

Project: Gas Holder Site, Reading

SMA Ref: 5757

Subject: Response to Highways Consultation Comments

Revision: A

Prepared by: Alice Connolly /Sarah Allen

Date: 23/09/19

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Stuart Michael Associates (SMA) have been commissioned by the Danescroft (Kenavon Drive Project Mgt) LLP (the applicant) to provide a response to Highways Officer's consultation response to the information submitted in support of an application for the Gas Holder Site, Reading ('the site'). The application covers the provision of 130 flats and 127 parking spaces.
- 1.2. The Technical Note responds to the points raised by the Highways Officer's comments set out in the response dated 29th August 2019 and includes the outcomes of the discussions held with Reading Borough Council (RBC) on the 16th September 2019. Each of the concerns raised are dealt with under a separate header as set out below:

2.0 CONNECTION TO ALEXANDER TURNER CLOSE

- 2.1. The consultation response set out the requirement for a drawing showing the works to be completed under S278 to show the proposed connection to Alexander Turner Close. This is attached as **Drawing 5757.001**. This drawing shows the proposed connection, alongside the area of landscaping previously discussed with RBC and the connection to the footway on the southern side of the existing carriageway.

3.0 CONNECTION TO FOOTBRIDGE

- 3.1. RBC has requested that a footbridge improvement scheme be provided to show that the design can be accommodated within the proposed scheme and that the key desire lines have been met (ie from the site and Alexander Turner Close).
- 3.2. The original scheme provided as part of the Bellway site (Drawing 4379.003 Rev B) provided a ramp connecting to Alexander Turner Close. A contribution of £47,000 was provided for the construction of this link.
- 3.3. **Drawing 5757.SK12** provides an updated drawing that shows the ramp connecting to the proposed scheme, providing both a connection to Alexander Turner Close and an alternative stepped route towards the proposed development. This drawing also indicates possible amendments to the existing ramp to accommodate the retaining structure if needed, however the need for this would need to be determined at the detailed design stage. Initial cost estimates for the construction of this design are £40-50,000 and are consistent with the contribution previously provided. Following a meeting on the 16th September 2019 the developer has agreed to provide these works.

4.0 SERVICING

- 4.1. As requested by RBC, the tracking drawing has been updated to consider the proposed S278 works to Alexander Turner Road. This indicates that the expected vehicles can safely enter and leave the site. This is shown in **Drawing 5757.SK10D**.
- 4.2. In reference to the turning head within the site, it is proposed that the carriageway inclusive of the turning head be a shared surface. It should also be noted that the refuse will only use the turning head once a week and the number of pedestrians on the shared surface limited to residents of the site (as there is no through route currently available). The likely conflict and therefore risk to pedestrian safety is limited. The manoeuvre of the refuse vehicle is therefore not considered a safety issue.
- 4.3. The site layout plan has been update to remove the cosmetic surfacing which indicated possible routes for pedestrian. The plan now shows the turning head clearly as shared surface and this will be at grade as well as minor amendments to the pedestrian route. It was agreed that this change would overcome the highways concerns to this point. This is shown in **Drawing 5757.SK10D**.

5.0 JUNCTION ASSESSMENT

- 5.1. The Transport Assessment fully acknowledged the existing network conditions around the site and that the observed queuing relates to capacity issues further along the network, rather than specifically at the junctions within the study area.
- 5.2. The operational capacity of the junctions is measured using the Junctions 9 and LINSIG programmes. SMA have spoken to JCT (company that make the programme Junctions 9) on the point of using the queue length data to alter the operational capacity of the a junction model and JCT advised that where there is queuing (not caused by junction capacity but network queues) the model of the individual junction should not be validated by queue length surveys. This is because the queuing is caused further along the network and so forcing the individual model to reflect network queuing does not reflect the capacity of the individual junction.
- 5.3. Therefore, any mitigation to the individual junction would make no difference to improving operation given the queueing is caused further along the network. On this basis, SMA chose not to alter the model, but instead acknowledge the wider congestion issues and provide a comparative assessment of the development impact on the junctions within the study network in order to provide an indication of the proportional impact of the scheme.
- 5.4. Having reviewed the approach taken by other application sites in the area, this is consistent to the overall approach. For example the Toys R Us/Homebase (PA:170509) TA adjusted the junction models to reflect the with queue lengths taken from traffic surveys. This indicated that the roundabouts were well over capacity, with RFCs as high as 1.2, if the network queuing was forced into the model.
- 5.5. However the assessment of the development impact was then undertaken using a different model, where the standalone capacity of the junctions (not accounting for the network queuing). This assessment, consistent to the SMA models, found that as standalone junctions, all operate within capacity.
- 5.6. SMA are therefore content that the approach taken is acceptable given the nature of the congestion issues on the network and the advice given to us by the manufacturer of the modelling programme.

