

**31 May 2012**

**Agenda Item: 7**

## **REPORT OF GROUP MANAGER, PLANNING**

### **STRATEGIC PLANNING OBSERVATIONS ON A PLANNING APPLICATION FOR A FOODSTORE, AT LAND NORTH OF WILFORD LANE, WEST BRIDGFORD.**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek Committee approval for comments set out in this report to be sent to Rushcliffe Borough Council (RBC) in response to the request for strategic planning observations on planning application for a foodstore at land north of Wilford Lane, West Bridgford.

#### **Information and Advice**

2. A planning application was submitted to Rushcliffe Borough Council on the 30th March 2012 for the construction of a foodstore with ancillary customer restaurant, concession units and associated infrastructure, on land to the north of Wilford Lane, West Bridgford. A site plan is provided at Appendix 1.
3. Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) has been consulted for strategic planning observations on the application and this report compiles responses from Departments involved in providing comments and observations on such matters. On the basis of Committee's decision, comments will be sent to Rushcliffe Borough Council.
4. The planning application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement, Design and Access Statement and a range of other supporting documents. This report is based on the information submitted with the application in the context of national, regional and local policy.

#### ***Description of the Proposed Development***

5. The proposed scheme comprises a Sainsbury's foodstore with a total gross external area of 9,700m<sup>2</sup> and a sales area of 4.646m<sup>2</sup>. The store will be primarily for the sale of food, with convenience goods in total equating to 72% of the total sales area and 28% non-food ranges.
6. The proposed store will comprise a single trading floor at first floor level as it will be elevated on stilts.

7. A total of 613 car parking spaces, including 549 standard spaces, 33 disabled spaces and 31 parent and child spaces are proposed. All car-parking will be at ground level and the majority will be located beneath the store and associated services.
8. The service yard will be located to the rear (north) of the store, raised to store level and accessed via a dedicated service ramp.
9. The store will include a customer café, toilets, cash machines, ancillary concession (operator to be confirmed) and an Explore Learning Centre which provide an extra-curricular learning facility for 5-14 year olds.
10. New bus stops are proposed on Wilford Lane, immediately in front of the proposed store entrance on the eastbound carriageway and to the east of the junction with Compton Acres on the westbound carriageway. A number of other highway and transportation measures will also be incorporated into the overall proposal.

## **Planning Policy Context**

### **National Planning Policy Framework**

11. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012) sets out at paragraph 14 its presumption in favour of development that requires the planning system to be plan led, proactively driven and supportive of sustainable economic development. If development proposals are assessed as having significant adverse and demonstrable impacts then they should not be permitted.
12. Paragraphs 23-27 of the NPPF set out the Government's policy in relation to retailing. When assessing an application for retail a sequential approach should be adopted. This 'town centre first' approach requires development to be located firstly within town centres, then on the edge of existing town centres and finally in out of centre locations. Generally Government policy is permissive of town centre uses in out of centre locations where they satisfy the test of sequential preferability and the sites are capable of accommodating the proposal.
13. In terms of the potential impact such a development may have on its surroundings paragraph 26 of the NPPF requests that applicants assess the impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planned investment in a catchment of the area and that the assessment addresses the impact on the viability and vitality of the identified centre and the wider area.
14. The assessment focussed on the West Bridgford District Centre and concluded that the application would not result in any 'significant adverse impacts' when considered against the tests set out in the NPPF.
15. Detailed national planning policy context is set out in Appendix 2.

### **East Midlands Regional Plan (RSS)**

16. On 6th July 2010 the revocation of Regional Strategies with immediate effect was announced by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. However following a legal challenge Regional Strategies (RSs) have been reinstated and the RSS therefore remains part of the statutory development plan for the purposes of determining planning applications within the Rushcliffe Borough District. Nevertheless, the intention of the Government to abolish RSs, through the enactment of the Localism Bill, may be taken into account as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
17. The RS contains Policy 22 'Regional Priorities for Town Centres and Retail Development' which seeks to promote the vitality and viability of existing town centres, promote investment and develop and implement town centre strategies for under-performing areas.

### **Strategic Planning Issues**

#### **Retail**

18. In terms of National Retail planning policy as set out in paragraphs 11-14 above, the County Council is satisfied that the applicants have adequately addressed the issue of the site being located out of centre and that there are no suitable, available or viable sites in an appropriate sequentially preferable location to accommodate the proposed development and is satisfied that the proposed development would not have an 'significant adverse impact' on the West Bridgford District Centre.

#### **Transport**

19. In accordance with the NPPF, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. All developments that generate significant amounts of movement are required to be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment and decisions should take account of whether opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up, safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people, and improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limit the significant impacts of the development. It goes on to say that development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.
20. Once NET is in place the site will be well served by public transport and there are opportunities to further improve sustainable modes of travel to reduce the traffic impact of the development. Whilst there is always some risk of accidents when there are pedestrians and motorists, the Applicant is proposing improvements to Becket Way to keep the two apart. Given that the vast majority of trips associated with the store would already be on the highway network, the traffic impact is only likely to be noticeable very locally, particularly at the Becket Way/Wilford Lane/Compton Acres junction which will be improved. The residual cumulative impact of the Development is therefore unlikely to be so severe as to warrant a recommendation of refusal on highway grounds subject to appropriate planning conditions and S106 Agreement. However, further traffic modelling work at the

Wilford Lane/Compton/Becket Way junction is needed to prove the junction will operate satisfactorily particularly once the tram crossing is in place.

21. Detailed transport comments are set out in Appendix 3.

### Rights of Way

22. There are a number of public footpaths in the area (See Appendix 4) most of these are also cycle paths managed by NCC Highways. It is likely that they will also be adopted, by NCC Highways, especially Footpath No. 24 which runs alongside the railway line and the NET as it is tarmaced and lit.

23. There are no adverse implications arising from this proposal on Rights of Way.

### Ecology

24. Having examined the information submitted with the planning application in relation to ecology there are a number of issues of concern:

- There appears to be a net loss of species-rich neutral grassland, with inadequate mitigation/compensation measures;
- There is uncertainty relating to the likelihood of a receptor site for common lizard being found;
- There is a need for further surveys in relation to Bats; and
- There are issues relating to species of tree and shrub used in the landscaping scheme.

