

	Havant Thicket Reservoir - Northern Access: Stakeholder Group Workshop Feedback Report (19 Jan 2022)	
	Comment	Response
Rowlands Castle Parish Council	A significant proportion of vehicles leaving the northern access route after their visit will need to turn right onto an already busy B2149. To prevent blocking back down the access road it is very strongly recommended that the exit carriageway be split into 2 lanes to allow <u>at least</u> 6 cars to sit in a right turn lane so that left turning vehicles are not inconvenienced.	It was assessed and agreed with the local highway authority at the planning stage, that the more dominant route choice for visitors would be to travel to the A3(M) north, or use the southern access for journeys to and from the areas highlighted. The assessment was based on a traffic model that considered where the potential visitors will be coming from (using population density) and the journey times to / from the populous areas. The assessment found that the numbers turning right out of the site are relatively low (less than 10 vehicles during the busiest hour (or 14% of all visitors to the site). The junction layout has been modelled using accepted industry software to test whether right-turning vehicles block vehicles from turning left. The junction bellmouth will be flared so that the small volume of traffic making to turn right can do so without causing a delay. It is considered that the queueing space into the reservoir is appropriate for the level of traffic expected. It is also important to highlight that a balance needs to be struck between vehicles queueing within the site and the amount of tree-loss required to facilitate a two-lane exit road.
Rowlands Castle Parish Council	The traffic volume will only increase with major development between Havant and Emsworth delivering over 2000 properties at completion, coupled with the LEOH development (850 dwellings) where a considerable proportion of vehicles will run south towards the coastal plain for work and leisure.	The assessment included future traffic flow forecasts, and was based on traffic surveys captured in 2020 (prior to lockdown) and so the function of the route and also use by HGVs is being considered in the design of the layout.
Rowlands Castle Parish Council	Splay visibility for the access road must also be good, particularly to the right so that traffic approaching fast from the south can be seen in good time. Speeds on the B2149 often exceed 40mph and with some dips in the road through the wood cars may not be seen until quite late by the drivers waiting to exit the road. There should be a warning sign for northbound traffic to make them aware of the junction. Low level lighting may be required unless the access road is to be closed at dusk and not opened until 0800, which is the preferred option from the Parish Council's perspective.	Speed survey results were undertaken which have been incorporated into the design of the junction. Works on the B2149 at the northern access junction will be undertaken to ensure that visibility is acceptable, they will only commence once the design of the junction has been approved under the section 278 agreement with Hampshire County Council. Lighting is not proposed to ensure impacts on bats are minimised and the character of the road is retained. The reservoir site will only be open during daylight hours.
Cycling UK	The scheme includes a possible cycle link between the Thicket & the 2 nd stage of East of Horndean development. Is there an assurance from the E of H developer or East Hants District council that ransom strips won't be placed on this route? It's understood there's a ransom strip preventing cycling between the north of the estate and BW24 that could enable cycling access from E of H estate into Cowplain & Havant Town Centre. As a local example of what not to do Waterloooville MDA has several ransom strips that significantly reduce the potential of the Waterloooville cycle network.	One of our commitments in the Reservoir planning application (captured in Planning Condition 13) was to investigate a direct north-south link for non-motorised users and one of the Planning Conditions attached to the Land East of Horndean (LEOH) outline planning permission is similarly to provide north-south footpath connectivity and this is also a benefit set out and illustrated in the Call for Sites evidence submitted to East Hampshire DC in relation to the Extension to LEOH. We are seeking to restrict the number of north-south links to one for ecological, arboricultural, site management and safety reasons. Havant Thicket is designated Ancient Woodland and a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation, this will also be an operational site with a vehicular access along this boundary. We have identified an optimum location (as shown on slide 15) which will result in no tree loss, minimises ecological impacts and links directly to the Havant Thicket permissive paths and cycle network and the Public Right of Way network, we are engaging with the landowner and HCC Public Rights of Way team on this location.
