



TECHNICAL NOTE 1

DATE:	14 December 2023	CONFIDENTIALITY:	Confidential
SUBJECT:	Response to Active Travel England Comments		
PROJECT:	70094210 - Land at Buntingford West	AUTHOR:	Gideon G
CHECKED:	Mehmet A	APPROVED:	Mehmet A

INTRODUCTION

This Technical Note (TN) has been prepared by WSP on behalf of Vistry Homes in response to Active Travel England (ATE) comments raised regarding the Buntingford West application (ref 3/23/1447/OUT), ATE ref ATE/23/00368/OUT on 07 November 2023.

Description of development: Outline planning application (with all matters reserved except for access) for up to 350 dwellings, with up to 4,400 sqm of commercial and services floorspace (Use Class E and B8) and up to 500 sqm of retail floorspace (Use Classes E) and other associated works including drainage, access into the site from the A10 and Luynes Rise (but not access within the site), allotments, public open space and landscaping.

ATE as statutory consultee have recommended **DEFERRAL** (ATE is not currently in a position to support this application and requests further assessment, evidence, revisions and/or dialogue as set out in this response) for the reasons discussed below to which WSP has provided responses accordingly. The full ATE comments to the Planning Application is included as Annex A of this TN.

Following the above, the report follows the structure below:

- Connection via Luynes Rise and Aspenden Road
- Qualitative review of external active travel routes
- Permeability and access to the site
- Comments on Development Framework Plan (DR-A-1002)
- Comments on Site Access Arrangement (7498-GA-02-REV G)
- Cycle Parking
- Bus Services
- Travel Plan



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CONNECTIONS VIA LUYNES RISE AND ASPENDEN ROAD

This is the primary connection to the site for walking, wheeling and cycling and provides a link to the improved cycle network on Station Road and on to the High Street. A design for this access is required, and clarity is sought as to whether it is intended as a bus link as well as an active travel link.

The response states that the traffic flows on Luynes Rise and Aspenden Road are less than 2500 vehicles per day, the survey data relating to traffic flows and speeds could not be located in the TA, however given that speed limit is 30mph on these roads, Figure 4.1 of LTN1/20 indicates that provision will not be suitable for all people and that light segregation is recommended. As these are residential roads lowering the speed limit to 20mph, with effective traffic calming, is an option that should be discussed with the highway authority. There are also stretches of the route that do not have footways or the footways are less than 2m in width.

The two strands of S106 are noted, however ATE would want to see improvements on this route between the site access and Station Road provided by the developer as S278 works, this will ensure that that works are delivered in accordance with the time scale of the construction and occupation of the site. Outline plans for a scheme should be provided at this stage to ensure deliverability, the scheme should be developed in consultation with the highway authority and safety audits provided as necessary.

RESPONSE

Following a meeting with HCC on the 30th of November 2023, it was agreed that speed reduction measures be implemented on Luynes Rise to facilitate safe active travel connection to the ATF route on Station Road/London Road. [Query – is this the primary connection for walking to the High Street? I consider Footpath Buntingford 041 (past Millfield School) and Footpath Buntingford 029 (past Monks Walk) are more direct. Do we query this and refer to Luynes Rise as primary cycle route but a secondary walking route?]

Details of the design were discussed with HCC including chicanes with cycle bypass and footway widening where possible. A draft design has been submitted for HCC's consideration and also attached at Annex B.

QUALITATIVE REVIEW OF EXTERNAL ACTIVE TRAVEL ROUTES

The use of the Level of Service Tool and Walking Route Audit Tool and provisions of plans with photographs on are welcome. It is noted that the scores for the route are generally low. In some cases this is because of physical constraints that cannot be changed (alleyways between houses) but there are other issues that can be addressed such as surfacing, lighting, dropped kerbs, signing and crossings. The next step is to use the audit to develop a suite of measures to improve the routes and help embed cycling not only with the development but connections from the site. Schemes should be developed for key routes with the intention of them being delivered through the S278 mechanism by the developer.

RESPONSE



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The scope of off-site and on-site works was agreed with HCC at the November 2023 meeting. Maps showing a suite of measures are included at Annex C.

HCC also provided clarity on the delivery mechanism in terms of contributions. HCC advised that all improvements directly related to the Proposed Development will be delivered via S278, the following were agreed:

1. Luyes Rise traffic calming improvement
2. Appended 026 and 029 within the site and off-site connection to existing infrastructure.

Active travel improvement works further afield will be delivered via S106 as this will not be directly related to the Proposed Development but provides wider benefits to the area. A revised Strand 2 contribution will be calculated if the applicant commits to any off-site works that provides a wider benefit.

Attached at Annex B is the S278 works proposed and Annex C is S106 improvements identified following the route audit.

PERMEABILITY AND ACCESS TO THE SITE

The applicant should demonstrate what exactly what treatment is to be provided at the access points with the public right of ways and at Peasmead where it is noted there is limited land available. ATE would like to understand what work has been undertaken to try and acquire land to provide more than one walking and cycling access that faces towards the village. This is especially important to the north of the site where direct connections to schools and the village centre are important and to the south to provide direct connections to the employment centre.

RESPONSE

As previously mentioned, the connection via Peasmead was previously investigated but could not be pursued due to land ownership issues. The land between Peasmead and the Buntingford West development scheme is made up of four ownerships between No.8, No.9, No.10 and Vistry owns the proposed site edging this piece of land. The land provides a turning head and front garden to No.9 and access to No.8 and No 10. This part of Peasmead is an enclosed private cul-de-sac with driveways to the neighbouring houses and maintained gardens. Adding a pedestrian/cycle link across the existing residential drive and maintained gardens will be detrimental to this space.

That said, B26 provides an alternative to Peasmead albeit via a short 30m section where cyclist may have to dismount to connect with Knights Close.

HCC however advised at the November 2023 meeting that they are looking for a better access route and not necessarily an optimum route for both Monks Walk and Knights Close which are alternative routes to the north. It was discussed and agreed that minor improvements including vegetation clearing to improve

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effective width of the routes and removal of the anti-cycle gates at the B29/Monks Walk junction to allow cyclist could be pursued together with signages.

