

Planning Committee

6 November 2024

Update/Amendment/Correction List

Planning Committee Minutes – 9 October 2024

Please find attached a copy of the planning committee minutes from the 9 October 2024 meeting.

23/P/00139 – (Page 21) - 176 Epsom Road, Guildford, GU1 2RR

Additional comments have been received from the Council's tree officer who recommends the following condition be attached

No development related works shall take place on site until an Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) and Tree Protection Plan (TPP), in accordance with BS 5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction, are submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. The approved Arboricultural Method Statement must be adhered to in full, and may only be modified subject to written agreement from the LPA. No development shall commence until tree protection measures, as set out in the AMS and TPP, have been installed and a site meeting has taken place with the site manager, the retained consulting arboriculturist and the LPA Tree Officer.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to ensure the protection of the trees to be retained on the site.

24/P/00441 (Page 41) – Land west of Blackwell Farm, Hogs Back, Guildford, GU3

Amendments and additions in *italics* and deletions ~~strikethrough~~.

1.0 Key information:

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1.3 The proposal has an installed capacity of 12.21MWp and would have an annual generation of *approximately* 8.25GWhr/yr for use by the

University of Surrey as part of its net zero strategy to be carbon neutral by 2030. *(The annual generation from solar is subject to a range of factors and is not constant).*

RECOMENDATION

3.1 Revised and additional conditions (page 44-59)

9.	<p><u><i>Great Crested Newt Mitigation Principles</i></u></p> <p><i>No development shall commence except in accordance with Part 1 of the Great Crested Newt Mitigation Principles, as set out in the District Licence (WML-OR146, or a 'Further Licence') and in addition in compliance with the following:</i></p> <p><i>a) Works to existing ponds onsite may only be undertaken during autumn/winter, unless otherwise in accordance with the Great Crested Newt Mitigation Principles. Works which will affect likely newt hibernacula may only be undertaken during the active period for amphibians;</i></p> <p><i>b) Capture methods must be used at suitable habitat features prior to the commencement of the development (i.e., hand/destructive/night searches), which may include the use of temporary amphibian fencing, to prevent newts moving onto a development site from adjacent suitable habitat, installed for the period of the development (and removed upon completion of the development).</i></p> <p><i>c) Amphibian fencing and pitfall trapping must be undertaken at suitable habitats and features, prior to commencement of the development.</i></p> <p><i>The measures shall be implemented and maintained for the course of the development works.</i></p> <p><u><i>Reason:</i></u> <i>To safeguard the on great crested newts and their habitats which are a protected species and provide suitable mitigation and enhancements. This is required to be a pre-commencement condition as these matters need to be agreed before development commences, in order to minimise impacts on habitats and biodiversity.</i></p>
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20.	<p><u>Archaeology</u></p> <p>Prior to the commencement of any development on the cable route <i>a programme of archaeological work on the site in accordance with a written scheme of investigation shall be submitted to and be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved <i>Written Scheme of Investigation.</i></i></p> <p><u>Reason:</u> To ensure archaeological investigation(s) are carried out before any archaeological remains are disturbed by the approved development.</p>
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4.0 Proposal:

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4.45 *Most of the landscape and biodiversity mitigation and enhancement measures would remain. For example, the grassland areas within the three solar array fields themselves would be removed.*

8.0 Planning policies:

(page 83)

8.11 *Other strategies*

Surrey Hills AONB Management Plan 2020-2025

Planning Management Policies – P6

11.0 Planning considerations:

(page 88)

11.1.16 The University of Surrey has a ‘Net-Zero Strategy’ (2030), this is two-fold with measures to reduce demand and to decarbonise the energy supply. The University has a consumption of approximately 23GWh/yr, and this is

expected to increase in the future due to the need for data centres (to support their people-centred AI) and electric vehicle (EV) charging *to approximately 28GWh/yr (equivalent to the power for approximately 4.38 million households for one year)*. The University has a strategy that involves using roof mounted solar panels and decarbonising energy consumption.