25. As such, until the above ecological concerns are addressed NCC does not support this application as it stands.

26. Full detailed ecology comments are contained at Appendix 5.

### Landscape

27. It is considered that the balance between the presence of the store along Wilford Lane and retention of landscape character has not been achieved. Further planting should be employed to reinforce the treed character of the site in line with the recommended actions from the 2009 Landscape Character Assessment and to reduce the visual impact of the proposal. As such, until the issues outlined below are addressed NCC does not support this application as it stands. The additional mitigative works should address, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

- Reducing views into the site from the south west corner across the meadow grassland area, to both the lower level infrastructure and the upper level of the building through the use of additional tree and shrub planting.

- Reducing the visual presence of the store along Wilford Lane by incorporating additional tree planting to the frontage area. In addition, further retention of existing roadside vegetation along the stretch of Wilford Lane facing the new building would be exceedingly valuable in mitigating the impact of the development in landscape and visual terms from the outset. Highway design and frontage layout must be revisited to make provision to retain the maximum amount of this frontage vegetation as possible.
- Providing a continuous strip of proposed planting along the section of site perimeter opposite the turning head at the end of Bede-Ling.
- Providing additional tree planting south west and west of properties on Bede-Ling to reduce visual impact.
- Providing planting to reduce the landscape and visual impact of the new pupil drop-off facility, particularly along the southern boundary.
- Reducing the impact on landscape character by employing additional tree planting in the north east corner of the site and enhancing the setting as viewed, medium distance, from the north east
- Reducing the impact on landscape character of works to The Beckett Way by re-evaluating the need for extending the pedestrian guard rail to the sides of the carriageway and providing hedgerow / other planting to the back of footway to reduce the impact of widening of footway and reduce the dominance of this section of highway in the local landscape.

28. Detailed landscape and visual comments are set out in Appendix 6.

#### Archaeology

29. From the evidence submitted with the planning application, it is recommended that the applicants be requested to supply additional information on the buried archaeological resource of the site, in accordance with the advice given in paragraph 128 of the NPPF. An archaeological field evaluation is necessary and this work should include an element of desktop assessment and a scheme of trial trenching.

30. Detailed archaeological comments are set out in Appendix 7.

#### Developer Contributions/Section 106

31. The site satisfies the minimum criteria in terms of the scale of development referred to in the Planning Contributions Strategy (January 2010). For transport contributions table 2 of the PCS provides a guidance figure of £64,000 per 1,000sq.m of food retail development in this location. The development is indicated as being 8,778sq.m and therefore a contribution of £561,792 would normally be appropriate.

32. The Application is supported by a Travel Plan. Once agreed it is recommended that this is appended to a Section 106 Agreement to ensure that it is appropriately administered and monitored. The Highway Authority will be seeking a contribution towards providing advice and monitoring of the travel plan to be secured within the S106 Agreement.

## Conclusions

33. The overall National Planning Policy context in relation to retailing, as outlined above, is supportive of 'out of centre' development providing no other sequentially preferable sites are available or suitable and that sites are capable of accommodating such development.
34. Provided that the above transport comments are taken into account the County Council does not have any transport objections to make.
35. The County Council supports the proposed development in principle, however, concerns are raised over the potential impact of the proposal on the ecology, landscape and archaeology of the County. These concerns can not be addressed until significant further work has been undertaken satisfactorily and relevant information has been provided by the applicants.
36. Developer contributions should be sought from the developer as set out in paragraphs 31 and 32 above.

## **Other Options Considered**

37. This report considers all of the relevant issues in relation to the above planning application which have led to the recommendations, as set out below. Alternative options considered could have been to express no or full support for the application.

## **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

38. It is recommended that the development is supported in principle as it is recognised that the site, although out of centre in retail planning terms, is sequentially preferable and is capable of accommodating the proposed Sainsbury's Supermarket.
39. The County Council has concerns over the potential impact of the proposal on the ecology, landscape and archaeology of the County. These concerns can not be addressed until significant further work has been undertaken satisfactorily and relevant information has been provided by the applicants.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

40. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

1) That Rushcliffe Borough Council be advised that whilst the principle of such development in terms of strategic and National retailing policy is supported, Nottinghamshire County Council wishes to raise objections to the proposal owing to the concerns over its potential impact, as yet undetermined, on the ecology, archaeology and landscape of the County.

**Sally Gill**  
**Planning Group Manager**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact: Nina Wilson, Planning Policy Team, ext 73793**

#### **Constitutional Comments (MA 16.05.12)**

41. The financial implications of the report are set out in paragraphs 31 and 32 above.

#### **Financial Comments (16.05.12 SHB)**

42. Committee have power to decide the Recommendation.

#### **Background Papers**

The following link provides access to all the relevant planning application documents used to inform the above report.

<http://www.document1.co.uk/blueprint/Results2.asp?Acpt=424539914&CaseNo=12/00564/FUL&Dept=DC>

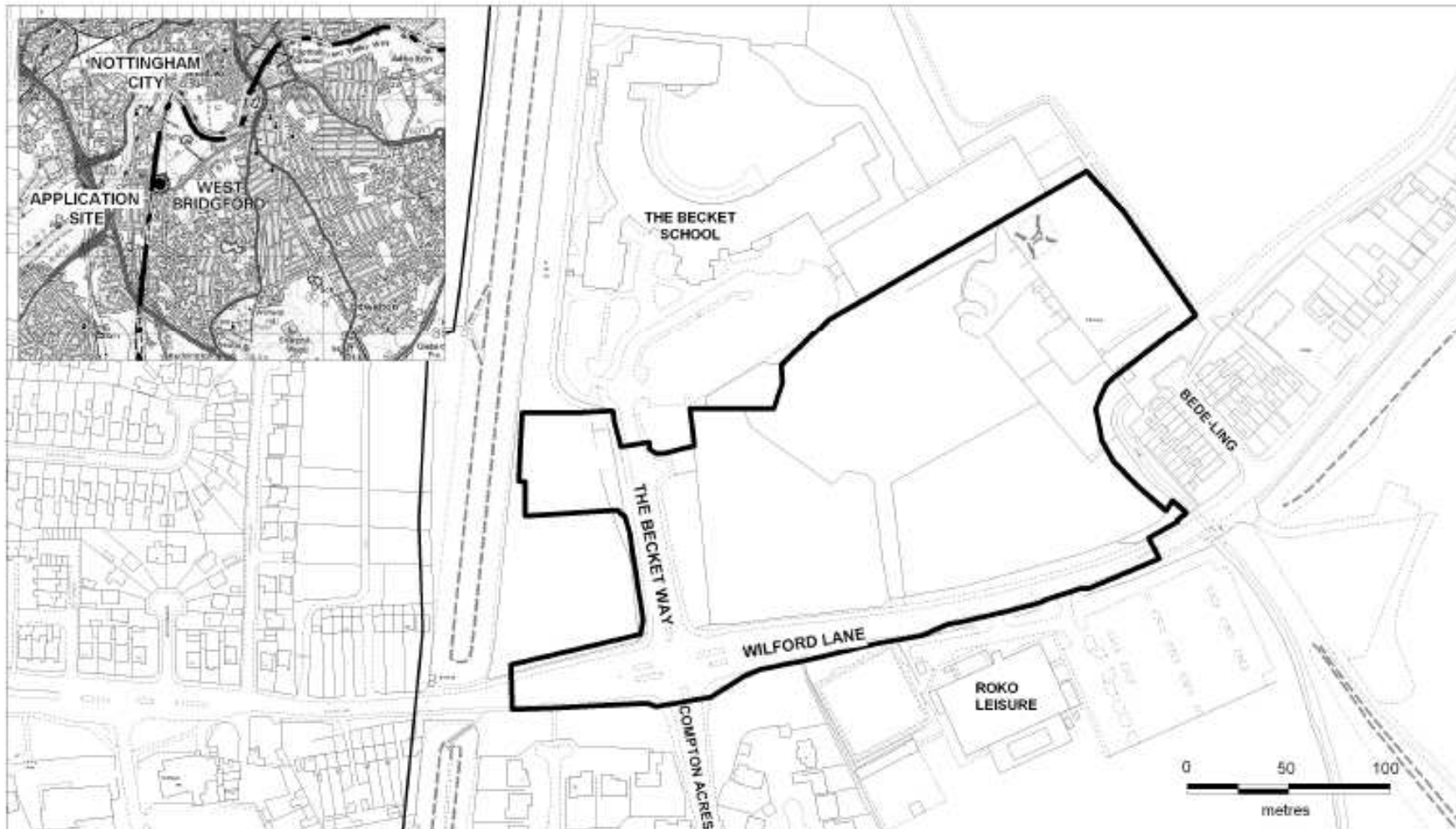
Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

#### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

Ruddington – Councillor Reg Adair  
West Bridgford Central – Councillor Michael Cox  
West Bridgford South – Councillor Barrie Cooper  
West Bridgford West – Councillor Gordon Wheeler

## **Appendix 1 – Site Location Plan**






 Trent Bridge House, Fox Road  
 Nottinghamshire West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 8BJ  
 County Council Tel: 0115 982 3823

**Proposed Development by Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd**  
**Land North of Wilford Lane, West Bridgford.**  
**Planning Application No. 12/00564/FUL**

This map is reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the  
 Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright.  
 Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. (1000010713) (2012)



Scale: 1:2,500  
 Produced by: JW  
 Date: JUNE 2012

## Appendix 2 – Detailed National Planning Policy

23. Planning policies should be positive, promote competitive town centre environments and set out policies for the management and growth of centres over the plan period. In drawing up Local Plans, local planning authorities should:

- recognise town centres as the heart of their communities and pursue policies to support their viability and vitality;
- define a network and hierarchy of centres that is resilient to anticipated future economic changes;
- define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, based on a clear definition of primary and secondary frontages in designated centres, and set policies that make clear which uses will be permitted in such locations;
- promote competitive town centres that provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer and which reflect the individuality of town centres;
- retain and enhance existing markets and, where appropriate, re-introduce or create new ones, ensuring that markets remain attractive and competitive;
- allocate a range of suitable sites to meet the scale and type of retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural, community and residential development needed in town centres. It is important that needs for retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses are met in full and are not compromised by limited site availability. Local planning authorities should therefore undertake an assessment of the need to expand town centres to ensure a sufficient supply of suitable sites;
- allocate appropriate edge of centre sites for main town centre uses that are well connected to the town centre where suitable and viable town centre sites are not available. If sufficient edge of centre sites cannot be identified, set policies for meeting the identified needs in other accessible locations that are well connected to the town centre;
- set policies for the consideration of proposals for main town centre uses which cannot be accommodated in or adjacent to town centres;
- recognise that residential development can play an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and set out policies to encourage residential development on appropriate sites; and
- where town centres are in decline, local planning authorities should plan positively for their future to encourage economic activity.

24. Local planning authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses that are not in an existing centre and are not in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan. They should require applications for main town centre

uses to be located in town centres, then in edge of centre locations and only if suitable sites are not available should out of centre sites be considered. When considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference should be given to accessible sites that are well connected to the town centre.

Applicants and local planning authorities should demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale.

25. This sequential approach should not be applied to applications for small scale rural offices or other small scale rural development.

26. When assessing applications for retail, leisure and office development outside of town centres, which are not in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan, local planning authorities should require an impact assessment if the development is over a proportionate, locally set floorspace threshold (if there is no locally set threshold, the default threshold is 2,500 sq m). This should include assessment of:

- the impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres in the catchment area of the proposal; and
- the impact of the proposal on town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the town centre and wider area, up to five years from the time the application is made. For major schemes where the full impact will not be realised in five years, the impact should also be assessed up to ten years from the time the application is made.

27. Where an application fails to satisfy the sequential test or is likely to have significant adverse impact on one or more of the above factors, it should be refused.

## Appendix 3 – Detailed Transport Comments

<b>DISTRICT:</b>	Rushcliffe	Date received	05/04/2012
<b>OFFICER:</b>	MATTHEW MARSHALL	by D.C.	10/04/2012
<b>PROPOSAL:</b>	CONSTRUCTION OF FOOD STORE (A1), CUSTOMER RESTAURANT, CONCESSION UNITS, SERVICING, CAR PARKING, PARENT DROP OFF	D.C. No.	12/00564/FUL
<b>LOCATION:</b>	WILFORD LANE, WEST BRIDGFORD, NOTTINGHAM		
<b>APPLICANT:</b>	SAINSBURY'S SUPERMARKETS LTD		

### Traffic Impact

In order to inform the Transport Assessment, the Applicant has commissioned the Council's Greater Nottingham Transport Model. This has simulated the highway network conditions over the conurbation at the likely year of opening (2013) plus five years (2018) in accordance with DfT Transport Assessment Guidance. The model output includes predicted traffic growth, additional traffic due to other committed development proposals, and the affect of major transport infrastructure projects that will likely be delivered within that time period such as NET (lines 2 and 3). It then compares traffic conditions with, and without, development. A further sensitivity test has then been undertaken, with, and without, the proposed A453 widening due to the uncertainty of its delivery within the 5 year time period. There is very little difference in the traffic modelling outputs in the local area when comparing the two A453 scenarios.