COMMENTS ON DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN (DR-A-1002)

It is essential that fundamental principles are agreed at this stage in order to ensure that the correct details are secured at outline planning, which ensures their subsequent inclusion as an integral part of the reserved matters application(s). In the absence of the correct specification of infrastructure being secured, there is no guarantee that these components will be included, nor is there any certainty that future applications will be submitted as one and by the current applicant.

a) Ensuring that there are good walking and cycling routes within the development is required to achieve high modal share. The off-road cycle route should be continued to the north within the site to serve the development and then connect to the circular leisure route at an appropriate point. The off-road route on the spine road should continue into the employment area to provide safe cycle access for employees in a area which is likely to have a high number of HGVs.

i. The use of shared use on the spine road does not fall into the exceptional circumstances outlined in LTN1/20 6.5.6. In order to maximise pedestrian and cycle and avoid conflict between the users a segregated facility should be provided.

b) The orange leisure route should be designed for pedestrians and cyclists with an appropriate width. It should be noted that surfacing of leisure routes should be smooth, sealed and bound in accordance with Inclusive Mobility and LTN1/20. These principles should be agreed at this stage to inform the future design of the site.

c) The point concerning the public rights of way across the site is noted and agreed as long as there are good cycling alternatives providing direct routes for walking, wheeling and cycling within the reserved matters layout.

RESPONSE

- a) Point A is noted and is welcome however, extending the shared active travel route to the north will not provide any added benefit as the estate road would be lightly trafficked as previously discussed and cyclist can safely mix with traffic on the estate road to connect with the B29. The B29 has width restrictions with existing barriers towards Monks Walk. As the width cannot be widened, proposals are to remove the barriers to allow cyclists to dismount and safely access Monks Walk. This is not a preferred/suitable cycle route, ergo extending the shared active travel route to the north will naturally signpost cyclists towards this restricted route and reduce the comfort of use for both pedestrians and cyclist as cycle demand increases.
- i. The point regarding extending the shared route towards the employment centre is noted. The layout will be updated to ensure the employment area is served.

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- b) As stated previously, the orange route will be designed as 2.0m wide in line with Section 4.2 of Inclusive Mobility which considers a width of 2.0m enough space for two wheelchair users to pass, even if they are using larger electric mobility scooters and 1.0 -1.5m minimum where there are width restrictions. Cyclist can also be accommodated on-street as the internal road network would be LTN/120 compliant to allow safe mixing of cyclist and vehicles due to low speeds (20 mph) and low flows (less than 2500). The proposals are therefore considered adequate.
- c) There are proposals to improve the B29 and B26 connections to Monks Walk and Luyne Rise respectively to provide on-ward connectivity. This coupled with the proposed active travel route through the site will provide ample opportunities to the key locations in Buntingford.

COMMENT ON SITE ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

- d) ATE welcomes the use of the Junction Assessment Tool and the provision of a Sparrow Crossing on the A10 in the vicinity of the roundabout to connect to the wider PROW network. It is noted that the design is with Highways for discussion.
- e) The intention for the spine road to be 20mph is welcome, it should be noted on the plans and it should be designed as such at this outline stage to ensure the speed limit is self-enforcing.
- f) Again, it would be preferable to show junction treatments at this outline stage, and certainly the intention should be noted on the plans.

- d) The design has now been approved by HCC as set out in their November 2023 Response (Application received by HCC on 5 October 2023):

General Vehicle Access

As mentioned previously the general vehicle access to the development will be via a new roundabout onto the A10, Buntingford Bypass. As default HCC Highways resists access on to a principal road unless special circumstances can be demonstrated. The access has be subject to the scrutiny of a Road Safety Audit (RSA) which identified no major safety concerns and through correspondence with HCC Highways most minor problems raised have been addressed and it is agreed any remaining issues will be addressed post planning through the detailed design process. HCC Highways also consider in that allowing this site to be developed sustainably, without impacting substantially upon existing residents that this access is preferable and thus special circumstances have been demonstrated. Therefore, subject to detailed design HCC Highways accepts the principle of the proposed A10 access.

- e) This is welcome and will be noted on plan.
- f) Subject to detailed design review by HCC, further details to include any access treatment will be designed and agreed with HCC highways.

CYCLE PARKING



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The standards to be applied cycle parking should be agreed at outline stage to ensure that the design going forward uses them from the beginning. Given the ambition of the applicant to encourage active travel LTN1/20 standards for residential parking are recommended.

RESPONSE

This is welcome however, given the rural nature of Buntingford the level of cycle provision set out within LTN/120 is very onerous and represents excessive provision for this area. Paragraph 11.3.3 of LTN/120 sets out that:

“Data gathered for Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans and other planning documents may be helpful when predicting the potential growth in cycling and understanding the demand generated by typical local trip patterns. This may enable a more considered approach, with a variation in standards related to location as well as type of land use”.

The East Herts District Council (EHDC) parking standards are based on local research and so considered aligned with likely local demand. That said the EHDC standards are outdated (2015) relative to LTN/120. A good compromise for demand prediction will therefore be to consider a middle ground between the EHDC minimum standards and LTN/120 suggested standards.

BUS SERVICES

The diversion of bus services into the site is noted and welcome and should be secured through a S106 agreement.

RESPONSE

Noted and welcome

TRAVEL PLAN

The comment concerning the national target of 50% of trips within towns and cities to be undertaken by walking, wheeling or cycling is understood and AT recognises that the target may not be achievable in a rural location such as this. However, it is not clear from the Residential Travel Plan what the final target is for active travel trips. A target is important not only to understand what needs to be done to achieve it and to help to limit the impact on congestion on the highway but to ensure access to active travel for residents making it easy for them to choose a healthy and cost-effective form of transport. A number of initiatives have been put forward in the travel plan to be explored, these should be secured through the S106 and as should the remedial measures mentioned in the response.

RESPONSE

Comments regarding the Travel plan are welcome.

As set out within the Travel Plan a 20% reduction in vehicle trips is considered achievable given the intended measures proposed. This will reduce the current mode share from 70% to 56%:



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$$1 - \left(\frac{0.56}{0.70}\right) = 0.20$$

In line with HCC Travel Plan Guidance, remedial measures may be written into the planning obligation to supports the county council in pursuing sanctions to ensure that remedies are made if targets are not met.

Remedial measures may include:

- Payments to the county council to cover the costs of implementing measures which were agreed but not implemented.
- Implementation of works expected to remedy the failure
- Limitations on the way the site can be used in the future, such as partial occupation or restriction on future phases of the development.

The Travel Plan will be updated and delivered in line with conditions 10 and 11 set out within the HCC November 2023 Response (Application received by HCC on 5 October 2023).