(page 92)

11.2.20 Furthermore, where ducting is laid, other utilities required for the residential site allocation *could theoretically be laid, this would depend on the routing and timing of utilities for the Blackwell Park development which has not been progressed following its allocation.*

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11.3.1 *NE commenced a 12 week consultation on 16.09.2024 to include the additional land.* There is no timetable for submitting the Order to the Secretary of State. At this time, whilst the application is not in the SHNL it is in the candidate area and therefore this designation has growing weight in decision making. So it would not be unreasonable to give relative weight to the relevant development plan policies and NPPF considerations. *There is no moratorium in place for determining planning application in the candidate areas.*

11.3.2 *However, it is still relevant to consider "The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas [National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty] should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas." As required by the para. 182 of the NPPF. This is also reflected in policy P6 of the AONB Management Plan Development, which resists development that would spoil the setting of the AONB by harming public views into or from the AONB.*

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11.3.16 It is possible to see that the proposal would be situated within a mixed and managed landscape. Whilst there is a predominance of what most

people would recognise as 'countryside' visible within the views recognised in its designation as an AGLV. This is a rural-urban fringe location with built settlement to the *east* comprising the Guildford town and the University (as identified by the GLCA), as well as being visible in wider views with vantage points including the ridge of the Hog's Back, which is the current boundary of the SHNL.

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11.3.26 The fencing would be *2.4m in height*, the proposed post and wire mesh design would not be visually dominant and would over line blind in with the enhanced planting. When seen from the PROWs and permissive paths adjoining the field boundaries.

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11.3.28 From the fields themselves, the extent and 3.0m height of the solar array, would not unduly obstruct outward views and so would not cause harm to the candidate area of the SHNL. However, as there would be some harm to views from the existing SHNL, the AGLV and landscape character area *due to the development on Little Misley*, this would be contrary to policy P1(3) and (5) of the LPSS, which states that development should be conserved and enhanced to maximise its special landscape qualities and scenic beauty and must have regard to protecting its setting *and policy P6 of the AONB Management Plan as there would be some harm from public views*. Then partially conflict with P1(1) due to the impact on the SHNL candidate area.

11.3.29 *No adverse impacts have been predicted, and therefore, no mitigation is deemed necessary.*

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11.4.27 A Soils and Agricultural Quality assessment has been submitted with the planning application. This notes that land of grades 2, 3 and 4 have been identified at the site. The total application site area of *37.7 hectares* comprises the following:

Grade / Subgrade	Area (Ha)	% of application site
Grade 2	<i>1.6</i>	<i>4</i>
Subgrade 3a	<i>11.8</i>	<i>32</i>
Subgrade 3b	<i>19.9</i>	<i>53</i>
<i>Other land (non-agricultural)</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>3.5</i>
<i>Unsurveyed land</i>	<i>2.5</i>	<i>7.5</i>
Total	<i>37.7</i>	<i>100</i>

11.4.28 Based on the results of this survey, *approximately 36% of the study area is considered to be BMV and this would not be available for arable farming for up to 35 years for the development. This would include parts of the buried cable route that would not affect agricultural land use.*

(page 111-112)

11.5.26 *The County Archaeologist states that the geophysical survey results do not preclude archaeological remains being present on the site as some types of archaeological features do not produce a significant magnetic signature and so may not show up on a survey. So they are not satisfied that this constitutes a full survey. The applicant has clarified that both Big and Little Miskey fields were subject to recorded scanning and detailed gradiometer survey in 2014. The 2014 survey report is noted in footnote 5 (page 9) within the submitted desk-based heritage assessment and heritage statement and the targeted survey in these fields is shown as Figure 5b of the submitted assessment report.*

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11.6.4 The application has been supported by the following documents:

- ... Ecological Impact Assessment (ECIA), prepared by ECOSA, March 2024
- ... Ecological Impact Assessment (ECIA) Addendum, prepared by ECOSA, August 2024
- ... Habitat management and monitoring plan (HMMP), prepared by ECOSA, March 2024
- ... Hazel Dormouse Survey Report, prepared by ECOSA, January 2024

