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Enquiries To Sophie Osborne

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Date 28 May 2024

My reference 053315

Your reference APP/22/01231

Email havantdc@hants.gov.uk

Dear Ms Miszewska,

Land at, Palk Road, Havant

Redevelopment of a brownfield site to include the provision of 4No. Apartment blocks comprising of 83No. residential dwellings (including 25 affordable units) (Use class C3 residential), parking, public open space, landscaping and other associated works, including demolition of existing buildings on site, with access from Palk Road

Thank you for your re-consultation on the above planning application. In response to previous comments raised by the Highway Authority (dated 10 May 2023 and 29 November 2023) the applicant has submitted a Highways Response Note (hereafter, HRN) which the Highway Authority have reviewed and have the following comments to make.

It is noted that the quantum of development has since reduced from c. 90 to c. 83 dwellings. This is however not a significant quantum change to alter the previous views of the Highway Authority.

Policy Status

The applicant should be made aware that Hampshire County Council's Local Transport Plan 4 was adopted in February 2024 which provides a set of guiding principles that will be relevant when providing a recommendation to this application.

Planning History

A further in-depth review on the planning history for this site has been undertaken to ensure the understanding from all parties is clear in regard to the current valid planning permission(s) for the site. The valid planning permissions have been considered to be APP/15/00447 and APP/19/00078.

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The Highway Authority are not suggesting that the existing use of the site does not need to be considered in the planning balance, however, do not agree that great weight should be assigned to this position when considering this planning application in highway terms. It is important to note that the valid planning permissions do not cover the whole site that this development covers. There have previously been concerns about the access arrangements via Palk Road for these uses hence the temporary, end user specific and limited nature of the planning consents. Notwithstanding that the proposed development creates a wholly different trip generation and modal split to the consented uses.

Considering the above, the proposed use still intensifies the use of Palk Road and changes the type of vehicles, distribution across the day and types of users. It is therefore considered that the permitted use becomes an insignificant point with regards to the changes that are being sought to the road and its requirements regarding access rights that are required to ensure safe and suitable access can be achieved.

Palk Road

Following previous comments raised by the Highway Authority dated 29 November 2023, a meeting was held on 26 February 2024 to establish the requirements to bring Palk Road up to adoptable standards. The Highway Authority require the applicant to engage in a S278 design check process alongside the statutory planning process so that it can be confirmed that Palk Road can be brought up to adoptable standards. To date, no application has been made. In the absence of this being confirmed, the Highway Authority remain concerned that safe and suitable access into the site cannot be achieved and are unable to move this application forward. Any progress of this application is reliant on the applicant engaging with the Highway Authority on the S278 technical review and confirmation from the Highway Authority that the road can be brought up to an adoptable standard.

A 2.0m footway is proposed on the northern side of Palk Road to connect into the development. The width accords with HCC TG10 and provides continuous footway provision into the development and along Palk Road itself. This is considered acceptable to aid pedestrian permeability into the site for all users. To provide unobstructed footway provision into the site the bin store for the property Wengen is to be relocated and has been accommodated within the site plan as shown within drawing 21085-201 Rev A. It is understood that agreement has been had with the landowner to relocate this bin store.

The Highway Authority requested that parking restrictions were to be provided on both sides of Palk Road to be enforced through a TRO. Despite the above, the applicant is only proposing parking restrictions on one-side of the carriageway (drawing 043.0035-001 Rev P03) which is not agreed. Reasoning as to why a TRO on both sides of the carriageway is considered necessary is raised within the previous response dated 29 November 2023. It is therefore requested that the drawing is updated.

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To address comments on the operational width of Palk Road, the applicant proposes to widen the carriageway to 5.5m where required to accommodate two-way movement as shown indicatively within drawing 043.0035-0014 Rev P03. Whilst this would alleviate concerns along with the provision of parking restrictions along both sides of the carriageway, this is wholly reliant on Palk Road being able to be brought up to adoptable standards to ensure the applicant has the rights to make these required amendments to ensure a two-way flow and safe and suitable access can be achieved.