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Annex A

ATE COMMENTS



Active
Travel
England

Active Travel England
West Offices
Station Rise
York
YO1 6GA
Tel: 0300 330 3000

Your Ref: 3/23/1447/OUT
Our Ref: ATE/23/00368/OUT
Date: 07 November 2023

Active Travel England Planning Response Detailed Response to an Application for Planning Permission

From: Planning & Development Division, Active Travel England

To: Amit Patel, East Hertfordshire District Council

Application Ref: 3/23/1447/OUT

Site Address: Land East Of The A10, Buntingford

Description of development: Outline planning for the development of 350 dwellings, with up to 4,400 sqm of commercial and services floorspace (Use Class E and B8) and up to 500 sqm of retail floorspace (Use Classes E) and other associated works including drainage, access into the site from the A10 and Luynes Rise (but not access within the site), allotments, public open space and landscaping.

Notice is hereby given that Active Travel England's formal recommendation is as follows:

- a. ~~**No Objection:** ATE has undertaken a detailed assessment of this application and is content with the submission.~~
- b. ~~**Conditional approval:** ATE recommends approval of the application, subject to the agreement and implementation of planning conditions and/or obligations as set out in this response.~~
- c. **Deferral:** ATE is not currently in a position to support this application and requests further assessment, evidence, revisions and/or dialogue as set out in this response.
- d. ~~**Refusal:** ATE recommends that the application be refused for the reasons set out in this response.~~

1.0 Background

These comments are provided by Active Travel England (ATE) in response to the Technical Note 1 (TN1) 'Response to Active Travel England Comments' dated 15/09/2023. In preparing this response ATE has reviewed the submitted plans and documents and liaised with highway authority.

Although some items have been addressed there are still outstanding items which are listed below.

2.0 Areas of Concern

The applicant makes a key pledge early on in the submitted Design and Access Statement to create *"a new liveable mixed use neighbourhood with most of people's daily needs met within a short walk or cycle."* While a laudable and valid commitment, it is ATE's principal concern that this will not be achieved or secured by the submission in view of the submissions to date.

A significant amount of detail is outstanding with regard to the access to the site and its specification which is not a reserved matter. As an outline application, these proposals will set key principles and resultant travel patterns and trends for which there will be extremely limited scope to revisit or revise at the reserved matters stage or thereafter, where the focus is solely on the internal layout bound by the red line of each subsequent application. The outline application stage therefore represents the greatest opportunity to influence the long-term accessibility of the development holistically, and through exploiting the opportunity for a permeable and connected new settlement and in so doing avoiding missed opportunities to maximise connectivity. This will improve the future chances of embedding and sustaining active travel throughout the lifetime of the development.

Please note the paragraph and table references on page 2 of the TN1 are not correct making it difficult to follow.

Connection via Luynes Rise and Aspenden Road

This is the primary connection to the site for walking, wheeling and cycling and provides a link to the improved cycle network on Station Road and on to the High Street. A design for this access is required, and clarity is sought as to whether it is intended as a bus link as well as an active travel link.

The response states that the traffic flows on Luynes Rise and Aspenden Road are less than 2500 vehicles per day, the survey data relating to traffic flows and speeds could not be located in the TA, however given that speed limit is 30mph on these roads, Figure 4.1 of LTN1/20 indicates that provision will not be suitable for all people and that light segregation is recommended. As these are residential roads lowering the speed limit to 20mph, with effective traffic calming, is an option that should be discussed with the highway authority. There are also stretches of the route that do not have footways or the footways are less than 2m in width.

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These principles should be agreed at this stage to inform the future design of the site.

c) The point concerning the public rights of way across the site is noted and agreed as long as there are good cycling alternatives providing direct routes for walking, wheeling and cycling within the reserved matters layout.

Comments on Site Access Arrangements

d) ATE welcomes the use of the Junction Assessment Tool and the provision of a Sparrow Crossing on the A10 in the vicinity of the roundabout to connect to the wider PROW network. It is noted that the design is with Highways for discussion.

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Travel Plan

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A number of initiatives have been put forward in the travel plan to be explored, these should be secured through the S106 and as should the remedial measures mentioned in the response.

3.0 Next Steps

This advice should be forwarded to the applicant and local highway authority. ATE would be content to meet with the LPA, HA and applicant and review further submitted information to help address the above identified issues; with a view to providing a further response and recommended wording for planning conditions and obligations.

