerned. While the overall area loss can be considered large, the quality was found to be low, thus reducing the magnitude of adverse impact, both in the opinion of the farmers and a recent independent soil survey undertaken as part of the baseline landscape survey. Furthermore, the Agricultural Land Classification provided by Natural England goes no further than giving the site a general Grade 3 and the nearest area where full sub-categorisation is available (to the immediate south) the majority is Grade 3b, suggesting a similarly low value can be assumed for the MIRA development farmland when combined with these site observations.

8.4 While also (inevitably with the loss of farmland) adverse, the potential impact upon farm business was not seen as insurmountably problematic by the farmers when consulted. There was agreement that there would be no resulting loss of jobs. While two ancillary farm buildings would be lost, there is no major built infrastructure currently in agricultural use within the affected area.

8.5 Mitigation can be offered by the combination of: phasing, thus limiting the extent of land take over time; the extensive amount of landscape green infrastructure proposed accompanied by a clearly defined Soils Strategy, thus re-utilising this valuable resource on site; and finding alternative land elsewhere for the current farmers to continue the volume of their enterprise.

8.6 With these full mitigation measures in place, the residual effects of quantity and quality of agricultural land loss were assessed as minor adverse while the impacts on agricultural business and infrastructure were assessed as negligible.

9. Air Quality

9.1 An air quality assessment has been undertaken based on predictions from a validated air quality dispersion model. The model has been verified using local air quality monitoring data collected by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council and Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council as part of their duties under Local Air Quality Management.

9.2 The significance of the effects of emissions from the construction phase has been assessed as 'moderate adverse' and appropriate mitigation measures have been recommended based on best practice guidance which reduces the significance to 'slight adverse'.

9.3 Operational phase modelling of NO2 and PM10 has been undertaken for the full opening year of the development in 2021. There are no predicted exceedences of the Air Quality Objectives at any receptor in 2021 including within the existing Air Quality Management Area in Nuneaton. The air quality significance of the change in traffic emissions has been assessed as being negligible with both minimal highway improvements on the MIRA site and with the full package of highway improvements outside of the development site.

9.4 The development may include a biomass or CHP element as part of the sustainable energy strategy. A dispersion modelling assessment of a typically sized plant has been undertaken which demonstrates that the significance of the exposure to NO2 and PM10 is 'negligible'. The specification of the plant emissions will need to be agreed with the local authority prior to commissioning.

9.5 A qualitative assessment of the significance of potential odour from activities within the development has assessed this as 'slight adverse'. Following the recommended mitigation measures the significance is deemed to be 'negligible'.

9.6 The development is not considered to be contrary to any of the national, regional or local planning policies governing air quality.

10. Archaeology and Cultural Heritage

10.1 A desk based assessment, fieldwalking, historic building and geophysical surveys have been undertaken in order to identify heritage assets of the application area and to inform the most appropriate evaluation methodology. The assessment and surveys were carried out in consultation with the Leicestershire and Warwickshire County Council's planning archaeologists, and included sites identified in the two County's Historic Environment Record, as well as reference to any designated sites on the National Monuments Record.

10.2 The assessment examined the potential impact of the development on any statutorily designated sites, including Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas and non-statutorily designated sites, for example Historic Parks and Gardens. Previously unrecorded potential heritage assets were also included.

10.3 The assessment and surveys have identified potential heritage assets including archaeological remains, historic buildings and historic landscapes, most of which are of low or local significance. There will be no impact on any scheduled monuments or listed buildings or their settings. After mitigation there will be moderate adverse effects on the potential archaeological remains and on unlisted buildings of historical significance.

10.4 The overall assessment of the significance of effects on heritage assets is that after mitigation there will be a slight adverse effect.

10.5 Based on the results of the assessment and surveys a methodology for further assessment of any extant archaeology will be determined in consultation with the relevant organisations. Mitigation, including preservation in situ and or excavation/recording, will be promoted where necessary at the detailed design stage and through construction.

11. Ecology

11.1 The existing ecological baseline of land at MIRA has been considered and the ecological impacts arising from extending the existing business park have been assessed. The information has been gathered through Phase 1 and Phase 2 surveys and from desk-top study information.

11.2 Habitat values and development impacts are assessed in accordance with evaluation criteria published by the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (IEEM).

11.3 Relatively little of the proposed site area supports habitat that can be described as 'natural' or of intrinsic high ecological value; most of it being managed for amenity or agriculture, or supporting office and warehouse buildings. Exceptions to this are a number of ponds (some supporting protected great crested newts) and wooded field boundaries.

11.4 In most instances, habitats with ecological value are retained and protected. Where this has not been possible compensation measures will be implemented involving habitat creation, species translocation, and habitat restoration. The result of these measures and further habitat enhancement proposals for areas outside of the application site boundary are anticipated to bring about a net ecological benefit effect to the local area.

12. Infrastructure and Services

12.1 A series of specialist surveys have been carried out to determine the exact location of the existing buried services and these have been plotted on the existing services drawings. During this process it was established that the existing water main from the A5 at the East end of the site is badly corroded and will be replaced during the extension and rerouting operations.

12.2 All the utility companies have confirmed that the local networks can be reinforced to satisfy the demands of the development. The HP gas main on the site will serve a local LP main supply. The water and telecom will both be supplied from the A5 whilst the electrical supply will emanate from Hinckley by way of a pair of 33KV cables routed alongside the A5.

12.3 The existing HP gas main on the site represents a significant safety issue and the specific requirements of National Grid Gas PLC with regards to working adjacent to the existing main will need to be strictly adhered to.

12.4 A number of renewable technologies will be implemented to reduce the energy consumption and carbon emissions in the proposed development subject to the outcome of feasibility studies.

12.5 Overall the cumulative environmental effects of the new infrastructure will be minimal.

13. Land Contamination and Ground Conditions

13.1 The current assessment is a Phase 1 Environmental Assessment and comprised a walk over survey of the site and a desktop investigation of published information and historical documents. Previous site investigations undertaken by MIRA have been examined as well as an ecological topsoil survey of the site.

13.2 The site is set in rural Leicestershire and its history can be traced over the last 120 years from the early editions of the OS County Series maps to the current OS Raster Series.

13.3 There was very little change between 1880's and the 1930's with the site being farmland to the north of Watling Street, the A5, and the Ashby and Nuneaton Railway. The dominant feature in the area was Lindley Hall set in Lindley Park to the north of the Application site.

13.4 The major difference with World War Two was the construction of the airfield to the west of Higham on the Hill on what is now the Proving Ground section of MIRA Ltd's site. Access to the airfield was from the north west. The access track crossed the northern spur of the site and along this were a guardhouse, sub-station, service huts, armoury, lubricant and inflammable stores and aviation fuel and oil tanks.

13.5 In the late 50's and early 60's the MIRA Ltd Headquarters site along the A5 was commenced and this has developed over the intervening years. The rest of the Application Site has remained as farmland.

13.6 With the exception of the airfield buildings either side of the track that transverses the northern part of the site, there is nothing in the site history to suggest that there have been any processes undertaken on or adjacent to the site that could lead to significant sources of contamination.

13.7 The site is founded on Glacial Till overlying Mercia Mudstone, both of which are effectively impermeable and are classified as 'non aquifers'. The Mercia Mudstone is some 150m thick and protects the underlying Bromsgrove Sandstone Formation which is a major or principal aquifer.

13.8 Radon is not a problem on the site and there is no record of any landfill facilities in the neighbourhood so that the likelihood of ground gas affecting the site is extremely low.