Paragraph 2.16 of the HRN states that the gates which previously opened out onto Palk Road have been replaced and now open inwards. The Highway Authority understand that the gates cannot be set back 6.0m due to this falling on land outside of the applicant's control. The applicant further suggests that due to the nature of the site the gates are likely to remain open when operational. This is noted.

As part of the ongoing discussions with the required alterations to Palk Road, the applicant suggests that this access with the gates is to comprise of a vehicle crossover arrangement which maintains priority for pedestrians along the footway. It is agreed that tactile paving is therefore not required. Vehicular visibility and pedestrian visibility splays have been shown within drawing 043.0035-0008 Rev P02. The Highway Authority are content that appropriate visibility can be achieved for both vehicles and pedestrians. Notwithstanding, the Highway Authority requested that the planning position for this land parcel is confirmed regarding the permitted land use to ensure that a vehicle crossover arrangement is appropriate. This should be confirmed before the principle of the access arrangement is agreed.

The applicant is reminded that provision of footways, parking restrictions and removal of obstructions is not sufficient on its own merits to bring Palk Road up to adoptable standards, despite commentary within drawing 043.0035-0014 Rev P03 suggesting otherwise. Whilst this helps the process, as laid out previously, to bring Palk Road up to adoptable standards it would include the following (but not limited to) street lighting, core samples to confirm the build of the carriageway and footway and confirmation of the drainage provision/design.

The applicant is reminded that any amendments to bring Palk Road up to adoptable standards will be at the applicant's expense. The requirements are non-negotiable and are necessary to enable delivery of safe and suitable access into the site in perpetuity. In the absence of confirmation through the S278 technical approval process the Highway Authority are not currently satisfied that the required measures can be implemented.

Palk Road/West Street Junction

The commentary within the HRN is not agreed suggesting there is not a need to ease the alignment of the existing junction. The supporting swept path analysis (drawing 043.0035-0015 Rev P01 and drawing 043.0035-0007 Rev P02) further confirms the constraints and inability for the junction to operate safely with the delivery vehicle and

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fire tender unable to access the junction from the left should a car egressing Palk Road be positioned to turn right.

The Highway Authority have been discussing this matter with the applicant directly and a revised drawing altering the alignment has been informally discussed. The revisions ease the alignment and improves the tracking at the Palk Road junction.

The revised alignment also provides opportunities for the tactile crossing point to be located further within Palk Road and not on the radius as currently shown within drawing 043.0035-0008 Rev P02. The location of the tactile crossing point currently shown has reduced visibility and it is considered relocating the crossing point further into Palk Road should be undertaken, whilst being mindful of the desire lines to improve visibility. This drawing is yet to be submitted formally to the Planning Authority for comment. The revised arrangement is to be subject to an RSA1 along with the other alterations to Palk Road as discussed above and should be submitted to support this planning application.

Whilst easing the alignment of the junction helps to alleviate some of the previous concerns raised by the Highway Authority with the operation of the junction itself, the visibility (in the absence of an agreed drawing) and interaction with the level crossing as discussed below remains an operational safety concern.

Visibility:

The interpretation of the previous comments raised by the Highway Authority in relation to the visibility splay requirements within the HRN is incorrect. An additional 2.5mph should be added to the 85th percentile speeds recorded due to periods of wet weather within the survey period. This accounts for reduced driving speeds in wet weather. It is requested that visibility splays are revised and resubmitted for consideration.

Considering the presence of parked vehicles along West Street providing a permanent obstruction if splays are drawn to the required offset from the carriageway edge, drawing 043.0035.002 Rev C shows visibility splays drawn to the centre line of the carriageway. This will require a departure from standard with no guarantee that this will be agreed. Once a drawing has been circulated with visibility splays correctly drawn the Highway Authority will be able to obtain an indicative position as to whether a departure from standard will be acceptable or not. The alterations to the alignment of the junction may also improve the achievable visibility at this point.

Interaction with Bedhampton Level Crossing:

The Highway Authority are engaging in regular conversations with Network Rail on the safe operation of the level crossing considering the additional traffic generated by the development and the proximity of the access with the level crossing.