To inform the model, a vehicle trip rate to and from the food store was agreed by comparing the level of traffic at a similar Sainsbury's store in Arnold which is comparable in terms of location and is one of the busiest stores within the TRICS database (a development traffic survey database). A retail impact assessment has then been undertaken in the area to establish the retail share of local outlets such as ASDA at West Bridgford (39%), Morrisons at Gamston (13%), and West Bridgford Town Centre (5%) based on the total retail draw of local food outlets (Transport Assessment, Appendix H, Table 3.3). The agreed total trip rate is then reassigned over the highway network from these locations to the site. Some of these trips will be pass-by trips i.e. already on Wilford Lane previously on their way to another retail outlet, others will be diverted trips onto Wilford Lane rather than continuing to their previous chosen outlet. The roads and junctions that would experience an increase in flow have then been identified as a result of a combination of development traffic and rerouted existing traffic. Rerouting of traffic occurs when congestion caused by development traffic leads to existing traffic moving to alternative routes. A noticeable increase in traffic is predicted in the evening peak at the junction of Becket Way/Wilford Lane/Compton Acres (>10%), Compton Acres/Rugby Road (>5%), and Compton Acres/Landmere Lane (>5%). However, both the Compton Acres, Rugby Road, and Landmere Lane junctions are expected to continue to operate within

capacity. These junctions have therefore not undergone further junction analysis in the Transport Assessment.

A more detailed analysis of the operation of the Becket Way/Wilford Lane/Compton Acres junction and its interaction of the nearby NET/ Wilford Lane level crossing has undergone further analysis in the Transport Assessment. This has yet to demonstrate that the junction will operate satisfactorily. Further information has therefore been sought.

At the request of the County Council, further modelling has also been supplied contained in an addendum to the Transport Assessment April 2012 for the junctions of the A60 Loughborough Road/Wilford Lane which has been demonstrated to operate over capacity without the development but would be no worse with development, the Clifton Lane/Ruddington Lane which is predicted to operate within capacity during all peak periods with the development in place, and A60 Loughborough Road/Rugby Road which has been shown to operate over capacity in the PM peak hour in 2018 without the development. However, whilst still operating over capacity with the development, there would be some improvement due to traffic diverting from the adjacent ASDA towards the new Sainsbury's.

### **Sustainable Transport**

In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012 there is a presumption in favour of developments that give a choice to how people travel. This site is passed by 5 bus services resulting in up to 13 buses an hour with bus stops located immediately outside the site. There will also be a NET line 2 tram stop just to the west of the site scheduled to be in operation by 2014 that will provide up to 16 trams an hours.

This site is adjacent to a well connected cycle network. A shared foot/cycleway runs along the north side of Wilford Lane, directly past the site. At the junction of Wilford Lane, Compton Acres and Becket Way signalised Toucan crossing facilities are provided across all arms of the junctions. The signalised crossing facilities link to a further shared foot/cycle route which runs along the western side of Becket Way and continues north alongside the railway embankment. The route passes under the railway embankment at Coronation Avenue and then links to a foot/cycle bridge across the River Trent, providing a connection towards the City Centre. East of the site, the shared foot/cycleway running along Wilford Lane links to a signalised Toucan crossing over Wilford Lane. This provides access to a further shared foot/cycle route which continues south through the playing fields and connecting with the Leisure Centre and the residential areas to the south. To the east of the Toucan crossing there is a further foot/cycleway via Bede Ling providing access to Gresham Park, the Emmanuel School, and the Trent Embankment to the northeast.

Bede Ling is a narrow cul-de-sac and therefore offers a poor connection to the wider foot/cycleway facilities to the northeast. This could be vastly improved by diverting the route to the west of Bede Ling connecting with the Wilford Lane facility on the eastern side of the proposed store. This will also provide improved access to Gresham Park. The Highway Authority recommends that this facility is provided as part of the development.

### **Sustainable Transport and Section 106 requirements**

The site satisfies the minimum criteria in terms of the scale of development referred to in the Planning Contributions Strategy (January 2010). For transport contributions table 2 of the PCS provides a guidance figure of £64,000 per 1,000sq.m of food retail development in this location. The development is indicated as being 8,778sq.m and therefore a contribution of £561,792 would normally be appropriate.

The contribution would help to provide integrated transport measures which will provide motorists with an alternative to the car and help achieve modal transfer targets as set out in the Local Transport Plan and Travel Plan. The Highway Authority has identified a number of measures to improve sustainable transport links to this development including the installation of bus shelters and associated real time bus time table information on the bus routes passing the site, 'Supa Shelters' outside the store, a Wilford Lane to Ruddington Lane/Wilford Road foot/cycleway, a public transport information kiosk in the vicinity of the store entrance/atrium, the extension of the Bede Ling foot/cycleway, enhanced evening and Sunday bus services, and schemes identified as being desirable through Travel Plan initiatives. These measures, where not secured by planning condition, will make up the list of schemes to be considered for funding through the contribution.

### **Travel Plan**

The Application is supported by a Travel Plan. Once agreed it is recommended that this is appended to a Section 106 Agreement to ensure that it is appropriately administered and monitored. The Highway Authority will be seeking a contribution towards providing advice and monitoring of the travel plan to be secured within the S106 Agreement.

### **Access and Layout**

It is proposed for the store to be accessed from Becket Way that currently only serves the Becket School. Consequently, the level of traffic on Becket Way would increase from around 266 two-way movements in the AM peak hour to around 804 or circa 202%. Consequently the risk of accidents could potentially increase. However, the volume of traffic is still much lower than the existing traffic flows at the Wilford Lane/Compton Acres/Becket Way junction that already carries around 2,444 vehicles during the same period and across which pedestrians, including pupils' at the school, already negotiate. The speed of traffic on Becket Way is also likely to be much lower than Wilford Lane. It would therefore be unreasonable to assume that the provision of a supermarket would be unsafe in principle adjacent a school on the grounds that there would be more traffic.

To mitigate against the potential for increased pedestrian conflict with vehicles due to the increased volume of traffic on Becket Way, the developer proposes to provide over-wide footway/cycleway, crossing facilities and pedestrian guard rail arrangements to ensure that pupils arriving and departing the school on mass are kept out of the carriageway as far as reasonably possible, and where they need to cross, formal crossing facilities are available.

Whilst I am aware that the School is likely to object to this proposal on grounds including highways, in the event that the Development is likely to receive planning

consent, I would recommend that they consider whether amendments to their access arrangements would assist living with their new neighbour.