13.9 Given that there is a low risk of contamination on the site and there are limited pathways, it is not envisaged that there will be any significant pollutant linkages on

this site. In planning the Phase 2 Environmental Assessment investigations, the sampling and testing regime needs to concentrate on the superficial deposits to verify this position, probing in particular the site of the World War Two airfield buildings.

13.10 The results of the intrusive investigations will be assessed in accordance with current Environment Agency Procedures and if found necessary, a remediation plan will be prepared which will include subsequent validation testing on any clean up.

13.11 After any necessary remediation, the quality of underlying soils will meet regulatory requirements and the completed development will remove the risk of exposure to human receptors, the soil and surface water courses. In so doing it will improve the overall environment of the area.

14. Landscape and Visual Impact

14.1 This chapter evaluates the existing landscape of the application site and surrounding area in terms of its sensitivity, capacity and ability to accommodate change. The assessment addresses this by considering the interrelated but separate aspects of landscape and visual impact assessment and identifies the likely significant effects of the proposed development on the landscape and visual resources before and after mitigation.

14.2 The assessment is based on guidelines produced by the Landscape Institute and The Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment.

14.3 Criteria for evaluation of landscape and visual impact are set out in the section on methodology. With the baseline situation established, the impacts of the proposed development are identified, looking at various stages in the development: temporary effect during construction, short term effect (years 1-5), medium term effect (years 5-15) and long term residual effect (over 15 years). Visual effects are also considered at night time and with seasonal differences.

14.4 The landscape assessment explores the impacts of the proposed development on the resource of the landscape as an entity in itself, resulting from changes in the physical landscape and its character. It describes the current character, condition, value and sensitivity of the existing landscape of the site and its surroundings, taking into account the influencing factors of vegetation, landform, settlement and green space patterns, land use and the capacity of the landscape to absorb change.

14.5 The visual impact assessment explores the impacts of the proposed development on the visual amenity value of the landscape resulting from changes in the composition of a view. It identifies the extent to which the existing site is visible from the surrounding area, establishes who the view receptors are likely to be, and how sensitive they are to changes. The visual assessment covers a wider geographical area than the landscape assessment.

14.6 The findings of the assessments have then been used to inform the potential for mitigation measures to minimise the impact of landscape and visual effects to incorporate into the final design.

14.7 With the implementation of the mitigation proposals the impact of the development proposals will have a beneficial effect on the majority of landscape and visual receptors.

14.8 Despite the increase in built form, the benefits that the landscape proposals bring to the baseline situation of improvement to landscape character and increased visual screening ensure that the net overall impact on the site and surrounding countryside area is beneficial.

15. Noise and Vibration

15.1 The area surrounding the Application Site is affected by road traffic noise from the A5 Watling Street and at distances further from the A5 the noise climate also includes noise from existing activities on the MIRA proving ground together with general noise from local activities.

15.2 The Proposed Development will introduce temporary construction noise and also longer term noise associated with the new facilities, although the latter is likely to be similar to the noise currently produced by the existing facilities housed on the Application Site land.

15.3 A baseline noise level survey was carried out to inform the noise impact assessment. It is understood that there is no expectation that use of the test track itself will increase significantly. It may therefore also be expected that, in relation to test track activity, there will be no significant rise in noise levels nor adverse noise impact.

15.4 Reference has been made to national guidance documents PPG 24 and BS 5228 regarding the noise level limits suitable during construction activities in order to prevent a major scale of impact at the nearest dwellings. Upper threshold noise level limits have been proposed, appropriate for daytime (07:00 – 19:00 hours), evening (19:00 – 23:00 hours) and night-time (23:00 – 07:00 hours) operations.

15.5 Similarly, reference has been made to national guidance documents PPG 24 and BS 4142 regarding the likely noise impact during the longer term operational phase of the development. Upper threshold noise level limits have been proposed appropriate for operational noise during daytime (07:00 – 19:00 hours), evening (19:00 – 23:00 hours) and night-time (23:00 – 07:00 hours) periods.

15.6 General guidance about measures that may be taken to reduce noise from construction activities and from permanent operational noise sources has been described that may be taken into account during the detailed planning of the construction of the proposals and the detailed design and construction of the development.

15.7 Reference has been made to national guidance document DMRB in relation to increases of road traffic noise from the A5 Watling Street due to the vehicles associated with construction activities and also during the operational phase, identified in the Transport chapter. The traffic flow data indicates that increases of less than 1 dB may be expected, which the impact assessment considers to be negligible.

15.8 Subject to the imposition of appropriate planning conditions to control noise from construction and operational activities to the limits described in the chapter on noise, it is considered that the overall noise impact during the temporary construction phase would be no higher than moderately adverse and when the proposals are fully complete and operational the noise impact would be negligible.

15.9 For, particular buildings such as the proposed energy centre, it may be appropriate to set a specifically targeted condition.

16. Transport

16.1 The 'Transport' chapter of the ES provides a thorough review of existing planning policy, assessment methodology, details of the study area, survey data and the consultation process as well as significance criteria. Furthermore the baseline conditions of the application site have been reviewed in terms of provision for walking & cycling, public transport, access by private car and baseline traffic flows on the surrounding highway network and highway safety.

16.2 The potential impacts of the proposed development have been reviewed in terms of the construction period and operational period and accompanied by details of mitigations required. During the construction period all potential effects have been classified as 'Minor Adverse' resulting in 'Minor Adverse' residual effect.

16.3 During the operational period of the proposed development the future year 'do something' scenarios during 2018 and 2021 have required highway works and travel planning to mitigate any potential development generated traffic impact. In summary, the issues of changed traffic flows, impact of development-related trips on the network and possible impact on road safety have been deemed to be 'Moderate Adverse' with 'Minor Adverse' residual effect.

16.4 In conclusion, it has been demonstrated that any potential environmental issues or impacts that may arise from the highways and transport element of the proposed development can be fully addressed through a package of both on-site and off-site mitigation measures.

17. Water Resources

17.1 An assessment has been made of the hydrology and flood risk issues relating to the Application Site.

17.2 The site is in the catchment of the River Anker, which flows from Nuneaton joining the River Tame at Tamworth. The whole of the site is above +83m OD and is in Environment Agency Flood Zone 1 as the lowest flood risk category. The nearest Flood Zone 3 [high risk] is surrounding the Rive Anker at a level of +74m OD. This is over 1km from the site.

17.3 The two outfalls from the Application Site are both ditches. The Southern Outfall collects to a low point on the A5 from where it is culverted beneath the trunk road before extending south as a ditch. This becomes a stream bed, feeding the pond to the north of Caldecote Hall and the overflow of this pond is a tributary to the River Anker. The Western Outfall drains the northern side of the site. The outfall from the northern part of the site discharges into three ponds along the northern boundary. The ponds have an overflow ditch which extends some 0.5km to the west where it joins a stream that loops around alongside the A444 as feeder to the River Anker.

17.4 The site is founded on Glacial Till overlying Mercia Mudstone, both of which are effectively impermeable and are classified as 'non aquifers'. The Mercia Mudstone is some 150m thick and protects the underlying Bromsgrove Sandstone Formation which is a major or principal aquifer. Site Investigations show that the Boulder Clay and the Mercia Mudstone appear at the surface as a medium plasticity clay.

17.5 The Application Site has a low risk of flooding from fluvial, overland, sewers or groundwater sources.

17.6 The existing foul sewer within the MIRA Site collects on the north side of the A5. From this it extends south as a 225mm private gravity sewer to a private pumping station on Weddington Road where it is pumped to the public foul sewer in Caldecote Village. The public foul sewer connects to the Woodford Sewage Works. As the scheme develops this will be supplemented by a package sewerage works located underground within the site. The rate of flow and chemical/biological quality from the outflow of the package sewerage works will be agreed with the Environment Agency.