- 5.7. RBC have set out the requirement for an overall package of sustainable travel measures to support the development and promote non car modes in order to mitigate the development impact. It has been agreed that this would include the provision of suitable cycle parking, pedestrian facilities within the site and connections to the wider network including the adjacent footbridge, car club provision, a site Travel Plan and a contribution towards the local bus services. This has been agreed by the applicant.

6.0 PARKING

- 6.1. The proposed development will provide 127 unallocated parking spaces within the site. One of these spaces will be a dedicated car club space. This provides an overall car parking ratio of 0.97. SMA are pleased to see that this level of parking is acceptable to RBC.
- 6.2. SMA are happy to agree that a car ownership ratio of 0.62 (as put forward by RBC) is representative of the car ownership levels of flats within the immediate local area. This is evidence based on local data and best represents the likely parking demand for the site.
- 6.3. On this basis, a total of 81 spaces would be required to meet the actual parking demand for the development. This would leave a further 46 spaces being provided on site to accommodate any further parking demand likely such as visitor parking, equivalent to 13 spaces as set out in the RBC response. All of the proposed spaces (bar the car club space) are intended to be unallocated and so would be available for use by residents and visitors alike. The 127 spaces proposed are therefore considered more than adequate. This level of provision has been agreed as acceptable by RBC in combination with other sustainable travel measures proposed.
- 6.4. The officer's comments request the provision of 2 car club spaces rather than the 1 currently proposed. SMA contacted a number of potential operators prior to submission of the application to ensure that a car club could be operated from this site. Whilst the car club operator acknowledged that RBC would want to see 2 cars operating, it was felt that this would not be required in this location and the operator thought only 1 car space would be viable.
- 6.5. Discussions with the Kingsmead Residents Association also highlighted that a car club was provided as part of the Bellway scheme but that it was not used and was removed. This supports the operator's view that there is not the demand for 2 car club spaces in this location.
- 6.6. It was agreed at the meeting on 16th September 2019 that a Planning Condition could be provided specifying the provision of 1 car club space but with the provision of a second should there be sufficient demand.

7.0 TRAVEL PLAN

- 7.1. The points made on the Travel Plan are noted and can be updated and resubmitted. In reference to Section 4.20, the approach applied by SMA is to consider a mode shift in the vehicle only based trips rather than total person trips (as those by non-car modes are already sustainable). On this basis, the expected number of single occupancy car trips ie 21 in the AM and 25 in the PM would be reduced by 10%. This would equate to 2 car trips in the AM and 3 in the PM. Whilst this mode shift seems very low, this is a reflection of the very sustainable location and current travel patterns for the area.
- 7.2. Section 6.4 of the Travel Plan has been amended to reflect comments and the report will be resubmitted once the above approach has been discussed and agreed.