- ... Biodiversity Net Gain Stage Report and Metric Rev 2, prepared by ECOSA, August 2024
- ... Confidential Badger Report Rev 1, prepared by ECOSA, August 2024
- ... Ecological Mitigation Strategy – Rev 4, prepared by ECOSA, August 2024
- ... Responses to Ecological Consultations, prepared by ECOSA, August 2024

(page 130)

11.9.10 In terms of glint and glare the submitted Solar Photovoltaic Glint and Glare Study assesses the possible effects of glint and glare from the development on road safety, residential amenity, PROWs and SHNL and railway operations and infrastructure. ~~For this section the impact on residential amenity WOULD be discussed. The impacts of glint and glare on the other possible receptors would be (have already been) discussed in other sections of the report.~~

(page 131)

11.9.14 In terms of privacy, it is noted that the facility would *not have operatives* onsite on a daily basis – the activity associated with the operational phase has been explained above.

(page 133)

11.10.13 These have been assessed above and that alternatives were considered and discounted based on an evidence based approach. It has been acknowledged that whilst third parties *do not* agree with the conclusions made. There is no evidence to suggest that the approach taken is not sound.

(page 135)

11.10.29 The University has a consumption of approximately *23 GWh/yr, and this is expected to increase to 28GWh/yr* due to the expected to increase due to the data centres for the growth of AI and EV charging. Energy efficiency measures and roof mounted solar panels would not enable them to reach their net zero target by 2030.

(page 135)

11.11.3 The export cable would comprise a Copper Triplex HV; cable size - 630sq.mm single core XLPE Cu and cable voltage - 11kV. ~~2.4.286.~~

(page 139)

11.12.8 The scale of the proposal would represent a significant contribution (*approximately 36%*) towards energy needs of the University from a renewable source and is predicted to deliver a saving of 1,122,000 kg CO2e of emissions annually.

(page 142)

11.13.5 Wildfields Farm is a locally important heritage asset, relatively speaking there is a lower value associated with its significance. Therefore, the relative harm is given lesser weighting and consequently the *public* benefits to outweigh this harm *do* not have to be as great.

11.14.1 Firstly, by virtue of the inappropriate development of the solar arrays on the fields and harm to the openness from the access track on the Green Belt there would be conflict with policy P2. Secondly, due to the harm to the landscape qualities of the AGLV and setting of the existing SHNL caused by the solar array on Little Misley as there would be conflict with policy P1(3) and (5) of the LPSS, *policy P6 of the AONB Management Plan* and partial conflict with P1(1) due to the limited weight afford to this policy from the *solar arrays* being *located on* a candidate area. Thirdly, the temporary loss of *13.4 ha of BMV (approximately 36% of the study area)* would be contrary to E5(3) of the LPSS. Fourthly, the proximity of Wildfields Farmhouse to the proposed solar array on the Wildfields field and the access track spur would result in less than substantial harm at the lower end of spectrum to the setting of this designated heritage asset. This would be contrary to policy D3 of the LPSS and policies D18(3) and D19(1) and (2)(d) of the LPDMP.

**24/P/00563 (Page 145) – Surrey County Constabulary Police Headquarters
Mount Browne, Sandy Lane, Guildford, GU3 1HG**

2.0. *Conditions*

2.1. For clarity, condition 8 of application 24/P/00563 is proposed to be amended as follows.

No development shall commence until, a Biodiversity Net Gain Statement and ~~Habitat management and~~ Monitoring Plan (HMMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The ~~HMMP~~ Biodiversity Net Gain Statement and Monitoring Plan shall be based on the proposed impact avoidance, mitigation and enhancement measures specified in the Ecological Impact Assessment and should include, but not be limited to the following:

- (a) Description and evaluation of features to be managed.
- (b) Ecological trends and constraints on site that might influence management.
- (c) Aims and objectives of management.
- (d) Appropriate management options for achieving aims and objectives.
- (e) Prescriptions for management actions, together with a plan of management compartments.
- (f) Preparation of a work schedule (including an annual work plan capable of being rolled forward over a 30-year period.
- (g) Details of the body or organisation responsible for implementation of the plan.
- (h) Ongoing monitoring and remedial measures.
- (i) Legal and funding mechanisms by which the long-term implementation of the plan will be secured by the applicant with the management body(ies) responsible for its delivery.
- (j) Monitoring strategy, including details of how contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed and implemented so that the development still delivers the fully functioning biodiversity objectives of the originally approved scheme.
- (k) Timetable for the implementation of the works.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Net Gain Statement and Monitoring Plan. The measures to secure biodiversity net gain shall be implemented in accordance with the approved timetable of works.