The layout includes a small car park to allow parents to drop off and pick up on the western side of Becket Way. This facility is not supported by the Highway Authority as it encourages parents to drive their children to school against sustainable transport objectives and will also encourage cars into the vicinity of the school access unnecessarily. The Highway Authority therefore strongly recommends that this facility be removed. However, it is acknowledged that a formal objection may be difficult to sustain given that there would be a 600+ space car park on the eastern side of Becket Way to serve the store which could also be used by parents to drop off and pick up. If the developer is unwilling to remove the drop off point, the Highway Authority question who will be responsible to manage and maintain this facility?

Car parking has been provided in accordance with the County's standard. However, it is recommended that a number of spaces nearest the entrance are designated for the parking of taxis to reduce the potential of the proposed bus lay-by on Wilford Lane becoming a taxi rank. It is also recommend that the first aisle into the car park is closed at the end nearest the entrance to reduce the potential for vehicular conflict at this point.

#### **Noise/Lighting/Emissions/Trees**

The projected levels of lighting accord with the recommended figures given by the Institution of Lighting Professionals' Guidance Notes for the reduction of Obtrusive Light GN01:2011.

The Application is supported by an Air Quality Assessment Report. The Highway Authority is of the view that this is a matter for the Local Planning Authority to consider. However, the site is in a good location to benefit from sustainable modes of transport as encouraged by the National Planning Policy Framework.

The Arboricultural Report has been prepared in accordance with industry standards and specifications. There are no objections from a highway trees prospective.

The consultant has demonstrated that noise emissions from the store when operational will not give rise to adverse noise impacts on the highway.

#### **Summary**

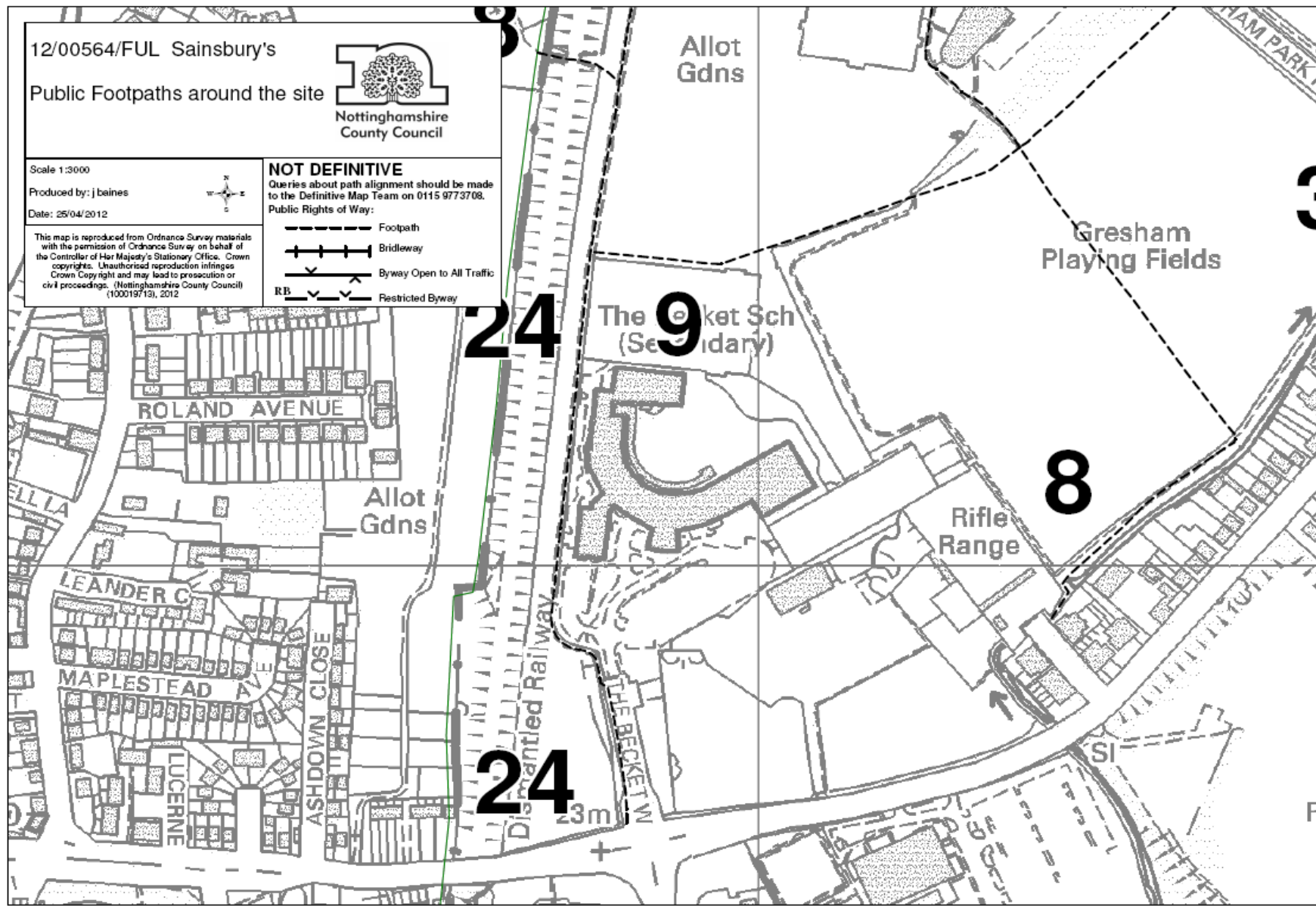
In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. All developments that generate significant amounts of movement are required to be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment and decisions should take account of whether opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up, safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people, and improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limit the significant impacts of the development. It goes onto say that Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.

It would be difficult to find a site better served by public transport once NET is in place and there are opportunities to further improve sustainable modes of travel to

reduce the traffic impact of the development. Whilst there is always some risk of accidents when there are pedestrians and motorists, the Applicant is proposing improvements to Becket Way to keep the two apart. And given that the vast majority of trips associated with the store would already be on the highway network, the traffic impact is only likely to be noticeable very locally, particularly at the Becket Way/Wilford Lane/Compton Acres junction which will be improved. The residual cumulative impact of the Development is therefore unlikely to be so severe as to warrant a recommendation of refusal on highway grounds subject to appropriate planning conditions and S106 Agreement. However, further traffic modelling work at the Wilford Lane/Compton/Becket Way junction is needed to prove the junction will operate satisfactorily particularly once the tram crossing is in place.