From these discussions, the Highway Authority understand that from June 2024, a service increase is expected leading to an additional 4 services within the peak hours further reducing the free flow traffic time within the peak hour. This provides an

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additional complexity to the existing concerns with the operation of the Palk Road/West Street junction and its interaction with the level crossing.

The Highway Authority have been made aware there are instances where the level crossing has been obstructed by vehicles inside the barriers when lowered, which may only be exacerbated following the service increase. The Highway Authority also consider that this could further impact the operation of the junction with future residents not able to egress Palk Road if there is sufficient queuing along the West Street approach. The applicant will need to revise their level crossing surveys undertaken based on this increase in service for the Highway Authority to assess how this impacts the existing queue survey data and time the barriers are in operation. In the absence of the impact on the increase in use of the level crossing within the peak periods being assessed appropriately, the Highway Authority are still unable to establish whether the junction is able to operate in a safe and suitable manner. It is already evident from the survey and modelling work provided that the queues do not always clear within the time the barrier is raised.

Mitigation considerations are ongoing and discussed below, however whether these are sufficient to allow safe operation is still to be determined. Without prejudice the below discussions have been being undertaken to determine the feasibility of mitigation opportunities.

As a minimum the repainted 'keep clear' box to be provided as part of the S278 works for the site has been shown within drawing 043.0035-0014 Rev P03. The Highway Authority have been engaging in discussions with the Traffic Management Team on the scope to provide a yellow box or a moving traffic enforcement in this location, in the absence of the keep clear being effective in keeping the junction clear. The trials on moving traffic enforcements are currently ongoing across the county, and it is currently unclear as to whether they are effective in keeping junctions clear. Notwithstanding, the Highway Authority would seek to secure a contribution towards the provision of a moving traffic enforcement should this be considered necessary in the future to ensure safe and suitable access can be maintained in perpetuity.

The Highway Authority have also discussed the provision of a yellow box over the level crossing with Network Rail directly and it is understood they would support this approach. Discussions should be held with Network Rail on the deliverability of this as this falls on their infrastructure and outside of the jurisdiction of the Highway Authority. This would be considered necessary to support the development, albeit does not fully resolve the concerns on the operational safety of Palk Road and the Palk Road/West Street junction as raised within this response.

The Highway Authority do not agree with the outputs of the revised junction modelling provided within the HRN. Whilst in theory the junction is shown to operate within ample spare capacity, this is not agreed in practice. The model build would not have considered any interaction with the Bedhampton level crossing when the barriers are in operation. The Highway Authority previously raised that this junction could not be

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modelled appropriately either using Junctions 9 or LingSig and that the impact of the level crossing needs to be considered holistically and the concerns assessed comprehensively.

Whilst progress has been made to alleviate some of the concerns, these cannot be considered in isolation. The combination of other factors such as the operation of the junction with the proximity of the level crossing is still a concern which is only likely to be exacerbated once the increase in service for the rail network comes into play.

Off-Site Improvements

S278 works:

Visibility splays for the proposed tactile crossing point to the west of the Palk Road junction are shown on drawing 043.0035.003 Rev B. Similarly to the vehicle visibility, the splays have not been drawn correctly with an incorrect interpretation of the requirements with speeds recorded within periods of wet weather. The visibility splays for the proposed pedestrian crossing point should therefore be revised in accordance with comments raised above.

The Highway Authority do not agree that a tactile crossing point within the vicinity of the Meyrick Road junction is not achievable. It is requested that a drawing is provided with visibility splays drawn in accordance with HCC TG3 based on the recorded speeds data available. A departure may be appropriate to be considered given the presence of the parking for the visibility to be measured to the centreline where needed.

S106 contribution:

No commentary has been provided within the HRN regarding the requirement for a S106 contribution towards off-site walking and cycling improvements along the Solent Road corridor. The need for an off-site contribution towards sustainable transport improvements have been raised within both previous responses made by the Highway Authority.