Reason: to ensure the delivery and management of the specified biodiversity net gain in accordance with national and local requirements.

2.2. The amendments to this condition do not change the reason, only serve to clarify the purpose further being to secure biodiversity net gain.

3.0. *Amendments to the reports*

3.1. It is prudent to note that the case officer for both application 24/P/00563 and 24/P/00564 is Morgan Laird. It is evident that this was not recorded within the Officer's Report.

3.2. Paragraphs 8.4.19 and 8.9.11 of application 24/P/00563 refers to an area of 7,000sqm woodland planting. This should read as 700sqm as this refers to the area of planting at the top of the proposed access road. This does not change the consideration of the report as the proposal was assessed on the basis that 700sqm is proposed.

3.3. *Furthering the Purpose of protected landscapes*

3.4. The AONB Planning Advisor sent an email to the Planning Officer following the agenda being published. This email was with respect to application 24/P/00563 (access road) and was received on Wednesday 30th October.

3.5. In their email it was noted that the Officer's Report did not make note that the Local Planning Authority should also be considered as a relevant authority for the purposes of the new The Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (LURA) duty. The LPA must therefore also be satisfied that as a relevant authority, this has been met.

3.6. In considering whether this duty has been met, regard has been had to the Policies within the Surrey Hills Management Plan. Specifically, one of the aims is for the Surrey Hills to be enjoyed and cherished as an Area of

Outstanding Natural Beauty for its own intrinsic qualities and in ways that contribute to people's health and wellbeing. Notable policies to achieve this aim include:

- ... RT1 – Visitors and facilities that enhance people's health, enjoyment and understanding of the Surrey Hills will be encouraged, whilst conserving or enhancing the landscape character and biodiversity.
- ... RT2 – Information will be made accessible for a diverse range of potential visitors in order to foster a greater understanding and enjoyment of the Surrey Hills AONB.
- ... RT4 – The design and development of new visitor facilities, and the maintenance of existing facilities, will have regard to the needs of people of all abilities to access and enjoy the Surrey Hills landscape.

3.7. The AONB Management Plan also aims to conserve and enhance the biodiversity resources of the Surrey Hills. Relevant policies to achieve this aim include:

- ... B4 – The enhancement of biodiversity will be maximised through the targeting of advice and grants, and applicants for planning permission will be expected to deliver biodiversity gains as part of their proposals secured through planning conditions or legal agreements where appropriate.

3.8. As set out in paragraphs 8.4.18 – 8.5.20 of the Officer's Report, the scheme includes the installation of a signboard and additional planting within the site which would increase the biodiversity gain achieved on site. It should be noted that these measures were provided in consultation with the LPA and the AONB Planning Advisor. The LPA have considered the measures proposed, and the justification provided as to why other measures would not be appropriate and are satisfied that as a relevant authority, appropriate justification has been sought by the LPA and provided by the Applicant. It is further considered that the measures proposed would be supported by the above mentioned policies within the AONB Management Plan.

3.9. The LPA have considered these comments and are satisfied that this duty has been met by the LPA with respect to both applications 24/P/00563 and 24/P/00564.