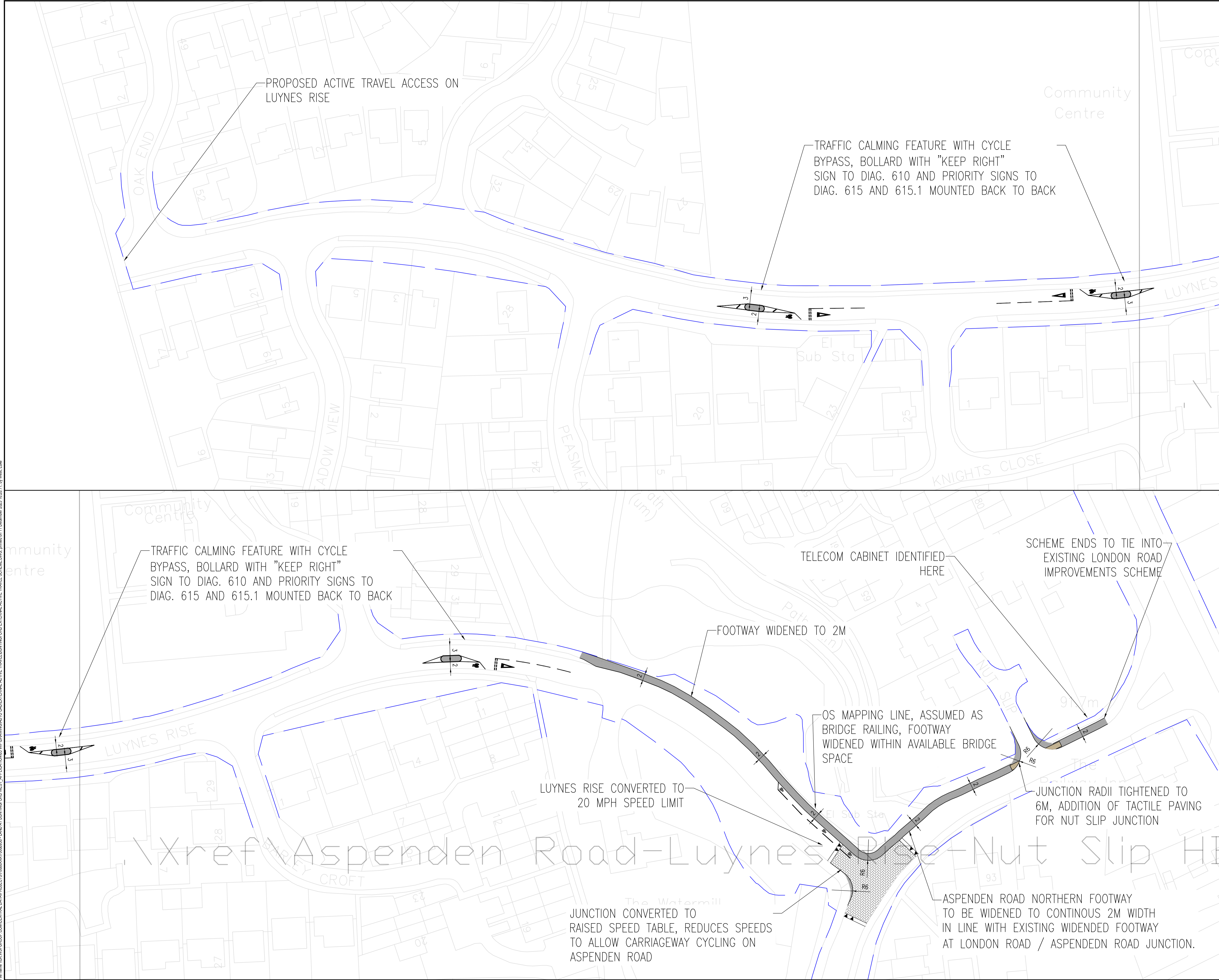


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Annex B

PROPOSED S278 WORKS



DO NOT SCALE

- PROPOSED FOOTWAY / ISLAND
- PROPOSED RAISED JUNCTION
- HIGHWAY BOUNDARY

UNTIL TECHNICAL APPROVAL HAS BEEN OBTAINED FROM THE RELEVANT LOCAL AUTHORITIES OR STATUTORY BODIES, IT SHOULD BE UNDERSTOOD THAT ALL DRAWINGS ARE ISSUED AS PRELIMINARY AND NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION. SHOULD THE CONTRACTOR AND / OR EMPLOYER COMMENCE WORK PRIOR TO APPROVAL BEING GIVEN, IT IS ENTIRELY AT THEIR OWN RISK

REV	DATE	BY	DESCRIPTION	CHK	APP
P01	11/12/2023	LW	FIRST ISSUE	GG	MA

DRAWING STATUS: **S3 - FOR REVIEW**

Unit 9 The Chase, John Tate Road, Foxholes Business Park, Hertford, SG13 7NN, UK
T+ 44 (0) 1992 526 000, F+ 44 (0) 1992 526 001
wsp.com

CLIENT: **Vistry Group**

ARCHITECT: **N/A**

SITE/PROJECT: **LAND AT BUNTINGFORD WEST**

TITLE: **LUYNES RISE ACTIVE TRAVEL SCHEME DESIGN**

SCALE @ A1:	CHECKED:	APPROVED:	
1:500	GG	MA	
PROJECT NO:	DESIGNED:	DRAWN:	DATE:
70088938	LW	LW	December 23

DRAWING NO: **8938-SK-01** REV: **P01**

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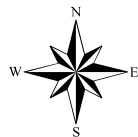
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For reference purposes only.
No further copies may be made.
Produced by Highway
Boundaries & Land Charges
Hertfordshire County Council