There is an identified opportunity to overcome the deficits with the existing sustainable transport infrastructure along the Solent Road corridor improving connections to the retail park and provision to access the employment facilities at Harts Farm Way. The scheme encompasses improvements to the Brockhampton Road/Solent Road/Marple Way roundabout along with cycle improvements along Marple Way and a shared use path provision along the northern side of Solent Road. The improvements have been identified within the Kingscroft and Portsmouth Water applications.

The integration of this scheme with the wider network provides a real opportunity to reduce the reliance on the private car and encourage walking and cycling as an alternative transport mode to comply with LTP4. This is particularly key for those shorter trips where the private car is commonly utilised.

The Highway Authority are needing to consider the impact on the Solent Road corridor holistically alongside this site, the Portsmouth Water offices and Kingscroft Farm

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development, all which impact an already congested part of the network. Financial contributions are therefore considered necessary from these three sites towards the cost of these works and the Highway Authority are discussing a fair and reasonable approach to agreeing a proportionate contribution figure and split across the 3 sites.

Cumulative Impact:

Notwithstanding the above contribution discussion, the Highway Authority are also undertaking additional modelling work to identify the impacts of this site along with the applications for Portsmouth Water Offices and Kingscroft Farm to understand if there are also requirements for capacity improvements at the junction.

The Highway Authority through the recent Transforming Cities Fund identified a capacity improvement scheme for Langstone Roundabout which sought to ease traffic through the Solent Road junction. This element of the scheme was to extend the northbound 3rd lane of the junction back to the Langstone roundabout exit. Increasing this left turn capacity from Park Road South means some additional green time can be applied to Solent Road. Similar extents of works have been implemented on the Park Road South approach to Langstone Roundabout recently costing a figure like that of the identified sustainable travel works. The Highway Authority wish to determine through revised modelling work whether these improvements would be sufficient to mitigate the impact of the cumulative impact should the Highway Authority wish to prioritise capacity improvements with any secured funding.

Stage One Road Safety Audit (RSA1)

The applicant has undertaken an RSA1 for the proposed site layout. In total the audit raised 4 items (4.3.1, 4.4.1, 4.4.2 and 4.4.3).

It is agreed that audit item 4.3.1. relating to vegetation within visibility splays will be maintained through an appropriate planning condition to ensure vegetation does not exceed 0.6m in height. The remaining audit items are discussed where appropriate throughout this response.

The Highway Authority note that an RSA1 is yet to be undertaken on the alternations to Palk Road. The applicant is aware this is a requirement.

Internal Road Network

The proposed internal layout is shown within drawing 21085-201 Rev A.

The HRN confirms that the design speed of the internal road network is to be 20mph. Due to the straight nature of the carriageway speed reducing measures have been provided within the internal road network with the first located to the west of the VXO access into Apartment Block A. The highway Authority do not consider that this is sufficient and an additional speed reducing measure should be provided earlier from the extension of Palk Road to ensure speeds are reduced to 20mph upon entering the development.

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In response to previous comments raised, the internal road is to tie into Palk Road appropriately mirroring the existing carriageway width (6.3m) before this reduces within the site to a width of 5.7m towards the western boundary.

Within the site, 2.0m footways are proposed flanking either side of the carriageway, again tying in with the infrastructure proposed along Palk Road. These footway widths accord with HCC TG10 providing inclusive walking infrastructure for all users and therefore the widths are agreed. Upon accessing the apartment blocks 1.2m footways are proposed which is substandard in accordance with HCC TG10. The substandard width of these footways has been raised within item 4.4.3 of the RSA1. The designer's response suggests that the footway widths are acceptable in accordance with Building Regulations and therefore no amendments are proposed. The Highway Authority disagree with the designer's response and consider that wider footways are necessary. This is the main walking route to access Blocks C and D and opportunities to widen these footways should be explored. Item 4.4.3 is therefore not agreed to be resolved.

There is a lack of pedestrian crossing points with tactile paving which has been picked up within item 4.4.2 of the RSA1. The Highway Authority agree with the designer's response to an extent that pedestrian crossing points are not required at the vehicle crossovers as pedestrian priority is to be maintained. Notwithstanding, it is not agreed that the provision of uncontrolled crossing points can be secured through condition and should be resolved at the planning stage. The Highway Authority need to be satisfied that there is appropriate space for a tactile crossing point in the locations identified and that visibility can be achieved in accordance with HCC TG3. Item 4.4.2 is therefore not agreed to be resolved.