- 4.0. The LPA are aware that a memo/document was sent to the members by a resident on the 5th November 2024. The document was noted to be sent on behalf of a number of local residents. The following is a summary of the points raised, as well as comments addressing these concerns by the Case Officer.
- 4.1. Lack of Transparency / misleading nature of application description. The document sets out that the application description is not correct and does not include reference to the relocation of emergency response vehicles to the site. It is noted that the closure of the Police Station within the Guildford Town Centre and relocation to Mount Browne could occur without planning permission. It is therefore is not included within the description of the development.
- 4.2. The document raises concern about the number of conditions, noting that residents should be given the change to comment on the documents when considered by the LPA. The Case Officer considers the number and contents of the conditions to be appropriate and necessary.
- 4.3. Specific reference is made to condition 2 of 24/P/00564 with an image attached. It should be noted that the image attached is a reference to a different plan, and not the plan conditioned (drawing no. MTB-SBR-SW-XX-DR-A-01120 Rev P01). This is therefore a misleading comment.
- 4.4. Further reference is made to conditions 30 and 27 of 24/P/00564 and condition 14 of 24/P/00563 which relate to droppable bollards on Sandy Lane and The Ridges. It should be noted that as the red line boundary of the access road application does not extend to Sandy Lane, it was not possible to require the bollards under this condition. It has therefore been included within the main site application to ensure these are provided.
- 4.5. Further reference is made to condition 26 of 24/P/00564 which requires the provision of a cycle lane along Old Portsmouth Road, noting (rightfully) that areas of Old Portsmouth Road are narrow and it would not be possible to provide a cycle lane. In discussions between the County

Highway Authority and the Applicant's transport consultant that the cycle route could be extended from the Artington Roundabout north, to tie in with the shared ped/cycle way introduced as part of the adjacent residential development of The Ridges. The details would be secured by condition 26. The cycle lane would therefore not be situated within the narrow section of Old Portsmouth Road.

- 4.6. Condition 24 of 24/P/00564 is reference where it was requested that the condition should include provision of finished floor levels and building heights. This is not considered appropriate or necessary with condition 24 requiring landscaping details.
- 4.7. Requests that condition 12 of 24/P/00564 include Phase 1. This is not considered reasonable as it is unlikely that vehicle headlights would cause an unacceptable impact on surrounding properties. It is further noted that the valley bottom is not absent from development or car parking as there is existing formal and informal car parking in this area. Accordingly, there would be no greater impact from vehicle headlight glare.
- 4.8. The letter refers to a condition requiring all internal roads and paths to be street lit. While specific reference is not made to a condition, it is assumed this relates to condition 20 of 24/P/00564. It is noted that this condition requires the submission of details of timing of delivery and a phasing plan for provision of pedestrian and cyclist routes within the site, as well as priority crossing points at internal junctions. It does not require all internal roads and paths to be lit. Notwithstanding this, the site is already developed with internal roads and pathways and is not a dark skies setting. This condition along with condition 11 of 24/P/00564 would allow the LPA to consider the details.
- 4.9. The document raises concerns with the dog school location and need, noting that alternative sites have not been adequate considered, including land within Guildford Borough Council's ownership. The assessment of alternative locations undertaken by the Applicant considered land within the Police's ownership. It is not considered

appropriate or reasonable to also consider all land within the Council's ownership. The Officer's Report appropriately considers the points raised in terms of consideration of alternative sites and the need for and scale of the dog school.

- 4.10. The final comment made in the document refers to the noise generated by the dog school in the new location, noting that an inadequate assessment of the noise impact assessment has been made. The Officer considers that appropriate consideration has been had to this, as outlined in the Officer's Report.

**24/P/00564 – (Page 199) – Surrey County Constabulary Police Headquarters
Mount Browne, Sandy Lane, Guildford, GU3 1HG**

5.0. *Air quality*

- 1.1. The Air Quality assessment within paragraphs 8.8.1 – 8.8.6 is to be amended following further comments from both the Applicant and the Council's Environmental Health Officer (EHO) addressing the impact on the Town Centre Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). The Applicant in their response explained that the air quality assessment takes into account the gross traffic movements from the proposed development at 2028 and it is important to note that this is not all new traffic being introduced into the area. Guildford Police Station currently operates from within the AQMA where all existing traffic utilising the Police station will currently travel through the AQMA. It has been advised that the majority of current operations within Guildford Police Station would be relocated to Mount Browne with a counter service remaining within the town centre. This would mean that existing traffic within the AQMA would move to Mount Browne which is outside the AQMA and has been demonstrated in the air quality assessment will have a negligible impact on air quality within 300m radius of the site.
- 5.1. The applicant's transport consultant notes that *circa 6,100 pass through the junction during the AM peak hour and 5,700 during the PM peak hour. In terms of percentage impact, the proposed development flows would equate to 1.5% of these flows during the AM peak and 2% during the PM*

peak hour. These impacts would reduce by circa 1% if the existing traffic generated by Guildford Police Station were to be netted off.