17.7 The current rate of discharge from the fields and research and testing facilities will be maintained with storage facilities within the development to cater for the increased impervious areas. A greenfield run off of 5l/s/ha will be adopted in sizing

the storage required for the increased impervious areas. The storage will be in the form of swales or depressions in the ground and generally will be sausage shaped following the contours; these will be designed for a 100 year storm with a 20% enhancement for climate change. Storage will be provided for small clusters of buildings in the landscape margins and it is envisaged that there will be some 15 such swales or basins in the Application Site. These will normally be dry, but will fill with water during prolonged or severe rain.

17.8 In designing the attenuation for a 100 year storm with 20% climate change, enhancement will ensure that the actual discharge rates will be lower than present. This will help relieve any overtopping of the ditches or stream beds downstream of the development.

17.9 Both the western and southern outfalls are restricted with culverts alongside the boundaries of the Application Site. On the southern outfall, the basin forming the inlet to the culvert beneath the A5 will be deepened with a 0.3m freeboard to act as further on site storage to this outlet. On the western outfall the corner of the field at this location will be lowered locally by 0.2m to give a flood meadow on the site immediately upstream of the culvert. Rowden Lodge will benefit from this flood meadow area.

17.10 There are no other properties within 1km of either of the two outfalls and consequently there is no significant risk of offsite flooding as a result of the development.

18. Cumulative Effects

18.1 Two types of cumulative effects have been assessed in relation to the Proposed Development:

- The interaction of individual effects of the Proposed Development. For example, noise, dust and visual intrusion during the demolition and construction works; and
- The effects resulting from the Proposed Development in combination with other schemes.

18.2 During the demolition and construction phases of the Proposed Development (expected to be phased over a period of 10 years), there will be some temporary cumulative effects primarily associated with noise, vibration, dust, visual effects and traffic. The scale of the effects will, however, depend on whether and to what extent construction periods (such as site preparation and enabling works, demolition, and superstructure construction) overlap. This is unknown at present. The CEMP for the scheme will accord with the local authority's requirements and should ameliorate these construction related combined effects as far as practically possible.

18.3 Significant developments within the wider area of the Application Site which have planning permission have been assessed in terms of traffic effects.

18.4 Overall, beneficial cumulative effects will arise in terms of:

- the creation of new jobs;
- the creation of public open space;
- associated contributions to the local economy;
- improving accessibility to the Site by modes other than the private car.

19. Residual Effects

19.1 Each assessment has identified the residual effects of the Proposed Development following the incorporation of recommended mitigation measures and completion of the scheme.

19.2 The assessment has identified that the residual effects will on the whole be either negligible or minor to moderate beneficial.

19.3 There will be isolated examples of adverse effects but these are limited in scale and magnitude. Major / moderate adverse effects during the operational period are limited to the effect of the Proposed Development on landscape character area A (large-scale agricultural land).

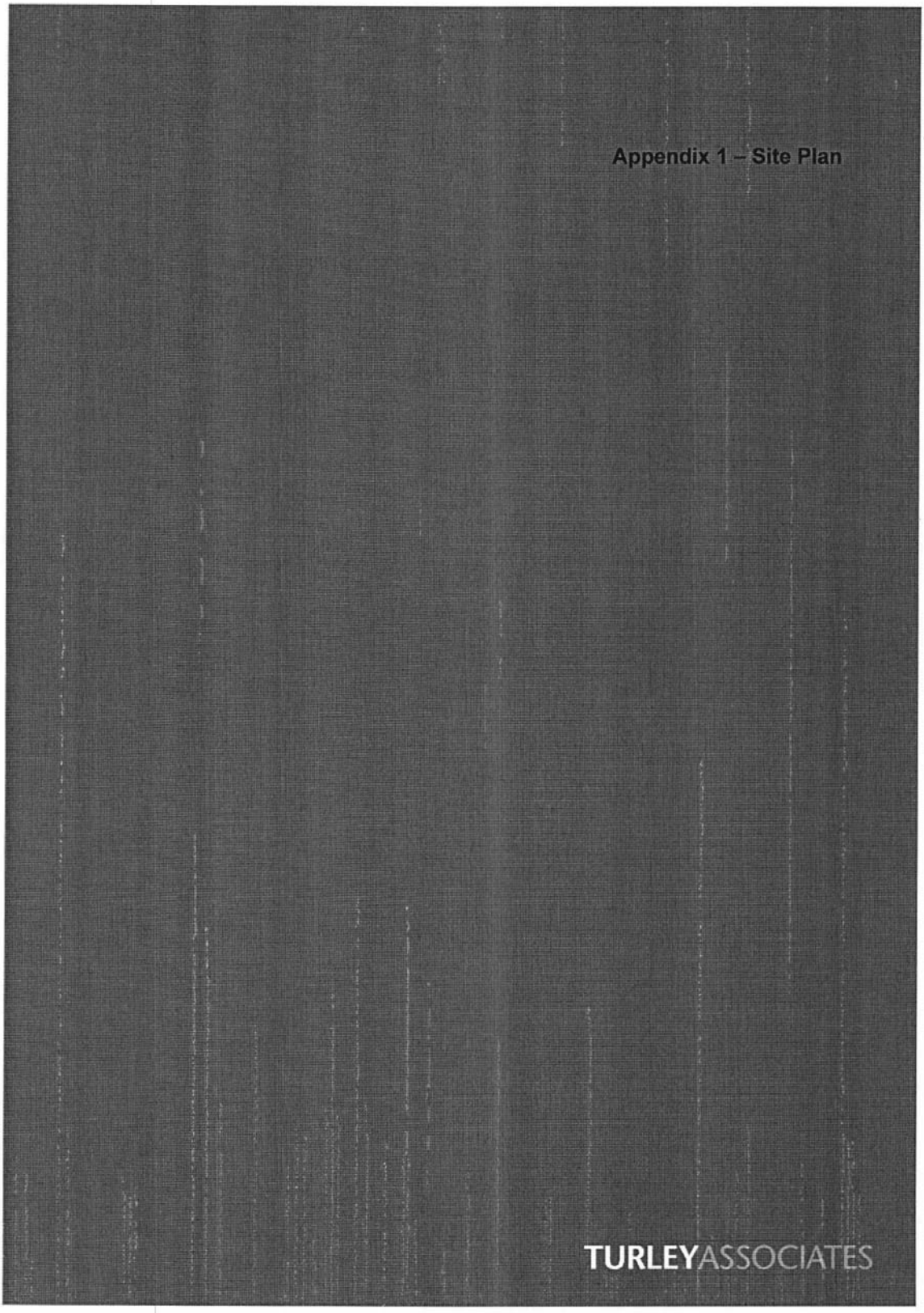
19.4 Minor adverse effects during the operational period are limited to the effect of the Proposed Development on:

- Surface water quality;
- Traffic flow, development related trips on the transport network and road safety;
- Landscape character area H (disused railway);
- View point 6 - the tallest buildings within the development will be visible and cut the existing skyline;
- The loss of a bat roost at Lindley Grange;
- Heritage assets including the effect on the unlisted Lindley Grange; and
- The loss of agricultural land.