Cycling UK	What would be the effect on house prices in E of H if there was a good north/south cycle route and a direct access from the housing estate into the high standard eco-friendly area such as the Thicket?	Effect on house prices isn't a planning matter but improved north south links through Havant Thicket will improve cycling and walking opportunities and the local recreational amenity of all existing and future residents in the area.

Cycling UK	Traffic on the B2149 has increased by a several times over since around 2000 when there was an appreciable amount of both cycle commuting & leisure cycling to destinations both in the north & south. Almost all cycle commuting on the B2149 had stopped by 2015 with small amounts of leisure/ health & well-being cycling limited to quiet times in the week. There's a strong case for a speed limit of no more than 40mph along the whole of the B2149 even though I understand, few accidents are recorded. It would then be more in line with other roads with similar traffic loading & might feel safer to use. A shared pavement along the B2149 from Horndean to the north access would help cycling.	There is limited space along the B2149 to incorporate a pavement and the land adjoining the highway is not in the control of Portsmouth Water so this wasn't raised as an option when we worked with HCC on access options, it is the intention that the proposed north-south link between Havant Thicket and the land to the north will provide a safer and more attractive alternative to cycling on the B2149. In addition, the reservoir planning permission includes new and upgraded cycle and pedestrian crossings further south to provide improved east-west connections across the B2149 to Havant Thicket.
Cycling UK	When sensitive habitats/species are close to cycling or walking routes low noise surfaces will be required (i.e., probably Asphalt)? Cellweb type material with a smaller cell size was used by Chichester Harbour Conservatory in constructing a short wet section of Salterns Way cycle route. From a user perspective it works well in the wet location but I wouldn't like to cycle a long distance on it.	The non-vehicular multi user route provided on site will be a self-binding gravel built to HCC Path Surfacing standards. We will consider low noise surfacing. The cellweb is proposed for parts of the northern access track which will be for motorised vehicles only.
Cycling UK	Prior to Park Lane Bridleway (BW123) being rebuilt in 2008/09 there were frequent problems including threats to residents and burning motor cycles on the routes. Between 2009 & 2017 when BW123 was in a good state & had a lot of users I understand there was only one motor cycle burnt on BW 123. Local facilities built to a good standard, well maintained & used don't seem to attract anti-social behaviour.	It is anticipated that the proposed development will help to address anti social behaviour in Havant Thicket through natural surveillance from increased numbers of recreational users, site management and by providing good quality recreational facilities. The multi user routes will be built to HCC Path Surfacing Standards. Maintenance regimes and responsibilities will be covered by the Site Management Plan.
Horndean Protection Group	As designed the northern access road will be a single track with passing points. The car park controls are still to be established but the intention is to install a physical barrier to prevent rat running. Cars will be parked on both sides of this thereby sharing the parking capacity with visitors using the southern access. My concern is the consequence of visitors filling the northern half with the result that there will be an incoming tailback on the single track which will prevent drivers wishing to leave. The plan is to use signage to indicate when the car park is full. This will obviously only be effective if the sign is at the junction with the B2149 and that it can be seen by traffic heading in both directions. I wonder if this can be achieved without the need for a long electrical supply cable ?	The northern access route is being designed as a single carriageway with passing bays to limit tree loss and impacts on woodland habitat and protect root systems where possible. The passing bays will help to limit tailbacks and it is considered that the design is appropriate for the level of traffic expected. Car park management will be addressed as part of the tripartite Site Management Plan (between Portsmouth Water, Hampshire County Council and Forestry England) which must be approved prior to construction of the visitor facilities. It is anticipated that there would be a system put in place that would limit and control the number of vehicles accessing the site to the capacity of the car park thereby minimising any queuing or traffic congestion at the access and along the access routes when the car park is full. Part of the parking system could include variable message signage (battery or solar powered) during periods of peak demand on the visitor centre (e.g. summer weekends) to warn people who haven't looked online.