Date: 07/12/2023



Aspenden Road, Luynes Rise & Nut Slip Buntingford

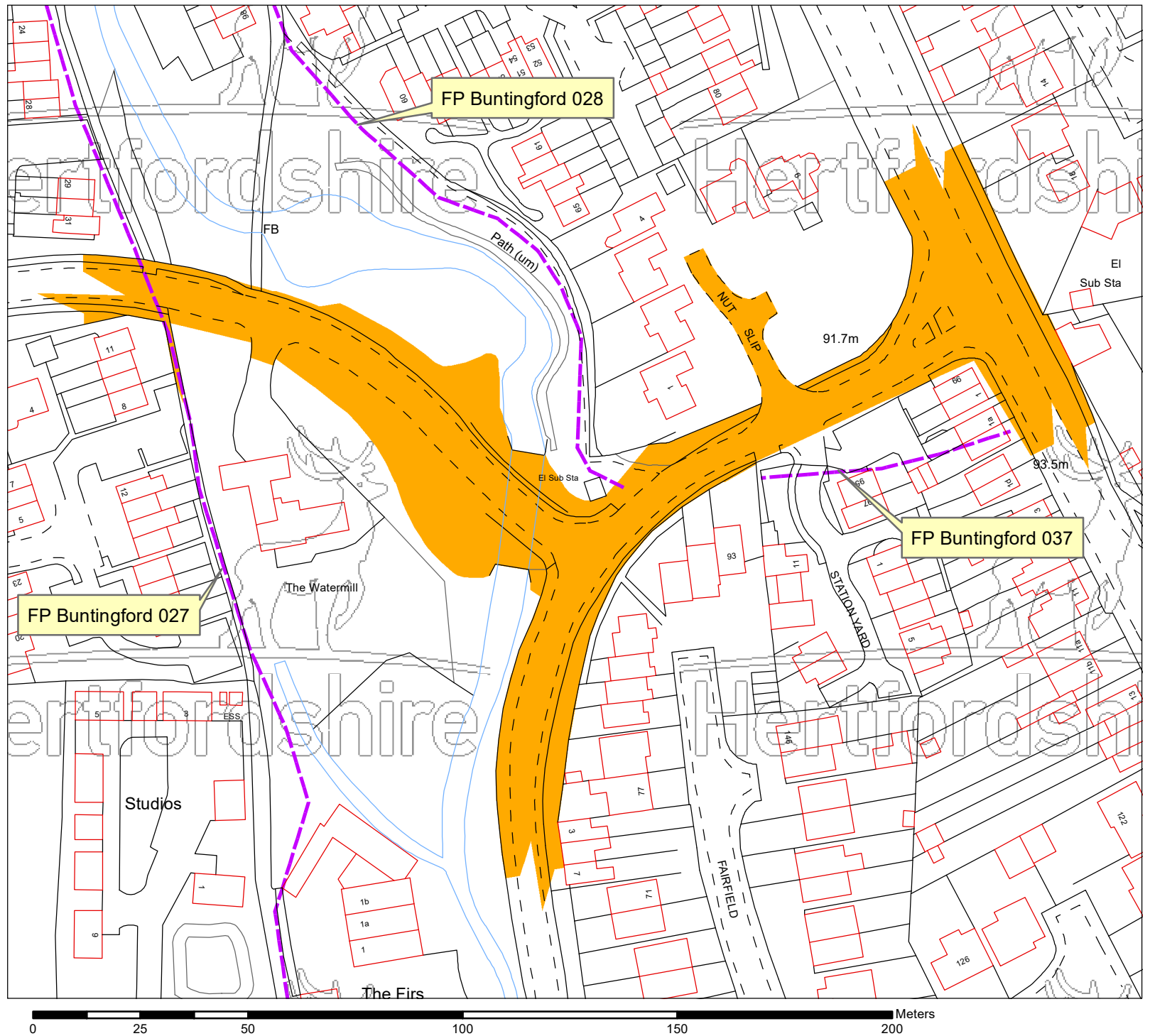


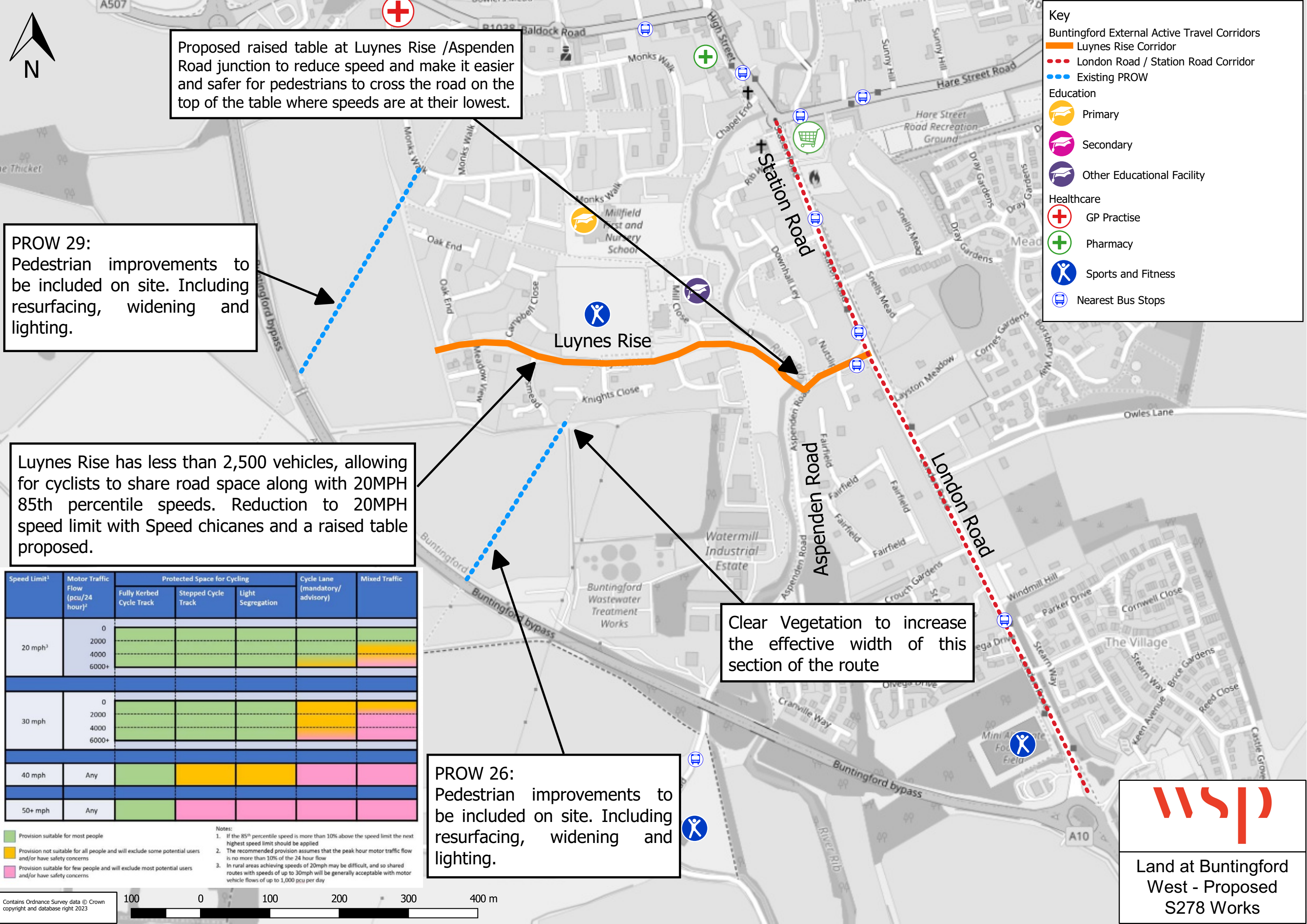
Scale at A4
1:1,250

The Rights of Way information on this plan is based on information from the Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way. The accuracy of this plan cannot be guaranteed. If in doubt the Definitive Map should be consulted.

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Proposed raised table at Luynes Rise /Aspenden Road junction to reduce speed and make it easier and safer for pedestrians to cross the road on the top of the table where speeds are at their lowest.

PROW 29: Pedestrian improvements to be included on site. Including resurfacing, widening and lighting.

Luynes Rise has less than 2,500 vehicles, allowing for cyclists to share road space along with 20MPH 85th percentile speeds. Reduction to 20MPH speed limit with Speed chicanes and a raised table proposed.

Speed Limit ¹	Motor Traffic Flow (pcu/24 hour) ²	Protected Space for Cycling			Cycle Lane (mandatory/ advisory)	Mixed Traffic
		Fully Kerbed Cycle Track	Stepped Cycle Track	Light Segregation		
20 mph ³	0	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
	2000	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
	4000 6000+	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
30 mph	0	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
	2000	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
	4000 6000+	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
40 mph	Any	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green
50+ mph	Any	Green	Pink	Pink	Pink	Pink

Clear Vegetation to increase the effective width of this section of the route

PROW 26: Pedestrian improvements to be included on site. Including resurfacing, widening and lighting.