19.5 The Proposed Development has a number of beneficial effects following completion. These include:

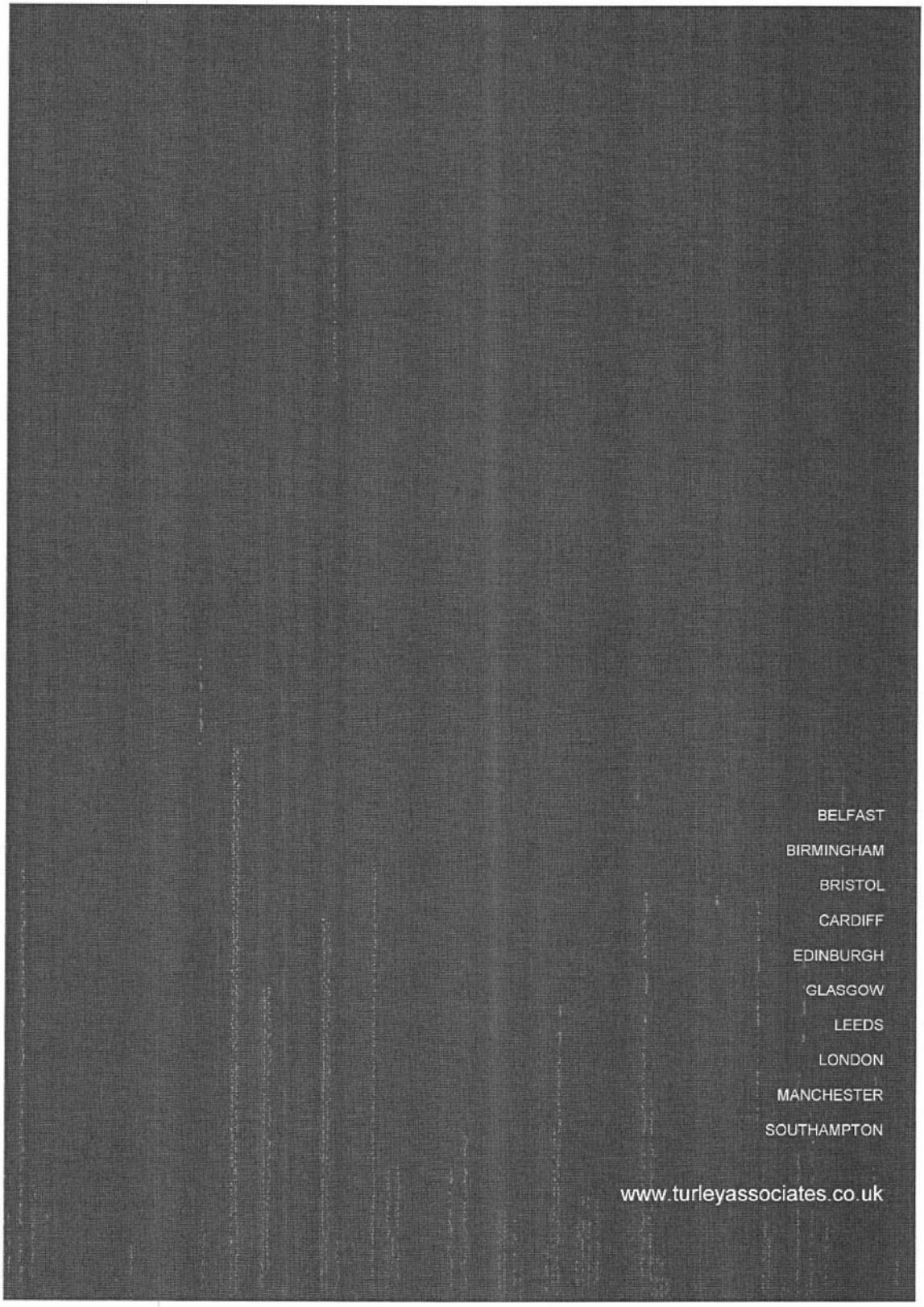
- Amenity grassland, ruderal vegetation, arable land and hedges and treelines following the creation of the linear park;
- Creation of new habitats for amphibians and breeding birds;
- Controlled waters and soil;
- The effect on 8 of the 10 landscape character areas;
- The effect on 23 of the 24 viewpoints; and

- The effect on surface water quality.


Appendix 1 – Site Plan
TURLEYASSOCIATES

Red Line - Extent of Application Site

PLAN 1 : SITE DESCRIPTION PLAN


BELFAST
BIRMINGHAM
BRISTOL
CARDIFF
EDINBURGH
GLASGOW
LEEDS
LONDON
MANCHESTER
SOUTHAMPTON
www.turleyassociates.co.uk

EXISTING
DEVELOPED AREAS

APPENDIX D

APPENDIX E

2011 /0259

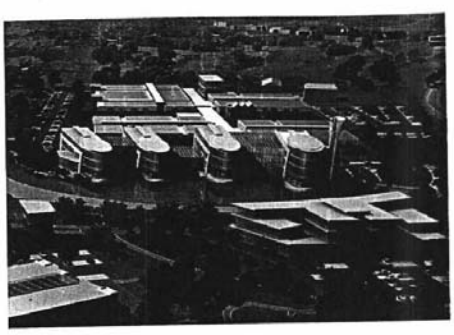
Details in respect of scale parameters can be found in the Design and Access Statement and Planning Parameters Report.