Horndean Protection Group	Although the County Council are happy with the present design it is indisputable that hazards will be reduced if no right turn from the new road is allowed onto the B2149. Also a few signs and road markings will cost much less than widening the exit stretch of the new road and the inconvenience to drivers will be minimised by using one of the nearby roundabouts to the left or even the exit onto the A3M in order to travel south. Not to accept this suggestion means any queuing vehicles in the middle lane waiting to turn right into the new road will obscure the vision of southbound drivers leaving. Also the more south turning vehicles leaving the more difficult it will be for entering vehicles to make the right turn and their numbers increase with hazards accumulating. This is a real danger which is so easily avoidable.	The transport assessment found that the numbers turning right out of the site are relatively low (less than 10 vehicles during the busiest hour in a peak period (or 14% of all visitors to the site). The junction layout has been modelled using accepted industry software to test whether right-turning vehicles block vehicles from turning left. It is considered that the queueing space into the reservoir is appropriate for the level of traffic expected. It is also important to highlight that a balance needs to be struck between vehicles queueing within the site and the amount of tree-loss required to facilitate a two-lane exit road.

Horndean Protection Group	There appears to be an existing footpath along the side of the woods which follows the route of the new northern road. In addition there appears to be another path which turns south into the woods shortly after the northern entrance. On the east side of the B2149 there appears to be a path from the road side which connects with Monarch's Way which is a route from the LEOH development to Rowlands Castle to the east of the B2149. Finally the verge on both sides of the B2149 is just about wide enough for a path to be made towards the north and thence into the southernmost extent of the LEOH development. (It would of course be more advantageous to have the path on the other side of the hedge with the permission of the landowner). The footpath and cycling options need to be investigated further so as not to eliminate any at this point in time. It should be remembered that both Portsmouth Water and East Hants District Council are committed to finding and funding a sustainable route to the north preferably to link in with the LEOH development which will bring another 2,000 residents much closer to the reservoir.	There are proposals to improve connectivity across the B2149 to Monarch's Way as part of the Land East of Horndean (LEOH) approved scheme to the north. The outline permission for the Reservoir scheme also includes a new pedestrian and cycling crossing across the B2149 at Castle road to link Havant Thicket into the public rights network (Monarch's Way, Staunton Way and footpaths in Rowlands Castle). Portsmouth Water is also funding improved crossings along the B2149 at Mallard Road and Whicher's Gate. It was considered during the consultation on the reservoir application and in liaison with HCC Countryside and Highways teams that these provide the most direct links to the wider network to the north east and are the safest places to encourage walkers and cyclists to cross the B2149. Another commitment in the Reservoir planning application (captured in Planning Condition 13) was to investigate the possibility of a direct link from Havant Thicket northwards into the adjoining land, one of the Planning Conditions attached to the LEOH outline planning permission is similarly to provide north-south footpath connectivity and this is also a benefit set out and illustrated in the Call for Sites evidence submitted to East Hampshire DC in relation to the Extension to LEOH. We are seeking to restrict the number of north-south links to one for ecological, arboricultural, site management and safety reasons. We are engaging with the landowner on the location illustrated in the presentation slides (15). It is not feasible to widen the proposed northern access route to include a path and cycleway due to the impact on trees, a two-way cycle and pedestrian route including buffer from highway would be another 3.5m, it would also need to be paved and lit which would have an impact on bats. We are currently preparing an Access and Recreation Strategy in consultation with Forestry England to look at how the existing tracks in Havant Thicket will be used and managed going forward, this will be shared with the Stakeholder Forum.