Notes:
 1. If the 85th percentile speed is more than 10% above the speed limit the next highest speed limit should be applied
 2. The recommended provision assumes that the peak hour motor traffic flow is no more than 10% of the 24 hour flow
 3. In rural areas achieving speeds of 20mph may be difficult, and so shared routes with speeds of up to 30mph will be generally acceptable with motor vehicle flows of up to 1,000 pcu per day

Key

Buntingford External Active Travel Corridors

- Luynes Rise Corridor
- London Road / Station Road Corridor
- Existing PROW

Education

- Primary
- Secondary
- Other Educational Facility

Healthcare

- GP Practise
- Pharmacy
- Sports and Fitness
- Nearest Bus Stops



Land at Buntingford West - Proposed S278 Works

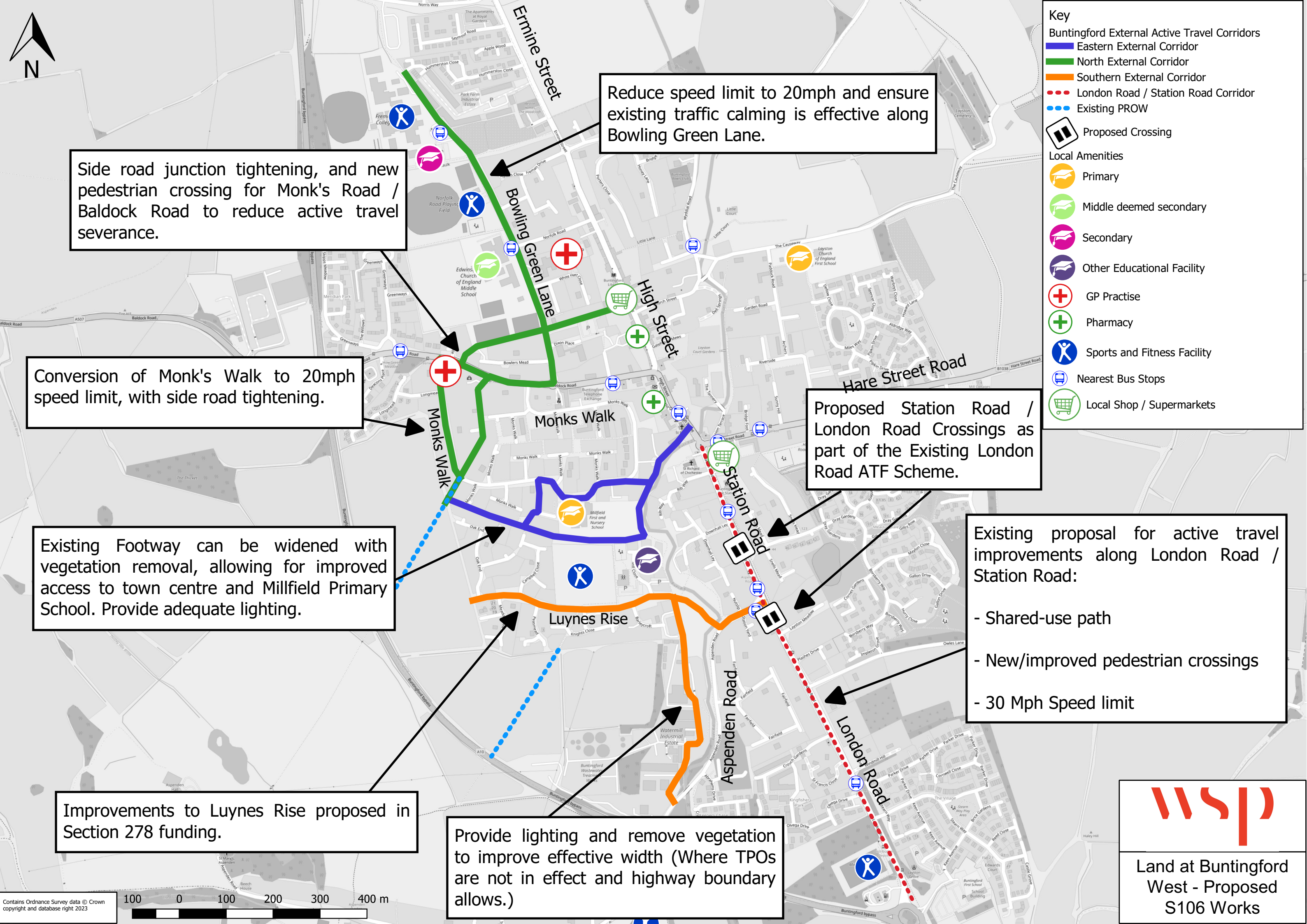


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Annex C

OFF-SITE S106 ACTIVE TRAVEL IMPROVEMENT WORKS



Key

- Buntingford External Active Travel Corridors
 - Eastern External Corridor
 - North External Corridor
 - Southern External Corridor
- London Road / Station Road Corridor
- Existing PROW
- Proposed Crossing
- Local Amenities
 - Primary
 - Middle deemed secondary
 - Secondary
 - Other Educational Facility
 - GP Practise
 - Pharmacy
 - Sports and Fitness Facility
 - Nearest Bus Stops
 - Local Shop / Supermarkets

Reduce speed limit to 20mph and ensure existing traffic calming is effective along Bowling Green Lane.

Side road junction tightening, and new pedestrian crossing for Monk's Road / Baldock Road to reduce active travel severance.

Conversion of Monk's Walk to 20mph speed limit, with side road tightening.

Proposed Station Road / London Road Crossings as part of the Existing London Road ATF Scheme.

Existing Footway can be widened with vegetation removal, allowing for improved access to town centre and Millfield Primary School. Provide adequate lighting.

Existing proposal for active travel improvements along London Road / Station Road:

- Shared-use path
- New/improved pedestrian crossings
- 30 Mph Speed limit

Improvements to Luyes Rise proposed in Section 278 funding.

Provide lighting and remove vegetation to improve effective width (Where TPOs are not in effect and highway boundary allows.)