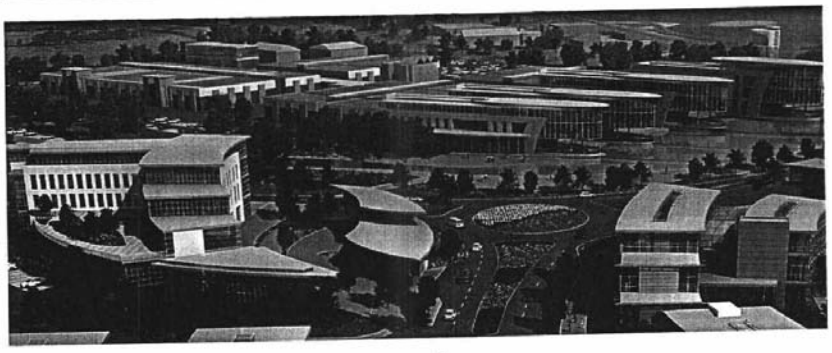
PP2: DEVELOPMENT FOOTPRINT AND HEIGHT

SCALE 1:7500 @ A4

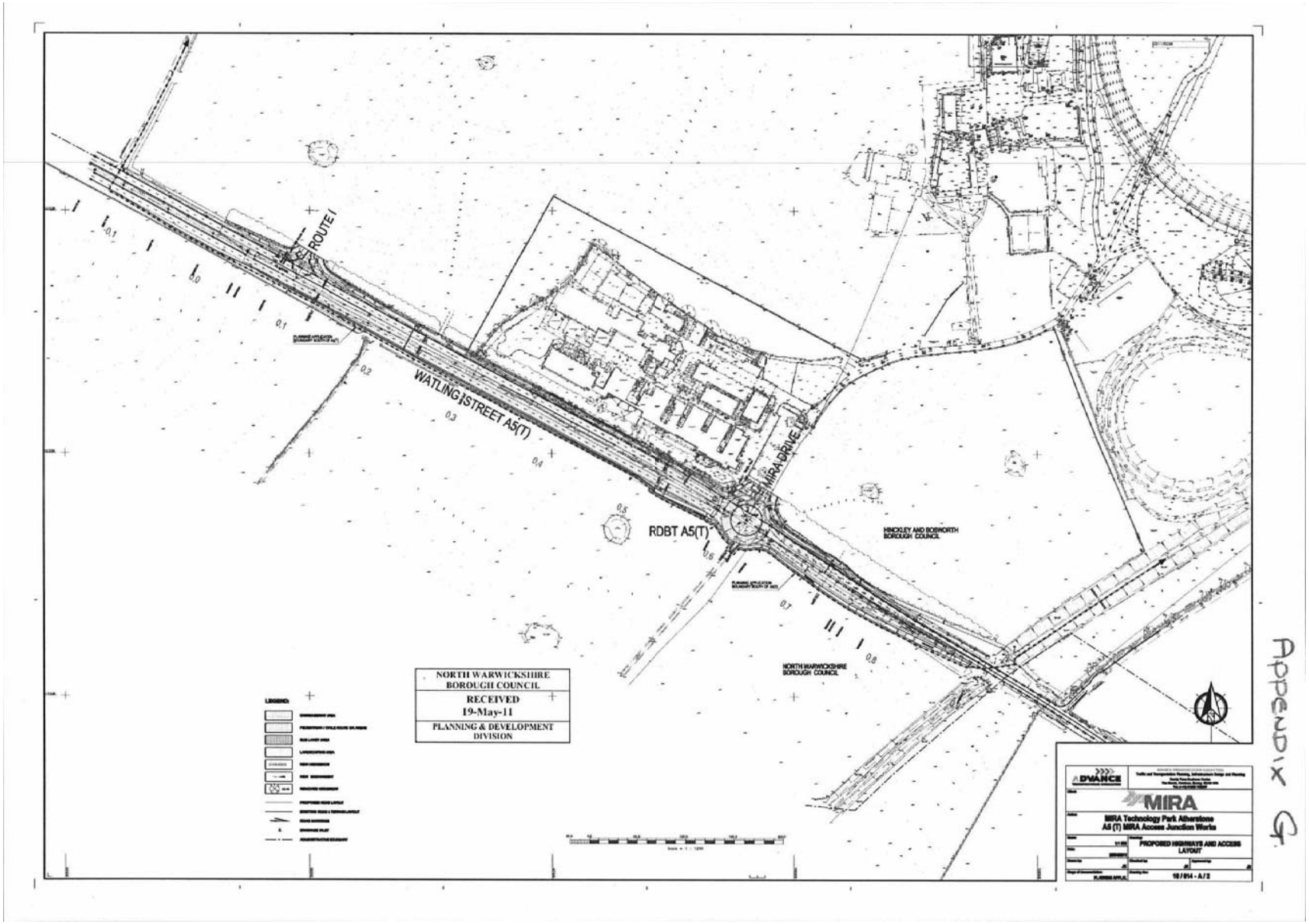
Appendix F

CONCEPTUAL MODEL IMAGES

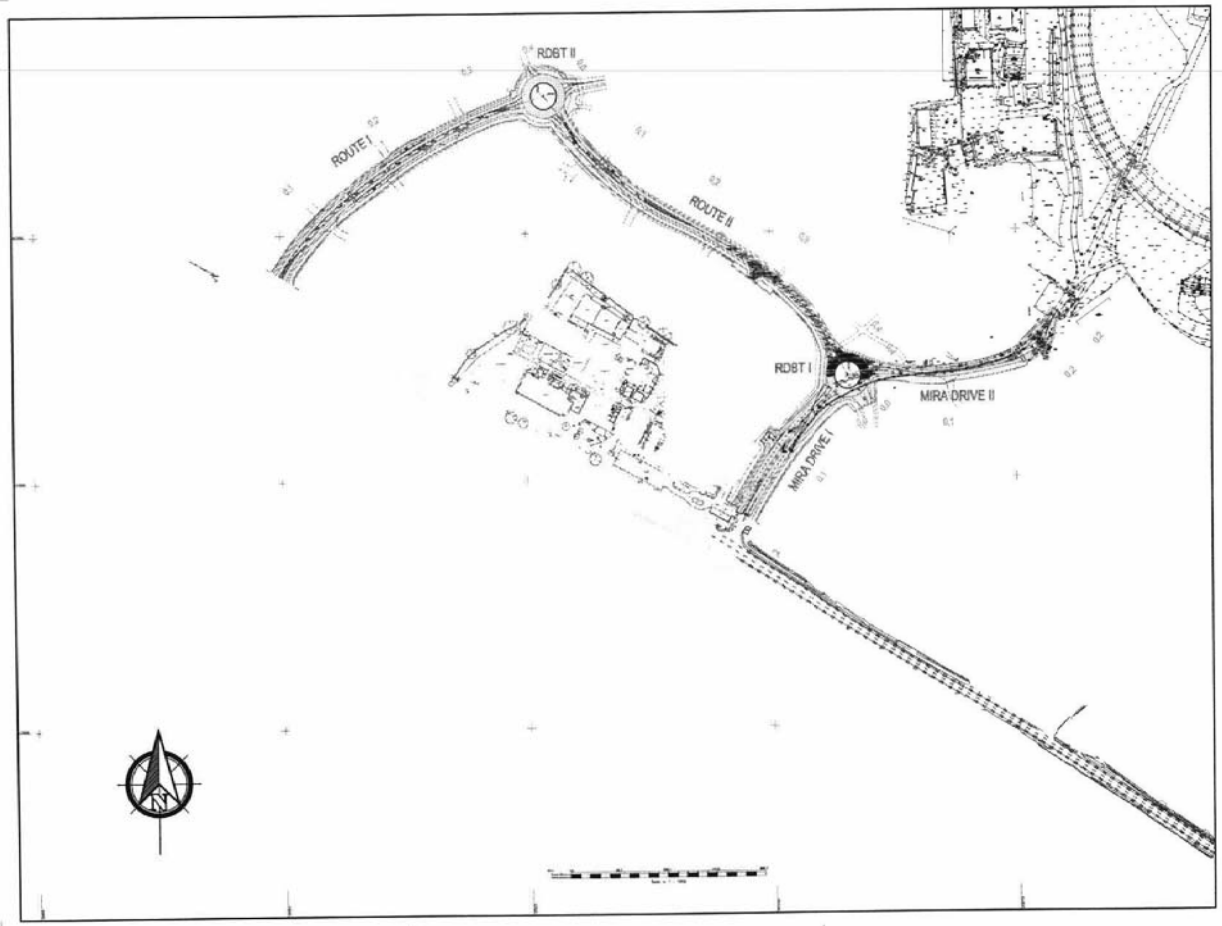




MIRA TECHNOLOGY PARK


ROUTE I
WATLING STREET A5(T)
MIRA DRIVE
RDBT A5(T)
HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL
NORTH WARWICKSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL
NORTH WARWICKSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL
RECEIVED
19-May-11
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DIVISION
LEGEND
MIRA
MIRA Technology Park Alterations
A5 (T) MIRA Access Junction Works
PROPOSED HIGHWAYS AND ACCESS LAYOUT
18/854 - A/2

APPENDIX G



DVANCE
TRANSPORTATION CONSULTANTS

ADVANCE TRANSPORTATION CONSULTING
Traffic and Transportation Planning, Infrastructure Design and Planning
Sandy Lane Business Centre
The Barns, Farnham, Surrey, GU10 1PX
Tel (+44) 01252 782297

Client: MIRA

Author: MIRA Technology Park Atherstone
A5 (T) MIRA Access Junction Works

Scale: 1:2 000	Drawing: INDICATIVE INTERNAL ROADS LAYOUT
Date: 29/04/2011	
Drawn by: JK	Checked by: JK / Approved by: JH
Stage of documentation: PLANNING APPLIC.	Drawing No.: 10 / 014 - A / 3