Horndean Protection Group	Although the County Council has accepted the layout I think it would be worthwhile PW asking the council to consider the suggestion for making the junction safer by directing any departing southbound traffic to turn left onto the B2149 and then use the nearby roundabout to head south. Also could we find out if the junction modelling used by the Council is for turnings on to a single track road? The answers already provided to issues with this junction have not addressed worries about safety.	The junction layout has been modelled using accepted industry software for this type of junction to test whether right-turning vehicles block vehicles from turning left. The model considers the junction in isolation, and is based on the geometry of the road up to 20m back from the give-way line (as a standard input into the modelling software). The proposed junction is reflective of this layout (two-way) for up to 40m from the give-way line, and so the modelling is representative of the proposals. If the model indicated that queues would extend beyond the current two-way section, then the layout would have been revised accordingly. The design of the junction has also been through a risk assessment process and subject to intense scrutiny from Hampshire County Highways team and the right turn out was not highlighted as a risk. Banning a right hand turn was discussed with Hampshire Highways at pre-approval stage and discounted due to the low numbers turning right, and the risk that it would make the northern access less attractive and encourage people to use the southern access more (undermining the access strategy). The existing roundabout is approx. 1.2km to the north so a c2.5km roundtrip is likely to mean drivers may attempt to turn around in side roads or still try and make a right turn out which would be dangerous without the correct junction layout. If a deflection island was provided to fully inhibit the right turn manoeuvre it would compromise the left turning swept path for larger vehicles and would potentially have implications on other safety considerations such as visibility for traffic joining the B2149 (whereby they would be looking over their shoulder more in a type of 'merge' arrangement, due to the angle they will have been forced to take), but also the forward visibility of traffic waiting to exit could be compromised for vehicles on the B2149 travelling northbound (i.e. vehicles waiting to turn left may be in more of a blind-spot of vehicles already in the B2149, this would compromise the operation of the junction.

Nik Knight - Chairman and County Bat Recorder, Hampshire Bat Group	The flora in the 'Blendworth Fragment' was described as dense birch and I pointed out, from my own experience of bat radio tracking, that such habitat can be of great importance for bat foraging and for Bechstein's bat roosts in cavities in surprisingly small trees. That area includes some significant yew and oak trees, which we were told would be avoided by the route. In addition, I confirmed that the rare woodland bats make use of overhanging trees to cross open spaces, such as the access route track. Removal of such features should be minimised, such as that involving a beech tree at SU 7086 1057. The Horndean development will be adjacent to the access route which could lead to anti social behaviour and increased recreational pressure/ecological impacts.	The northern access and access route is being designed to minimise the loss of trees as far as possible. This area of the Blendworth Fragment has been subjected to a tree survey in accordance with 'BS5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations' and the locations of the trees are being verified through further survey undertaken by a land survey team using highly accurate equipment to ensure accuracy underneath tree crowns. The route through this area has been selected to limit the impacts on high quality trees. There are notable yew specimens in this location, which the design team are aware of and are avoiding subject to confirmation on locations. There are a few Oaks in the location of the redline site extents, again their locations are being verified to confirm retention. Updated ground level tree assessments have been carried out recently. No potential bat roost features will be directly affected by the widening of the existing track, although some trees with low and moderate potential to support roosting bats will be felled within the Blendworth Fragment at the northern end of the access road and along the B2149 road verge. Felling of these trees will be undertaken in accordance with requirements of the European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) Licence for the scheme. While some branches overhanging the route will need to be removed, the implications for bats are being considered carefully in the final plans. Avoidance of indirect impacts through mitigation measures will be set out in the Construction Environmental Management Plan and site clearance will be undertaken in accordance with a methodology agreed with Natural England in an EPSM licence and an Ecological Clerk of Works will be on site during construction. The biodiversity mitigation and compensation strategy includes enhancement of habitats adjacent to the route within Havant Thicket woodland for dormice, bats and reptiles. The plan on slide 15 shows an illustrative scheme to the land to the north, this site is not allocated for development but is being considered in the emerging Local Plan process (referred to as Extension to Land East of Horndean). We are considering animal-friendly hedgerow bolstering along this boundary of the site for safety and security reasons but also to help protect the ecology of this area from increased recreational pressure. We are also seeking to restrict the number of north-south links to one for ecological, arboricultural, site management and safety reasons. Havant Thicket is designated Ancient Woodland and a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation, this will also be an operational site with a vehicular access along this boundary. We have identified an optimum location (as shown on slide 15) which will result in no tree loss, minimises ecological impacts and links directly to the Havant Thicket permissive paths and cycle network and the Public Right of Way network, we are engaging with the landowner to the north and HCC public rights of way team on this location.