Land at Buntingford West - Proposed S106 Works



TECHNICAL NOTE 1

DATE:	14 December 2023	CONFIDENTIALITY:	Confidential
SUBJECT:	Response to Active Travel England Comments		
PROJECT:	70094210 - Land at Buntingford West	AUTHOR:	Gideon G
CHECKED:	Mehmet A	APPROVED:	Mehmet A

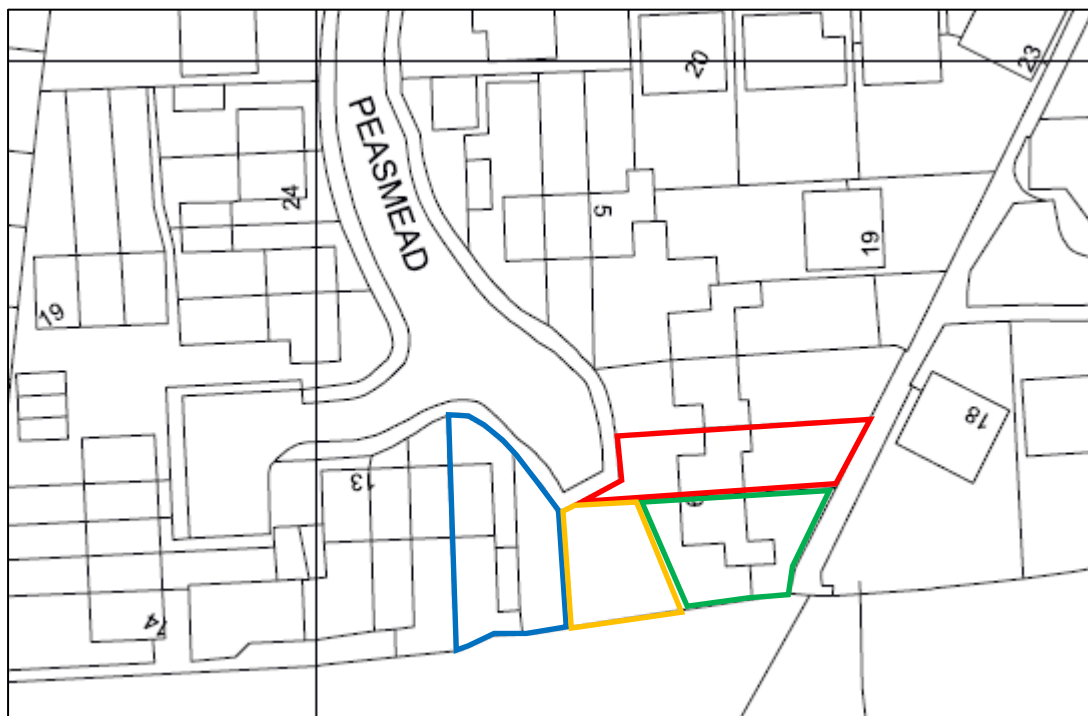
Annex D

PEASMEAD LAND OWNERSHIP

Buntingford West – Peasmead Ownership Constraints

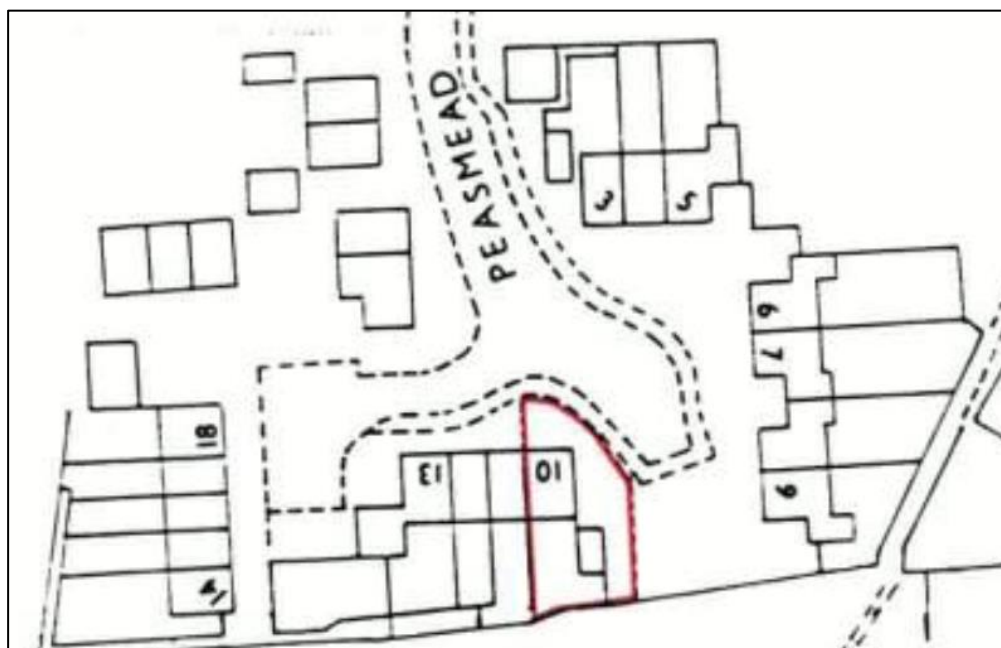
Briefing Note – 7th December 2023

1. The land between Peasmead and the Buntingford West development scheme is made up of four ownerships as follows:



2. These being:

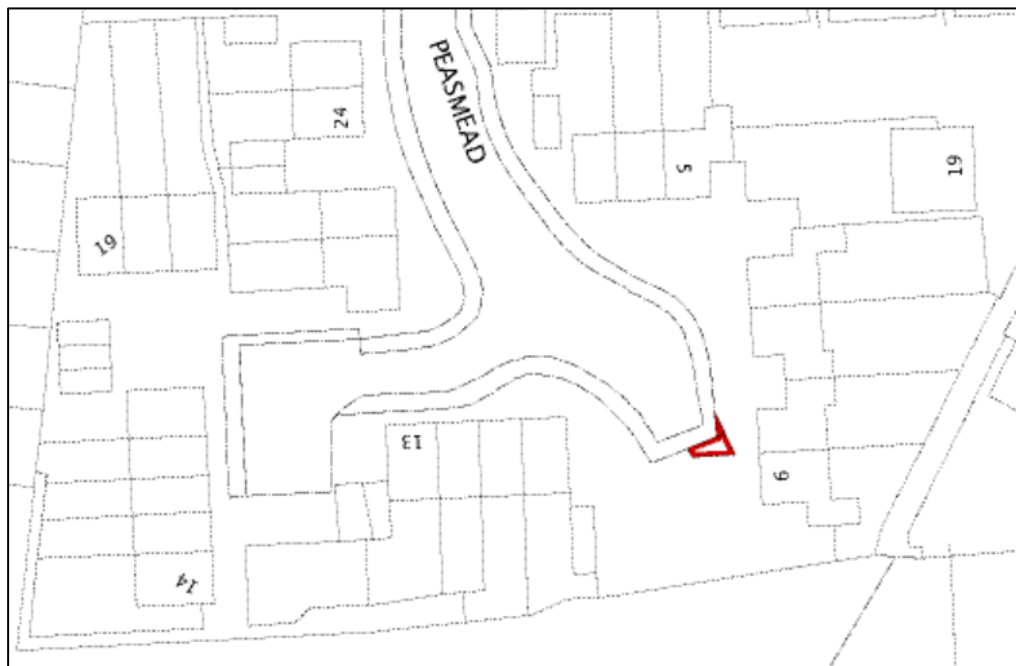
- 2.1 Edged blue; 10 Peasmead ownership as title plan extract below:



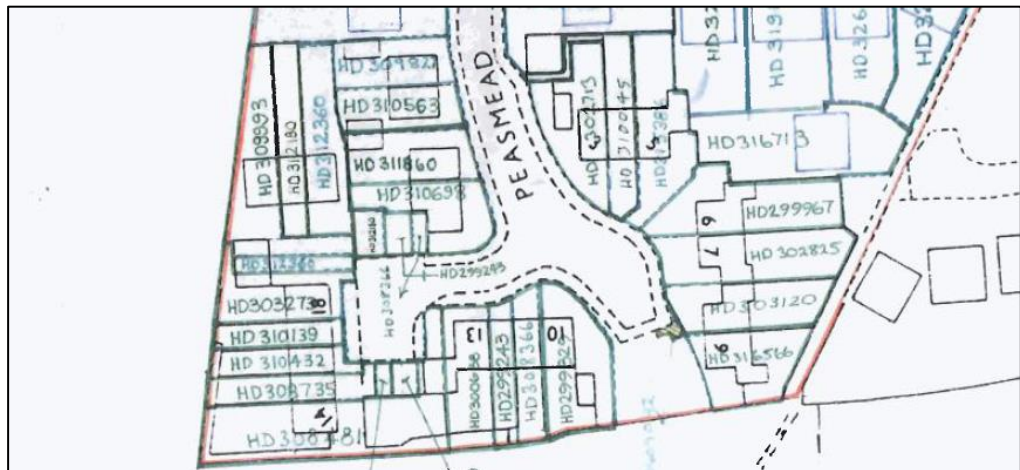
2.2 Edged green; 9 Peasmead ownership as title plan extract below:



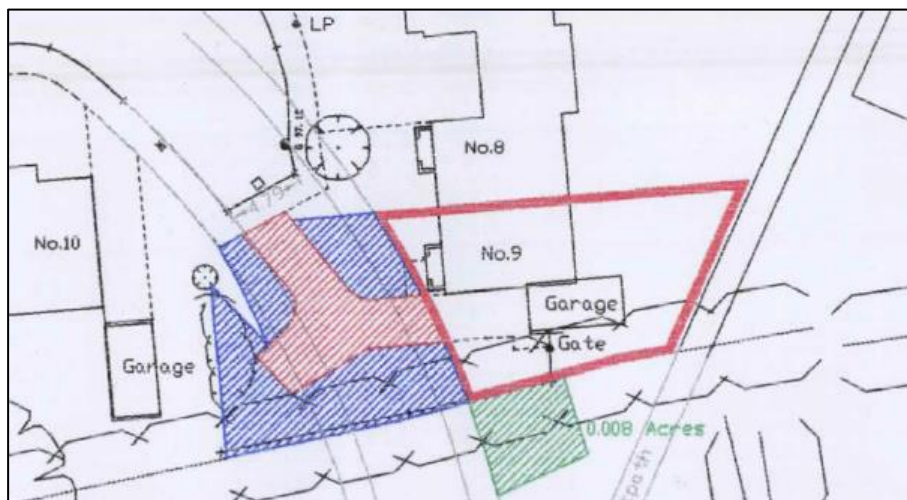
2.3 Edged red; 8 Peasmead ownership as part title plan extract below:



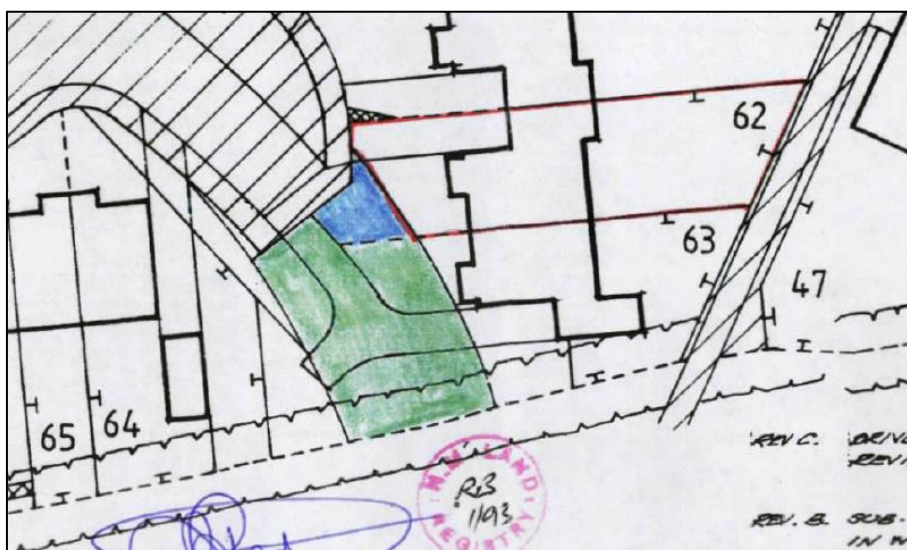
- 2.4 Edged orange; Vistry Homes residual ownership from the Bovis Homes development circa 1993.



3. Of further note, 9 Peasmead has a right of access over the area hatched red on the plan below (extracted from the Transfer dated 4th December 2001). This will have vehicle turning movements to access the garage and drive at 9 Peasmead.



4. Similarly, the transfer of 8 Peasmead retained access rights over the area coloured green.



5. The part of Peasmead is an enclosed private cul-de-sac and adding a pedestrian/cycle link across the existing residential drive and maintained gardens will be detrimental to this space.