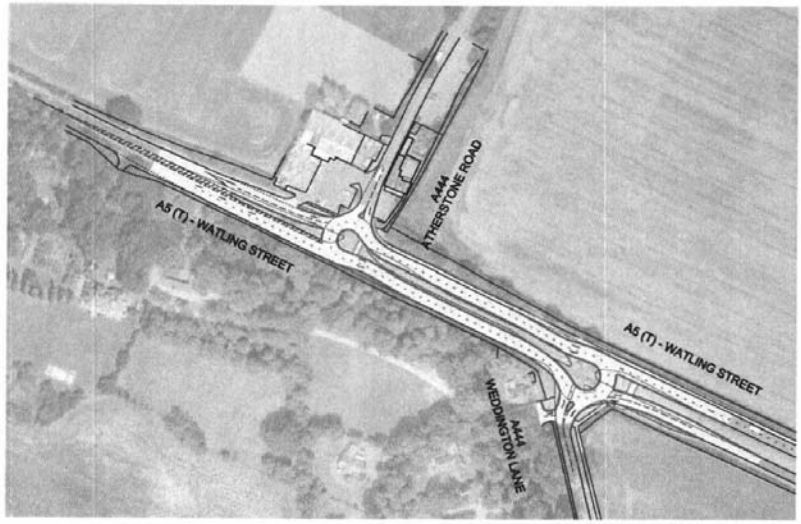
Appendix H

APPENDIX I

8.16 Recent discussions with the HA indicate that the scheme was costed at 9m GBP and due to the cuts, is not in any programme for implementation. Warwickshire CC have been pushing the HA to improve the junction, as the A444 approaches are considered problematical and had an accident record that could only worsen if side road delays increase in future due to traffic growth on the A5(T).

8.17 In light of the above, an alternative measure has been devised and is indicated below in Figure 8.1.

Figure 8.1 Proposed Mitigation Measure for the A444/A5 (T) Red Gate Junction



8.18 It will be seen from figure 8.1 that the measure involves the creation of a lozenge shaped roundabout/gyratory that is designed to incorporate the two A444 north/south arms. At the same time it would be located within highway land.

8.19 The junction would extend for a distance of 190 metres (East/West) and would have an ICD at each end of between 30-35m. Sufficient dimensions for 18m double drawbar design vehicles to turn at 20kph.

8.20 With this arrangement as indicated through traffic on the A5 is potentially only held up by turning traffic once as it passes through the 2 junctions.

8.21 Pedestrian/cyclist crossing facilities are indicated on the east side of the junction.

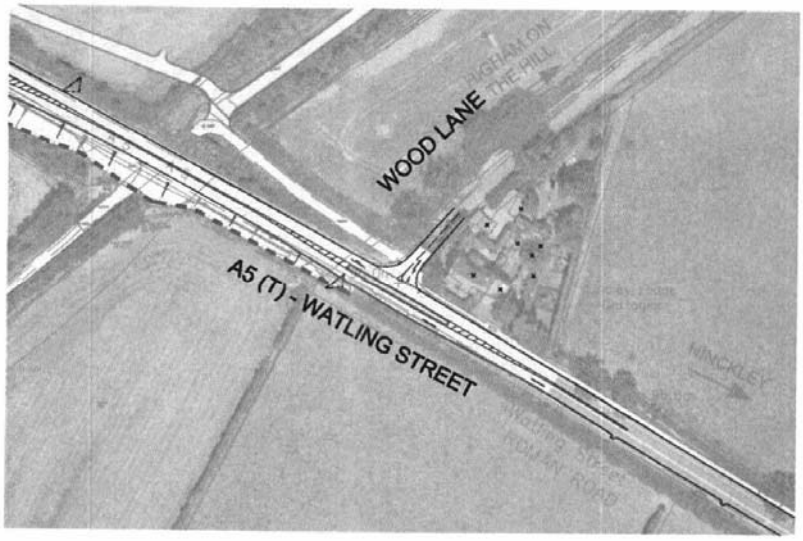
Wood Lane/A5 (T)

APPENDIX J

8.22 This junction is located some 380 metres to the east of the MIRA access on the A5(T) and currently takes the form of a simple all movements T junction. Vehicles turning right on the A5 into Wood Lane are required to wait on the A5 and due to the lack of segregated right turn lane, can block through traffic. Long queues often form on Wood Lane, with drivers being required to wait for a gap in the flow on the A5 in order to turn right.

8.23 In light of these concerns Figure 8.2 indicates an arrangement for the Wood Lane junction with the right turns eliminated by way of the provision of an elongated island within the A5(T). The carriageway would be widened to accommodate this measure as indicated.

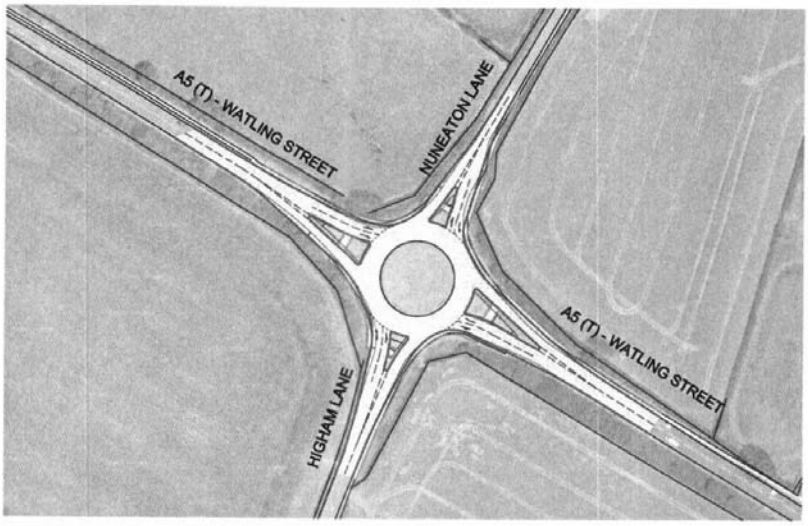
Figure 8.2 Proposed Mitigation Measure for the Wood Lane/A5 (T) junction



Higham Roundabout

8.24 This 4 arm roundabout is located some 1.5 kms to the east of the MIRA Site. The modelling work was indicating that queues build on both the Higham Lane and Nuneaton Road approaches to the junction during peaks. In Figure 8.3 is indicated an arrangement where the 2 approaches have been revised to provide greater entrance widths and extended flare lengths.

Figure 8.3 Proposed mitigation measures to the Higham Roundabout

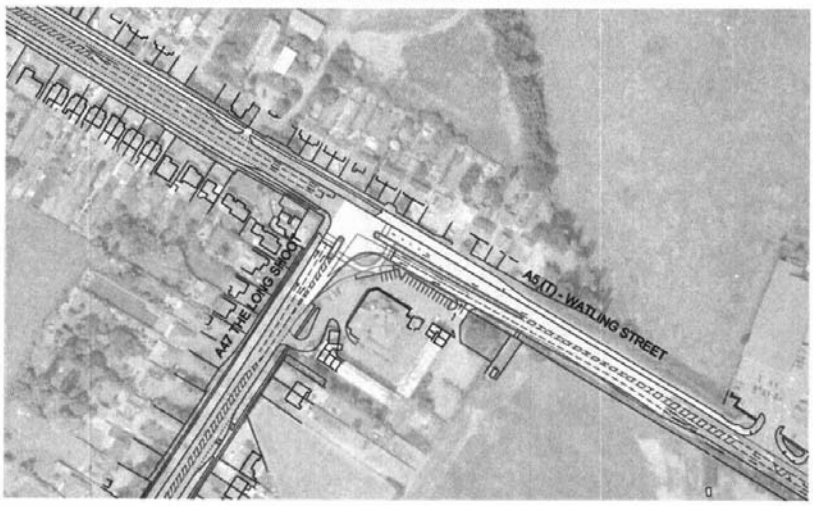


A47 Long Shoot/A5T) Signalised Junction

8.25 This junction has been the subject of a review by the HA in recent years as both it and its neighbouring junction, Dodwells to the east on the A5(T) experience operational problems during the peaks and which will deteriorate further with the MIRA development.