- 5.2. Additionally, it is assumed that all traffic travelling along the A3100 would travel through the AQMA which the Applicant reasons is not realistic as police traffic could disperse in any direction through the town and beyond.
- 5.3. The proposal would introduce a number of sustainable transportation measures, which are set out in the proposed travel plan. Of note, the scheme includes provision of 151 EV parking spaces (50% of new parking spaces) along with two rapid chargers, improved pedestrian and cycle facilities and a shuttle bus. The EV charging facilities will in the long-term allow the Police and their staff the opportunities to utilise electric vehicles which combined with the other sustainable transportation measures, would further reduce emissions and associated air quality impacts.
- 5.4. The Council's EHO has considered this response and no longer raises an objection. They also note in their response that the Surrey Police have signed up to the Active Travel Scheme operated by Velocity Transport Planning on behalf of National Highways, Surrey County Council and Guildford Borough Council. It was therefore concluded that the development would on balance, not result in an unacceptable adverse impact on air quality. The proposed development would therefore comply with Policy P9 of the LPDMP.

6.0. Legal agreement

- 6.1. The County Highway Authority in their response requested that a contribution of £6,150 be requested for the auditing of the travel plan. This is agreed and is proportionate to the development. This is proposed to be secured via an obligation within the S106 agreement.

7.0. Conditions

- 7.1. For clarity, condition 7 of application 24/P/00564 is proposed to be amended as follows.

No development shall commence until, a Biodiversity Net Gain Statement and Habitat management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The ~~HMMP~~ Biodiversity Net Gain Statement and Monitoring Plan shall be based on the proposed impact avoidance, mitigation and enhancement measures specified in the Ecological Impact Assessment and should include, but not be limited to the following:

- ~~(k)~~(l) Description and evaluation of features to be managed.
- ~~(l)~~(m) Ecological trends and constraints on site that might influence management.
- ~~(m)~~(n) Aims and objectives of management.
- ~~(n)~~(o) Appropriate management options for achieving aims and objectives.
- ~~(o)~~(p) Prescriptions for management actions, together with a plan of management compartments.
- ~~(p)~~(q) Preparation of a work schedule (including an annual work plan capable of being rolled forward over a 30-year period.
- ~~(q)~~(r) Details of the body or organisation responsible for implementation of the plan.
- ~~(r)~~(s) Ongoing monitoring and remedial measures.
- ~~(s)~~(t) Legal and funding mechanisms by which the long-term implementation of the plan will be secured by the applicant with the management body(ies) responsible for its delivery.
- (u) Monitoring strategy, including details of how contingencies and/or remedial action will be identified, agreed and implemented so that the development still delivers the fully functioning biodiversity objectives of the originally approved scheme.
- ~~(t)~~(v) Timetable for the implementation of the works.

The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Biodiversity Net Gain Statement and Monitoring Plan. The measures to

secure biodiversity net gain shall be implemented in accordance with the approved timetable of works.

Reason: to ensure the delivery and management of the specified biodiversity net gain in accordance with national and local requirements.

7.2. The amendments to this condition do not change the reason, only serve to clarify the purpose further.

7.3. An additional condition is proposed, which would become condition 32 of application 24/P/00564. The proposed condition would require the access road to be completed prior to the first use of any new buildings within the main site. This is required to ensure the highway safety impact is appropriately mitigated. The proposed condition would read as follows:

7.4. Condition 32.

No part of any new buildings hereby approved shall be brought into use unless and until the access road approved under application 24/P/00563 has been completed in accordance with the approved details and is open for use for all users.

Reason: in the absence of a safe access to the main site, the development hereby approved would result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety. The condition ensures that the access road comes forward first to mitigate the highway impact from the increase in trip generation.

8.0. *Amendments to the reports*

8.1. It is prudent to note that the case officer for both application 24/P/00563 and 24/P/00564 is Morgan Laird. It is evident that this was not recorded within the Officer's Report.