## Appendix 4 – Public Footpaths



## Appendix 5 - Detailed Ecology Comments

### Re: RBC planning application 12/00564/FUL – Sainsbury's foodstore on Wilford Lane, West Bridgford 12/00564/FUL

Thank you for consulting the Nature Conservation Unit of the Conservation Team on the above matter. We have the following comments regarding nature conservation issues:

#### A. Designated sites

The proposals do not affect any statutorily designated nature conservation sites; the nearest Site Special Scientific Importance (SSSI), Wilford Claypits, lies approximately 1.2km to the south. The proposals have the potential to affect one locally designated site, the Greythorne Dyke SINC 2/840, which runs up part of the eastern boundary of the site.

#### B. Specific issues

An ecological assessment of the site has been carried out (White Young Green (WYG) Environment, February 2012), providing details of an Extended Phase One Habitat Survey, and surveys for bats (roosts), badgers and reptiles. The main issues arising from these surveys/reports are as follows:

##### 1. *Impact on semi-improved/herb-rich neutral grassland*

Surveys have identified the presence of extensive areas of semi-improved (also described by WYG as herb-rich) grassland covering a large proportion of the site. Although not of Site of Important Nature Conservation (SINC) quality, it is apparent that these grassland areas contain a number of notable species (e.g. pignut and great burnet), and that they may qualify as LBAP or UKBAP habitat.

The extent of the habitat has not been quantified, although it appears that it is in the order of some 2 hectares. The development will result in the almost total loss of this habitat, and no mitigation is proposed; an area of 'meadow grass' is shown on the landscaping plan for the site, but this appears to amount to less than a quarter of a hectare of habitat.

Herb-rich grassland is a habitat which is highly reduced in extent nationally and locally, and which is still being lost through development and neglect. It is therefore necessary to develop mitigation or compensation measures to make this scheme acceptable. Although Rushcliffe BC has chosen not to take part in the current Biodiversity Offsetting pilot being run by the county council, this would be a good opportunity to use this new approach for delivering essential compensation.

##### 2. *Presence of reptiles*

Surveys have confirmed the presence of a small population of common lizards on the site - an extremely notable record; it appears that this is the most southerly

record for the county, and the only record from Greater Nottingham that is south of the River Trent.

It is proposed to translocate the lizard population to a nearby site, although the identity of such a site has not yet been confirmed. The nearby Wilford Disused Railway SINC is ruled out as a possible receptor site, due to its loss to facilitate the NET. However, it is understood that the northern part of the SINC is being retained, so this option should be re-examined.

Given that the translocation is essential, it is considered necessary to have firmed up the identity of the receptor site prior to planning permission being granted – for example, at least in-principle agreement for the owners/managers of potential receptor sites should be gained, as without this the translocation will not be able to go ahead.

In any event, should planning permission be granted, the following issues would need to be addressed:

- A detailed mitigation strategy covering trapping and translocation (as outlined in section 4.2 of Appendix G of the WYG report) would need to be produced before development commenced, secured through a planning condition
- A receptor site would need to be confirmed, and any necessary habitat enhancement works carried out following an agreed programme, prior to translocation occurring, secured through a planning condition
- Resources would need to be provided for the ongoing management of the receptor site in such a way that it supports lizards in perpetuity (or at least for the lifetime of the development), along with periodic monitoring, secured through a S106 agreement

### *3. The need for further surveys*

The WYG report identifies the need for an emergence survey on the tree they identify as TN6, due to its high potential to support roosting bats, should its removal be required. It appears that this tree is to be retained and incorporated within the site landscaping, however I am concerned that it becomes very isolated and is not linked to any foraging areas via a suitable commuting route. As a result, a survey of the tree for its use by roosting bats should be undertaken to allow appropriate consideration to be given to this matter.

It is concerning that no bat activity survey has been carried out at the site, given that it supports areas of mature vegetation and a potential bat roost, is located in a suburban area which is likely to support bats, and has been identified as being of potential value to foraging bats in the WYG report. Given that the majority of this habitat is to be lost, a bat activity survey is considered necessary to allow a proper assessment of the potential impacts of this on bats.

### *4. Japanese knotweed*

A stand of Japanese knotweed has been identified on the site. A planning condition should be used to ensure the production and implementation of an appropriate scheme of control/disposal.

#### 5. Potential impacts on the Greythorn Dyke SINC

No consideration is given in the WYG report to potential impacts on the Greythorn Dyke SINC. Given the county-level importance of this site, it is essential that this matter is addressed. Whilst outside the red-line, there is the potential for impacts on the SINC occurring during construction works (e.g. pollution spills). Therefore, a method statement for working in proximity to this watercourse should be produced and adhered to through a planning condition.

### C. General mitigation

More generally, the mitigation measures proposed in section 5 (ecological impacts and recommendations) of the WYG report should be secured via a planning condition. Specifically, this should cover:

- An update badger survey, prior to the commencement of development
- The dismantling of the roofs of the remaining buildings on site under the supervision of an ecologist
- The submission of measures to deal with potential impacts on bats arising from artificial lighting, informed by the results of the activity survey recommended above
- Vegetation clearance must not take place during the bird nesting season (which runs from March to August inclusive)
- The installation of bird and bat boxes around the site.

In addition, nesting features for Swifts, Starlings and House Sparrows should be incorporated into the building itself to deliver further enhancements at the site, with such details secured through a planning condition.

### D. Landscaping

In order to provide mitigation for the loss of established trees, scrub and other habitat at the site, it is essential that the landscaping scheme is of high quality, using native species appropriate to the local area. Therefore, the following issues identified on the 'Detailed Planting Plan' need addressing:

- a) The following species should not be used they are non-native species:
  - *Berberis darwinii*
  - *Cornus alba*
  
- b) The following species should not be used as they are not native in Nottinghamshire or are appropriate in this locality:
  - *Carpinus betulus*
  - *Fagus sylvatica*
  - *Pinus sylvestris*
  - *Prunus padus*

- *Sorbus aria*
- c) The following species should not be used as they are rare species of historical significance or because there are issues sourcing stock of appropriate genetic origin:
- *Populus nigra* (unless of guaranteed native origin and ideally from local stock)
  - *Malus sylvestris* (unless of guaranteed native origin)
  - *Cornus sanguinea* (unless of guaranteed native origin)
  - *Tilia cordata*

This leaves at least 13 native species as listed. It is suggested that the submission of a revised Planting Plan is made a condition of any permission granted, but that the principle of making these changes is accepted prior to planning permission being granted.

All stock should be of certified native genetic origin, ideally from Seed Zone 402, and this should be made a condition of any permission granted

Finally, the use of Emorsgate seed mix EM1 is supported for the 'meadow grass' area. However, there are some other relatively large areas of grass which are presumably intended for amenity management which could also be sown with EM1, namely the mound in the south-east corner and area along the northern boundary of the site. This matter should be given further consideration.