8.26 Halcrow reviewed options for the HA and their option 1 is indicated in figure 8.4 below.

Figure 8.4 Proposed mitigation measures to the A47/A5(T) Longshoot Junction



8.27 The measures include reorganised ped crossing facilities as well as reorganised lane configurations.

8.28 It should be noted that the A5 east of this junction remains unwidened due to land constraints. The favoured Halcrow option indicated this widened to dual carriageway standard to generate increased capacity.

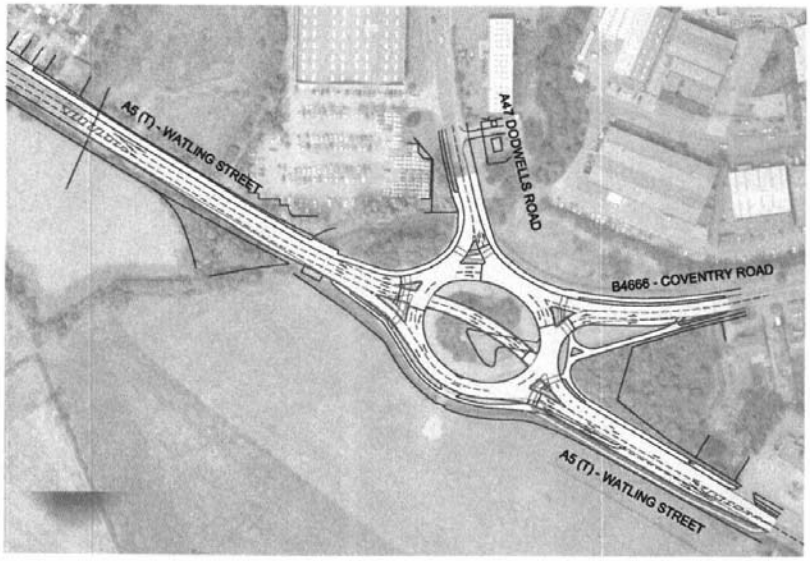
8.29 The access to the pub is relocated with this option. It is currently located within the junction itself.

Dodwells Roundabout

8.30 Halcrow had proposed for the HA that the existing 4 arm roundabout be enlarged and then signalised. This measure would require land that appears beyond the highway boundary and so alternative measures have been devised. These are indicated below in Figure 8.5.

APPENDIX M

Figure 8.5 Proposed Mitigation measures to the Dodwells Roundabout



8.31 It can be seen from Figure 9.5 that the arrangements involve signalisation of the roundabout and the provision of a signalised eastbound A5 through lane across the roundabout centre ("hamburger") and modified/extended entrance/exit tapers on the A5 (T).

MIRA Do Something Modelling Results and Comparative Analysis

8.32 Whilst the model was run with traffic mitigation measures for all future Do something situations i.e. 2015, 2018 and 2021, the analysis has mainly centred around the 2021 situation when full MIRA development occupation is assumed on the site. The key concern being whether with this situation by this time the proposed Mitigation measures are effective in offsetting the impact of development when compared with the corresponding reference situation.

8.33 As before, the analysis has centre around the flow changes, but more critically the junction operation impact and the overall delays on the 10 selected routes around the network.

(8) Application No PAP/2011/0260

Land South of Rowland Way, Atherstone

Removal of Hedgerows for
Aldi Stores Ltd

Introduction

This application is reported to the Board due to an objection that has been received. Because of the "default" time periods for determination of this type of application, it would not be possible to refer the case to local Members as set out in the Scheme of Delegation, and thus it is reported directly to the Board.

The Site

This is currently an area of poor grass land bordered by Holly Lane and Rowland Way on one of the Atherstone industrial estates. There is commercial development to the other boundaries. A number of former field boundaries cross the site. These were the lines of the original fields before the industrial estate was developed. They comprise around 520 metres in total and broadly are described as intersecting hedgerows – see Appendix A.

The Proposal

It is proposed to remove all of the hedgerows as described above.

The applicant points out that this land is allocated for commercial development in the saved policies of the North Warwickshire Local Plan 2006, and the owners expect to move onto the land so expanding its future development proposals. They point out a Design Brief for the site as adopted by the Council does not refer to retaining these hedgerows, only to those that surround the edge of the site along the road boundaries. Moreover it is claimed that their retention would preclude the efficient development of the site by preventing the inclusion of large buildings similar to the applicant's own present developments on the site and those of adjoining occupiers.

The applicant has submitted a Hedgerow Assessment. This he says shows that the hedgerows are species poor, and that they neither mark historic or archaeological boundaries. As such they are not "important" as defined by the Hedgerow Regulations.

The applicant has agreed to plant new hedgerows elsewhere around the perimeter of the site should a Removal Notice be granted.

Development Plan

Saved Policies of the North Warwickshire Local Plan 2006 – ENV4 (Trees and Hedgerows)

Consultations

Warwickshire Museum – Response awaited

Warwickshire Wildlife Trust – Response awaited.

Representations

Atherstone Town Council – Not yet received

Atherstone Civic Society - Not yet received

Representations

An objection has been received from a local resident saying that the loss of these hedgerows would diminish the bio-diversity value of the area, and thus impact on nature conservation interests.

Observations

The removal of hedgerows is governed by the 1997 Hedgerow Regulations. These stand separate from planning legislation. In short, if a hedgerow is found not to be “important”, then the Local Planning Authority cannot refuse its removal. There are strict definitions affecting what is “important” or not. These in essence relate to the whether the hedgerow has historic and/or archaeological significance, and to the ecological value of its growth. The applicant has provided an assessment of these hedgerows which examines all of the criteria set out in the Regulations governing the definition of what is important or not.

At present, there is no response from the two expert bodies – the Museum and the Trust – who would advise the Council on the conclusions of the applicant’s own assessment, against the criteria set out in the Regulations for defining what is an “important” hedgerow or not. The representation received, although well-intentioned, is not of any weight unless it is backed by evidence to show in line with the Regulations, that the hedgerows should be retained due to their status. Moreover, there is a default period with this type of application, meaning the hedgerows can be removed if the Council has not issued a Retention Notice before 8 July. This is before the next Board meeting when a full report would normally be prepared containing all of the consultation responses.

If consultation responses are received during the period between the preparation of this report and the meeting, they will be reported verbally to the meeting.

In the circumstances it is therefore recommended that the decision be delegated to the Solicitor to the Council, in consultation with the Chair and the Opposition Spokesperson. The decision will revolve around the consultation responses from the two outstanding consultees. If the hedgerows are not found to be “important” then a Removal Notice will be recommended, otherwise a Retention Notice will be issued.