DRAWINGS



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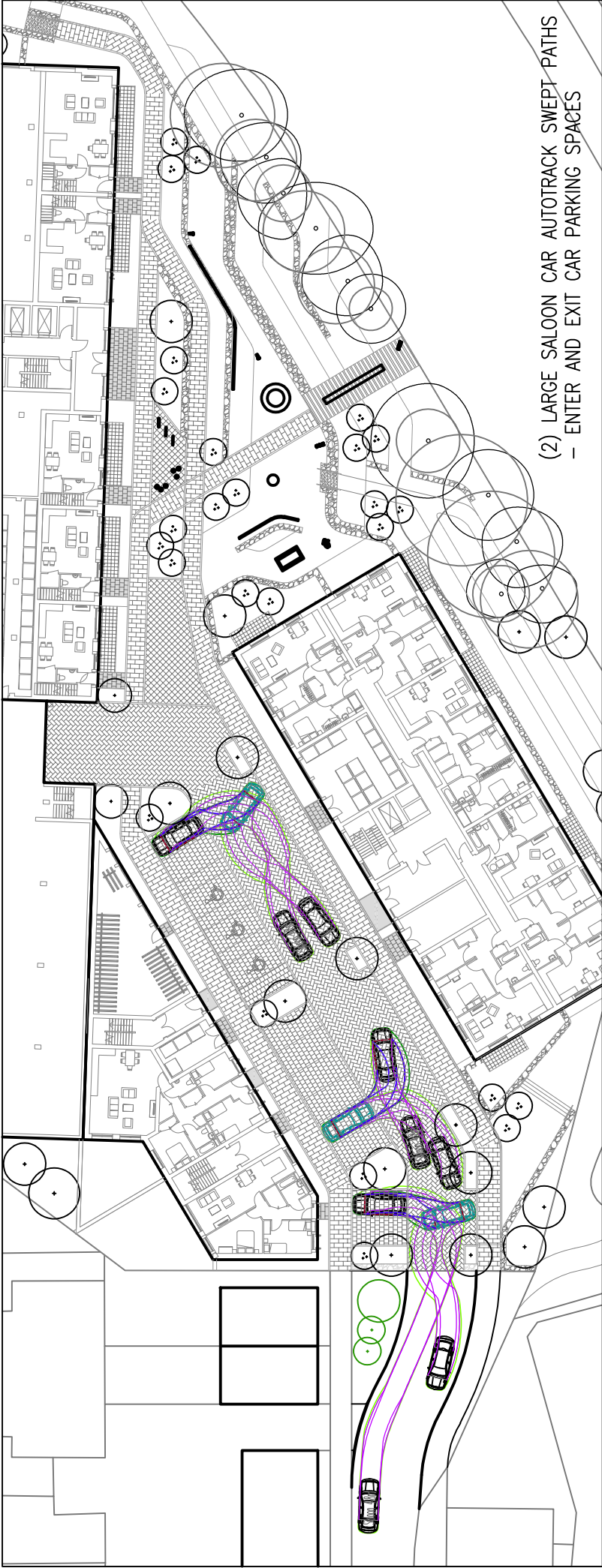
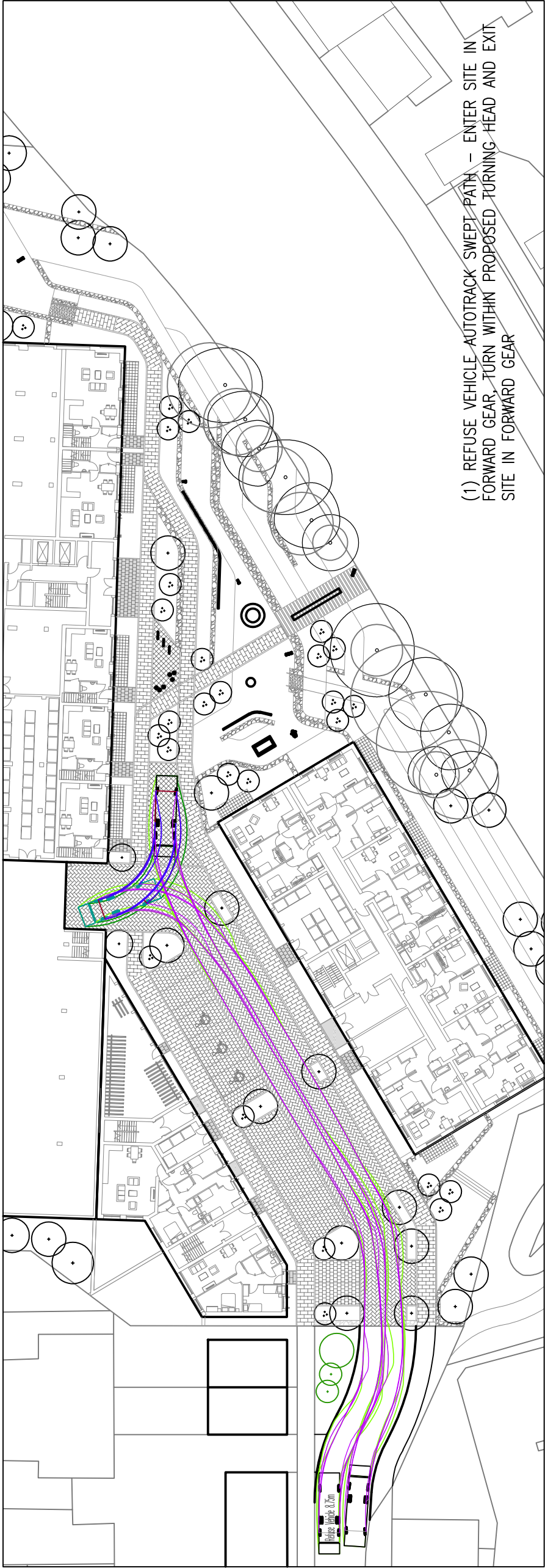
JOB TITLE

GAS WORKS HOLDER, ALEXANDER TURNER CLOSE
READING

DRAWING TITLE

SECTION 278 WORKS PLAN

Rev	Description	Drn	Chk	Date
REVISIONS				
Preliminary	Approval	Tender	Const.	
DRAWING STATUS				
DATE				
SEPT '19		JGP	SGA	
ISSUE CHECKBOX				
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D	LAYOUT AND TRACKING UPDATED	JGP	DLW	23.09.19
C	SECTION 278 WORKS ADDED AND TRACKING UPDATED	JGP	SGA	10.09.19
B	TRACKING AMENDED	JGP	SGA	04.09.19
A	LAYOUT AND TRACKING UPDATED	JGP	ALC	03.04.19
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