## **Summary**

A number of issues can be resolved through appropriate planning conditions. However, I am unable to support this application as it currently stands, for the following reasons:

1. a net loss of species-rich neutral grassland, with inadequate mitigation/compensation measures
2. uncertainly relating to the likelihood of a receptor site for common lizard being found
3. the need for further surveys in relation to bats
4. issues relating to species of tree and shrub used in the landscaping scheme

We trust you will find the above comments of use, but if you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Nick Crouch  
Nature Conservation Leader

## Appendix 6 – Detailed Landscape and Reclamation Comments

### RE: PLANNING APPLICATION FOR SAINSBURY'S FOODSTORE ON WILFORD LANE, WEST BRIDGFORD

#### INFORMATION RECEIVED:

Application and associated documents as available on Rushcliffe BC's website (application reference 12/00564/FUL) at 26 April 2012.

Thank you for asking the Landscape and Reclamation Team to comment on the above application.

#### Existing situation

The site lies to the north of Wilford Lane, West Bridgford and sits on land previously occupied by The Chateau public house (now demolished). The area is a mixture of grassland, scrub, and trees, several of which are fully mature, together with hardstanding associated with the former use. Existing outgrown hedgerows with timber post and rail fencing bound the site along Wilford Lane, giving way to an open fenced boundary towards and along The Becket Way. On the land immediately east of Becket Way are a number of individual immature trees which have been planted in association with the new road / school. To the north, stands the recently constructed Becket School, divided from the application site by weldmesh panel fencing. Beyond the site in the north east, are school playing fields with an outgrown hedge and treeline separating this and the proposed development. Residential properties on Bede-Ling abut the site to the east, with an existing mature hedge and trees marking the boundary.

Existing vegetation screens views into the proposed development site for users of Wilford Lane and the Roko health club opposite. Breaks in the hedgerow at former access points allow some views in. At the Wilford Lane / The Becket Way junction, the lack of boundary vegetation gives open views into the south west corner of the site which continue for users of The Becket Way. From The Becket School, views into the site are filtered by existing vegetation within the northern portion of the site, though some direct views remain. Views into the site from the Gresham School playing fields and the majority of houses on Bede-Ling are blocked by existing vegetation though filtered views would exist in winter and from upstairs windows.

#### Existing Landscape Character

A methodology for undertaking landscape character assessment was developed by Nottinghamshire County Council's Landscape and Reclamation Team, based upon Natural England's Landscape Character Guidance (2002). This methodology was produced to update the Nottinghamshire Landscape Guidelines 1998 and to respond to changes in Government legislation (PPS7) which required the greater emphasis on the use of landscape character assessments in informing policy within Local Development Frameworks (LDFs). The landscape character assessment fits national characterisations (as designated by Natural England's 'Character of England Landscape, Wildlife and Cultural Features Map' produced in 2005) and regional characterisations.

In the Greater Nottingham area, including Rushcliffe, the landscape character assessment has been executed by TEP Consultants in a slightly modified fashion to produce similar results. The process allows the landscape to be divided into Regional Character Areas, which are then subdivided into Landscape Description Units (LDU). Each Policy Zone (DPZ) is subsequently allocated a Conservation and Enhancement policy which defines the required approach to future development.

The land proposed for the new Sainsbury's development off Wilford Lane falls within the Trent Washlands Regional Character Area and the Landscape Description Unit 399. LDU399 has been allocated a Policy Zone reference TW055 – West Bridgford Regional Fringe. Characteristic features of this DPZ which relate directly to the land off Wilford Lane, as taken from the Landscape Character Assessment, include

- *...an urban green space character, with recreation, scrub and underused land enclosed by surrounding urban development to the north and the south.*
- *Playing fields to the south have wooded boundaries surrounding large grass fields.*
- *Scrub vegetation is beginning to establish along the river bank and in areas of land surrounding The Becket and Nottingham Emmanuel schools, which also contribute to a wooded character.*
- *Commercial buildings and a newly constructed modern secondary school are present on the south of the river banks with two distinctive seven storey, high density, residential buildings which are prominent on the skyline.*

The landscape condition is judged as Moderate. The landscape strength is also classified as Moderate:

*“The features, although, regularly distributed, are not strong enough to be distinctive or to give a highly unique sense of place except close to the river where the war memorial and river are distinctive features. The land use varies from amenity built development and rough scrub typical of an area of green space within an urban location”.*

The overall landscape strategy is Enhance, with landscape actions including

- *Enhance the fringes of the open spaces through additional woodland.*
- *Enhance fringes of the river through localised tree planting / natural regeneration to soften built form bordering the area*
- *Enhance the school grounds through planting along the boundaries to help soften them and reduce its prominence in views to the north of the river.*

The proposed development should adhere to the landscape strategy for the DPZ and follow the recommended actions as given.

### Tree / Hedgerow Loss

The Design and Access statement indicates (section 3.6) that the scheme will adopt the environmental initiative to “Preserve trees and enhance biodiversity”. The reality is that the scheme leads to the direct loss of 45 trees and 12 tree groups and will have an indirect impact on 5 trees and 4 tree groups on the site. Only 15 of the 72 trees and none of the tree groups surveyed will be unaffected by the proposals. This



loss of trees will have a direct and significant impact on the landscape character of the site.

Section 3.9 states that “To the south west of the site, most of the existing landscape and trees have been retained / enhanced to keep the existing character of the site and provide screening.” This is misleading as there are only two trees in this area which are retained (T26 and T25), whilst a number of trees and tree groups are to be removed (T21, T22, T23, T24, T27, T28 & G1). Screening from retained vegetation in this corner will be minor. No mention appears to be given regarding the treatment of the recent tree planting in this space.

Loss of a substantial amount of existing trees and hedgerow vegetation along the Wilford Lane frontage will have significant visual impact.

### Planting Proposals

All planting across the site is proposed as native species, with the exception of some *Berberis darwinii* and ornamental variety of dogwood (*Cornus alba 'Sibirica'*). This choice of species will assist in the assimilation of the development into the wider landscape, though *Tilia cordata* (lime) and *Carpinus betula* (hornbeam) are perhaps less representative of the Trent Washlands area. Typical species lists for this environment are given in the Nottinghamshire County Council Landscape Guidelines (1998) which, though recently superseded, still contains relevant information. There is also a notable ecological, and often financial, benefit in the choice of native species.

All tree species proposed are deciduous (holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) is evergreen but is included only as part of the general shrub mix). This must be borne in mind when considering their contribution to screening the site, which will be reduced during the winter when the trees are not in leaf.