Recommendation

That the determination of the application be delegated to the Solicitor to the Council in consultation with the Chairman of the Board and the Opposition Spokesperson, and with consideration of the responses from outstanding consultations.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

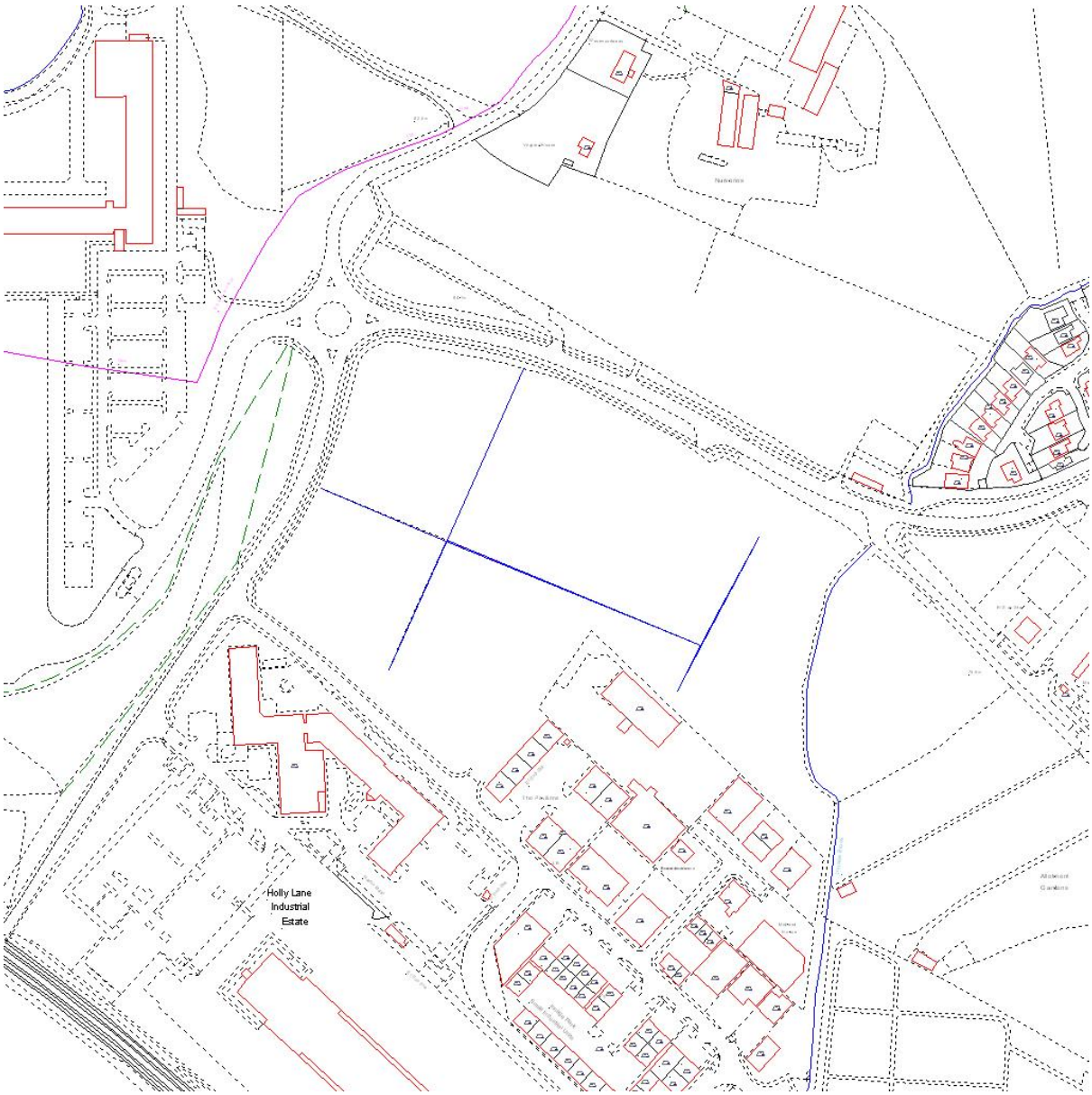
Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D, as substituted by the Local Government Act, 2000 Section 97

Planning Application No: PAP/2011/0260

Background Paper No	Author	Nature of Background Paper	Date
1	The Applicant or Agent	Application Forms and Plans	18/5/11
2	Mr Horton	Objection	6/6/11

Note: This list of background papers excludes published documents which may be referred to in the report, such as The Development Plan and Planning Policy Guidance Notes.

A background paper will include any item which the Planning Officer has relied upon in preparing the report and formulating his recommendation. This may include correspondence, reports and documents such as Environmental Impact Assessments or Traffic Impact Assessments.


Holly Lane
Industrial
Estate

Appendix 7

2011/0260

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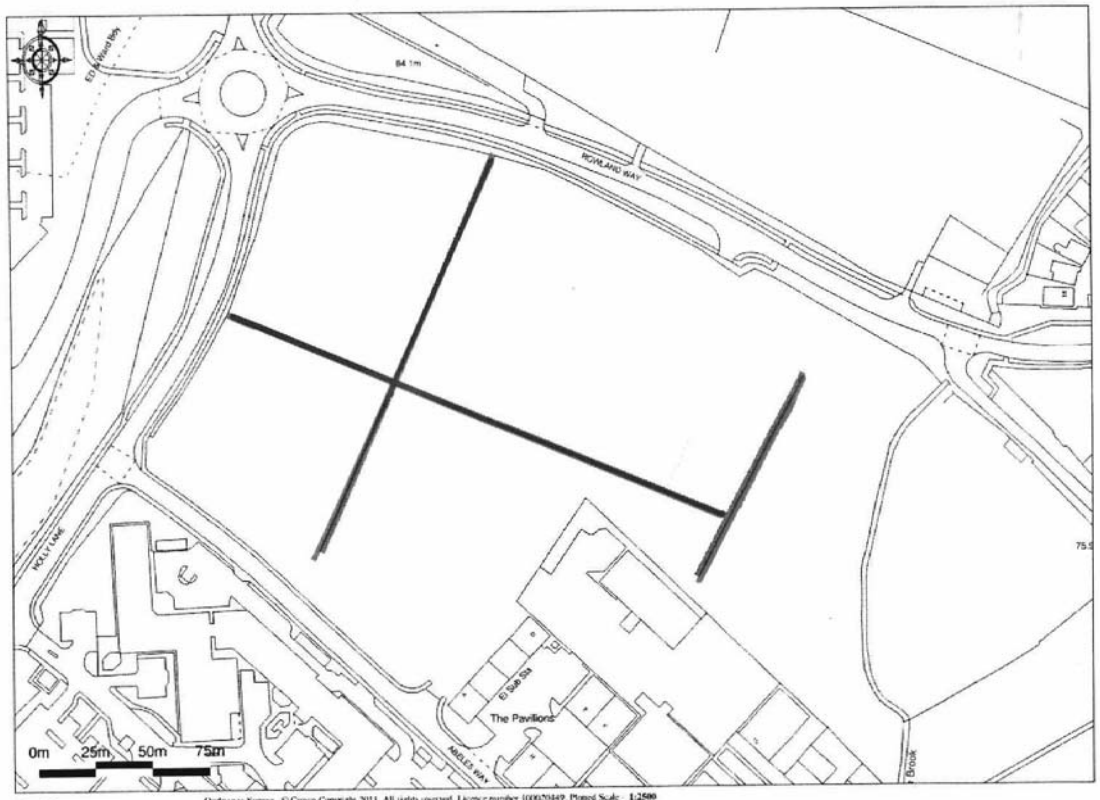
47 Newport Road
Cardiff
CF24 0AD

Tel: +44 (0)29 2032 0730
Fax: +44 (0)29 2045 5321
Email: planning.cardiff@wyg.com



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Legend:

Hedgerow Location

Drawing Title:

Hedgerow Location Plan

Scale @ A4	Drawn Date	Checked Date	Approved Date
1:2500	CP 16.05.11		

Project No.	Office	Type	Drawing No.	Revision
A058113	X	X	001	A