The footways terminate upon accessing Apartment Block A on the northern side of the carriageway which is raised within item 4.4.1 of the RSA1. The designer's response suggests that a footway extension is not considered necessary in this location due to an alternative route provided through the parking areas. The Highway Authority do not agree and consider the layout shown to be of poor design with a lack of consideration to pedestrian permeability throughout the site. The footway route is against the natural desire line for pedestrians wishing to access Block B and it is likely pedestrians will walk within the carriageway or across the grass verge proposed. Consideration should be given to extend the footway in this location as per the auditor's recommendations and vehicle crossover access arrangements should be considered to maintain pedestrian priority throughout the development. Item 4.4.1 of the RSA1 is therefore not agreed to be resolved.

The Highway Authority are concerned with how pedestrians are to access Blocks A and B from the parking area accessed via the VXO arrangements. There does not appear to be any appropriate internal connections without requiring them to walk in the carriageway under the apartment block. This is considered a poor design detail and could lead to conflicts with vehicles. There does not appear to be a secondary entrance.

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Alternative access should be considered to improve pedestrian permeability upon accessing these apartment blocks.

The Highway Authority are content that the nature of the development is conducive to on-carriageway cycling and therefore no dedicated infrastructure is to be provided within the internal layout design.

As previously requested, the applicant is proposing a connection onto the existing PRow network up to the boundary of the site via an informal route through the public open space of the site. This provides opportunities for connections to be pursued in the future albeit this falls outside of the applicant's jurisdiction. The width of this route should be confirmed and should be wide enough to provide opportunities for cyclists to access the PRow network should this be upgraded to bridleway status in the future. Notwithstanding, the footpath arrangement within the public open space is currently convoluted to provide an appropriate direct route for cyclists through the site. Should the aspirational route come forward, this would provide a traffic free or low traffic cycle route from the west through Bidbury Mead and through the site to access Bedhampton railway station and further afield to Havant Town Centre. Future residents of the site could also use this a recreational route to cycle towards Portsmouth via Farlington Marshes. This is a key link of which this site forms a part of. It is therefore requested that a direct cycle route is provided through the public open space to improve sustainable transport connections. Cyclists could be dropped on carriageway within the parking area for Apartment C or D in the southern parcel of the site. Public rights to pass and repass on foot and bicycle will be secured through the S106 agreement should any future planning consent be provided.

Where the informal pedestrian route skims the parking area for Block D, additional mitigation should be provided to ensure that manoeuvring vehicles do not overrun this path. Consideration should be given towards extending the hedge as a visual barrier or realigning the route to avoid the interaction with the parking spaces.

Visibility:

Visibility splays for the internal road network have been shown within drawing 043.0035-0017 Rev P01. 2.0m X 43.0m splays for the vehicle crossovers and 2.4m X 43.0m splays for the bellmouth accesses accord with HCC TG3 for a 20mph design speed. Should the bellmouth junction arrangement remain the visibility splays shown currently cross adjacent accesses within the development. The applicant should ensure that these accesses accord with the recently released HCC TG2 which requires appropriate junction spacing where visibility splays do not interfere with each other.

Additional speed reducing measures as discussed above are considered necessary to ensure there are opportunities to reduce vehicle speeds to 20mph upon entering the development.

Pedestrian intervisibility splays of 2m*2m in accordance with HCC TG3 should also be provided at the vehicle crossovers.

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Swept Path Analysis:

Swept path analysis has been provided for a fire tender and 11.20m 'super large' refuse vehicle at 10mph as shown within drawings 043.0035.005 Rev B and 043.0035.004 Rev B respectively. The Highway Authority are content that there is appropriate space for the fire tender and refuse to manoeuvre within the development appropriately.

Notwithstanding, the Highway Authority require tracking to be submitted for two cars passing throughout the internal road network and a delivery vehicle also passing a car at 10mph.