The plans include for a number of blocks of shrub planting to the perimeter of the site, some incorporating planting of individual trees. These are designed to separate and screen the site from its neighbours. However, some of these bands are very narrow (approx 2m) and are a single tree wide, limiting their screening potential.

### Visual Impact

The new development will have a significant visual impact on short and medium distance views. The Design and Access statement gives one of the development's design principles as “to give the store enough presence on Wilford Lane yet keeping the existing character of the street”. It is implicit in this that the development will have a significant visual impact along Wilford Lane. Proposed planting will offer some screening, particularly of the ground level infrastructure but, for a large proportion of the frontage, the upper level of the development will be visually prominent.

There will be significant impact on views for users of Wilford Lane / Compton Acres as they approach the junction of these two roads and for users of The Becket Way towards the south west of the site. Lack of proposed tree planting is compounded by the loss of existing mature trees in this corner of the site. This negative impact will

include views into the proposed store car park and of the service yard access ramp and of the proposed pupil drop off facility west of The Becket Way. In addition, the extension of pedestrian barrier railings and widening of the footway along The Becket Way will increase the urban feel of the area and have a negative impact on landscape character.

For users of the Becket school the new development will be visually significant though proposed boundary planting will mitigate this to some degree, serving to block localised views of the ground level of the development. Tree planting northern edge of the site will filter views of the bulk of the store and service yard.

Retained tree group number 4 will provide some screening of the development from the outset. However, this will still permit some views of the building from the north east, from the adjacent Gresham playing fields and longer distance views from the public routes beside the River Trent.

The majority of existing trees and tree groups at the eastern end of the site have been retained and this will be of substantial benefit in reducing the visual impact for residents along Bede-Ling. However, views will still be afforded of the new building, particularly from upstairs windows, and of the car park from the turning head at the end of Bede-Ling. The visual impact here is judged as moderate and negative.

#### Further comments and Recommendations.

It is considered that the balance between presence of the store along Wilford Lane and retention of landscape character has not been achieved. Further planting should be employed to reinforce the treed character of the site in line with the recommended landscape actions from the conurbation Landscape Character Assessment and to reduce the visual impact of the proposals.

The additional mitigative works should address, but not necessarily be limited to, the following:

- Reducing views into the site from the south west corner across the meadow grassland area, to both the lower level infrastructure and the upper level of the building through the use of additional tree and shrub planting.
- Reducing the visual presence of the store along Wilford Lane by incorporating additional tree planting to the frontage area. In addition, further retention of existing roadside vegetation along the stretch of Wilford Lane facing the new building would be exceedingly valuable in mitigating the impact of the development in landscape and visual terms from the outset. Highway design and frontage layout must be revisited to make provision to retain the maximum amount of this frontage vegetation as possible.
- Providing a continuous strip of proposed planting along the section of site perimeter opposite the turning head at the end of Bede-Ling.
- Providing additional tree planting south west and west of properties on Bede-Ling to reduce visual impact.

- Providing planting to reduce the landscape and visual impact of the new pupil drop-off facility, particularly along the southern boundary.
- Reducing the impact on landscape character by employing additional tree planting in the north east corner of the site and enhancing the setting as viewed, medium distance, from the north east
- Reducing the impact on landscape character of works to The Beckett Way by re-evaluating the need for extending the pedestrian guard rail to the sides of the carriageway and providing hedgerow / other planting to the back of footway to reduce the impact of widening of footway and reduce the dominance of this section of highway in the local landscape.

Several earth mounds are shown on the proposals plans but no heights are given. The applicant should confirm the maximum height of these mounds in the interests of avoidance of doubt.

Drawing GC.48972.005 Rev D appears to indicate cycle parking to the east of the main entrance whilst in the design and access statement section 4.4 they are shown to the west. This should be clarified.

Please contact me should you have any queries or require any further input concerning this development.

Ann Leigh-Browne  
Landscape Architect  
Landscape and Reclamation Team



## Appendix 7 – Detailed Archaeology Comments

Thank you for your request for comments on the archaeological implications of this proposal. I have checked the application site against the County Historic Environment Record and have the following comments to make.

The proposed development site is located east of the historic village of Wilford on the flood plain of the River Trent. This village is listed as 'Wilesforde' in the Domesday Survey of 1086, which also notes that the settlement contained a fishery and a priest at that time. It is possible that the origins of this village date to the Anglo-Saxon period, as it appears to be relatively well established just twenty years after the Norman Conquest. The name Wilford is thought to derive from the parish church of St. Wilfrids and an ancient ford which crossed the River Trent just north of the village. It is likely that the ford dates to the prehistoric period as a Bronze Age spearhead was found close to the ford site.

Also, from the available evidence it is possible that the proposed development will disturb palaeochannels or other forms of organic deposits associated with the River Trent. Palaeochannels are relict river channels. They are important to archaeology because they frequently contain valuable environmental evidence that can shed light on past climatic and environmental conditions. This type of evidence is usually organic and survives as waterlogged deposits. Unfortunately, by their very nature, palaeochannels and other organic deposits are non permanent and highly fragile.

Recent research has shown that current climate change is having a serious detrimental effect on buried archaeological sites. This is especially true for palaeo-environment deposits. By current estimates, it is highly likely that the majority of such deposits will be destroyed or severely damaged within the next decade. Therefore, due to the serious nature of this threat, the study and sampling of such organic deposits has become one of the county's foremost archaeological research priorities.

It is likely that the application site contains important archaeological remains. If so, it is likely that any surviving archaeological deposits will be able to provide us with very valuable information. However, the proposed development is likely to damage or destroy some of these deposits. Unfortunately, we do not have enough information about the buried archaeological resource to indicate its importance and level of survival and, therefore, the weight that should be attached to its preservation in situ. Archaeology is a material consideration here, and we need to be certain that we have sufficient information for a fully informed decision to be made.

Accordingly, I recommend that the applicants be requested to supply additional information on the buried archaeological resource, in accordance with the advice given in the *National Planning Policy Framework 2012* (paragraph 128). An **archaeological field evaluation** is necessary here, and this work should include an element of desktop assessment, possibly with a scheme of trial trenching.

A professional archaeologist or archaeological organisation should carry out this work, and the results of the evaluation should be available before the planning application is determined. I will be happy to provide further advice or comment as

required. I also would be grateful if I could be notified as to any further progress regarding this application. Please do not hesitate to contact me for further advice.

Yours faithfully,

Dr Chris Robinson  
Archaeological Officer