Forestry England	Confirmation during the presentations that the Northern Access Route would not be available/suitable for shared access has raised some key issues with regard to the impact on the connectivity of current, established recreational routes within Havant Thicket itself notably the impact/loss of connectivity to the main 3.8km circular route around the perimeter of FE's woodland at Havant Thicket. There are options to keep a reasonable degree of connectivity with improvements to existing ride surfaces and this may well be something that you would like to factor into the design considerations for the Northern Access Route as you head toward the planning application.	In addition to providing good quality cycle, pedestrian and equestrian paths within the reservoir site and Havant Thicket and contributing to improved connections into the site, Portsmouth Water is developing an Access and Recreation Strategy with Forestry England which will help to inform opportunities for further connections and subsequent site management measures. This work will also link to the Detailed Biodiversity and Mitigation Strategy.
	How will we prevent people driving over the verges on the northern access route, can dragon's teeth (bollards or boundary markers), planting or brash be used?	It is proposed to reinforce the route with timber bollards at regular intervals. It's not considered that a planted boundary will be suited to this location. It will possibly add maintenance issues and restrict visibility. The bollard approach will have a more open feel as you drive along the tree lined lane and will prevent drivers using the verge. We are looking to bolster the western tree lined edge with natural vegetation. Using brash as a solution for a natural edge may not be robust enough, and drivers will inevitably start using the verges instead of the passing bays. We will consider the issues discussed further as we develop the landscaping proposals.
	Comments in workshop	
	If the northern route won't be a multi-user access point, then Portsmouth Water will need to work with the Land East of Horndean for a cycling access point?	The decision to restrict the northern access route to vehicular traffic was made to minimise the footprint of the route and the number of trees that would need to be removed. We are working with the land owner to the north to agree a location for the north-south pedestrian/cycle link and we are developing an Access and Recreation Strategy in consultation with Forestry England to look at use and management of forestry tracks going forward and ensure a good quality cycle and pedestrian network across Havant Thicket and the reservoir site and beyond.

	Would the development encourage visitors to use more green forms of transport?	Portsmouth Water is making significant financial contributions to HCC to provide pedestrian and cycle access across the B2149 in Rowlands Castle and upgrade existing Public Rights of Way which connect to the site from the east and south. The scheme will also include an upgraded Bridleway 120, a foot and cycle path along the reservoir crest and upgraded footpaths within Havant Thicket to ensure a good quality circular route and other smaller routes for non motorised users and good quality connections to the wider network. Portsmouth Water is also committed to providing signage within and around the site and will develop further access improvements with HCC and Forestry England as part of the Access and Recreation Strategy and Site Management Plan.
	Is there a Plan B if there is way more traffic than anticipated?	Traffic and car park management will be addressed within the Site Management Plan and it will be continuously monitored, however It is anticipated that there would be a system put in place that would limit and control the number of vehicles accessing the site to the capacity of the car park.
	Will oncoming vehicles be visible from the junction?	Works will be undertaken on the B2149 to reprofile the road close to the proposed junction to ensure visibilty is acceptable, the designs will have to be approved by HCC before work starts.
	Will passing bays be large enough for construction traffic?	Yes the passing bays are being designed to accommodate construction traffic.
	How to ensure people behave and don't park in passing bays?	People will be working on the site and will help to manage traffic and the car park, hopefully over time people's behaviour will be respectful of the need to keep traffic moving and not parking in the passing bays. A parking system will help to limit the number of people accessing the site. Speed limit signs will be installed.
	What's to stop pedestrians and cyclists accessing the route from the B2149 at the northern access?	There won't be anything physically stopping them but the access route won't be cycle or pedestrian-friendly and signage will encourage cyclists and pedestrians to use the proposed safer, more attractive route from the north through Havant Thicket and the improved pedestrian and cyclist access points across the B2149 at Castle Road (to link to the long distance footpath network) and Mallards Drive, this will allow safer east-west and north-south connections. We are aware that the LEOH permission includes improved access to Monarch Way from the B2149 which will further support wider accessibility.