Parking Provision

Vehicle Parking:

Based on Havant Borough Council's Parking SPD, the applicant would be required to provide 101 unallocated parking spaces. The applicant is proposing 112 unallocated parking spaces which exceeds the parking standards by 11 spaces. Notwithstanding, the parking standards require 20% of the unallocated parking to be provided for visitor spaces. This would require an additional 17 parking spaces leading to an overall shortfall of 6 parking spaces. Havant Borough Council in the capacity as the Local Parking Authority should confirm whether the proposed shortfall in parking is acceptable. The Highway Authority should be reconsulted for further comment should this be a concern.

Notwithstanding, the Highway Authority raised the need for consideration to be given to the existing parking along Palk Road and the displacement of these spaces once the parking restrictions have been implemented. It was requested that confirmation was provided on whether the available spaces within the parking survey could accommodate the overspill parking on Palk Road should restrictions be implemented on both sides of Palk Road. Whilst the parking survey undertaken by the applicant suggests that parking along Palk Road can be accommodated within the allocated parking for the apartment blocks, accommodation of additional parking spaces solely for those users should be considered within the internal layout design to support the TRO process. The use of these spaces could be monitored and if not utilised could be added to the unallocated parking provision for this development.

Appropriate car parking management measures should be secured as part of the private management company condition to ensure that overspill parking does not occur outside of the dedicated parking bays and block any servicing and emergency access.

Parking spaces are proposed to measure 2.5m X 5.0m as confirmed on drawing 043.0035-0018 Rev P01. This exceeds the requirements as laid out within Havant Borough Council's Parking SPD albeit are considered more appropriate as reflect the modern size of vehicles. A 0.2m buffer is to be provided to provide additional space for accessing and egressing the vehicle where spaces directly abut boundary features. This is considered appropriate.

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Drawing 043.0035.006 Rev B shows tracking for a standard size car accessing and egressing some parking spaces at speeds of 2.5mph. Of the available spaces tracked the movements appear to be tight however, as 6.0m aisle width is provided the Highway Authority are content that there is appropriate space for vehicles to manoeuvre into the spaces and it is likely these movements have been poorly tracked. On balance, considering the low-speed nature of these movements and an appropriate aisle width, the Highway Authority are minded to accept the layout shown.

The applicant has confirmed that EV charging provision is to be provided in accordance with Building Regulations. This should also comply with the requirements as laid out within Havant Borough Council's Parking SPD. The Planning Authority in their role as the Local Parking Authority should confirm if the EV charging standards are appropriate. EV charging space requirements should be confirmed with the Planning Authority as this may need additional space to accommodate the charging infrastructure and for safe operation.

Cycle Parking:

The development is to provide 148 long-stay cycle parking spaces in accordance with Havant Borough Council's Parking SPD. The HRN confirms these are to be provided within a secure covered cycle store within each of the apartment blocks.

The parking standards required 20% of the long-term cycle parking standard to be provided in the form of short-stay cycle parking. Based on the above numbers, 30 short stay cycle spaces should be provided. 36 short-stay visitor cycle spaces are proposed which is an excess of the requirements by 6. It appears that the short-stay cycle parking is not covered however this should be confirmed. The Highway Authority would expect this to be covered cycle parking to encourage travel via sustainable modes to the site for visitors especially considering a shortfall in visitor parking is proposed. This should be revised.

Recommendations

The Highway Authority remain concerned with the operational safety of the Palk Road, the Palk Road/West Street junction, and the interaction with the Bedhampton level crossing. This is only likely to be exacerbated following an increase in the level of service within the peak hours, impacting the operation of the barriers and increasing the queue lengths previously observed.

In the absence of the applicant entering the S278 design check process running alongside the statutory planning process and confirmation provided that Palk Road can be brought up to adoptable standards the Highway Authority are unable to progress this application.

Whilst further assessment work has been undertaken this is not sufficient to address previous concerns raised. If the Planning Authority wish to determine the application, the Highway Authority should be contacted to provide reasons for refusal.

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I trust that the above is clear but please do not hesitate to contact Sophie Osborne should you require any further information.

Yours sincerely,

Gemma McCart
Team Leader – Highways Development Planning
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