

Highgate*Transportation*

Woodgate Nurseries and Adjacent Land
Proposal for up to 130 residential dwellings

Technical Note in Response to Network Rail Comments

(2401/TN/08)

January 2025

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This note (HTp/2401/TN/08) has been prepared by Highgate Transportation Limited (HTp) in response to comments received by Network Rail to the planning application (ref: AL/89/24/OUT) for 130 residential dwellings on land at Woodgate Nurseries and Adjacent Land, to the west of Lidsey Road.
- 1.2 The application is supported by a Transport Assessment (ref: HTp/2401/TA/01) and Residential Travel Plan (ref: HTp/2401/RTP/01). It can be noted that HTp have liaised with WSCC Highways throughout the application process, and WSCC Highways recommended no objection to the proposed development.
- 1.3 Comments were provided by Network Rail on 19th September 2024. The comments are contained in **Appendix 1**, in which Network Rail objected to the proposals for the following reasons:
 - i. The proposed development would result in an increase of usage at the Woodgate level crossing, given that local amenities are located to the north of the level crossing. The development is not proposing any mitigation for pedestrians or vehicles to minimise use and safety risk
 - ii. The traffic survey data used in the capacity assessment of the level crossing was dated June 2023, however, there was a change to the timetabling in June 2024 which will modify the time the level crossing barrier is down
 - iii. The application relies on the A29 realignment being brought forward to reduce local congestion and traffic over the level crossing
- 1.4 Comments (ii) and (iii) were addressed by HTp's Technical Note HTp/2401/TN/06/A, in which the capacity modelling was updated using traffic survey data carried out in October 2024. It was demonstrated that the application does not rely on the A29 realignment being brought forward to reduce the local congestion, and that the level crossing would still operate within capacity with the updated barrier survey information, and prior either Phase 1 or Phase 2 of the A29 realignment scheme being in place.
- 1.5 Following Network Rail's review of HTp/2401/TN/06/A, Network Rail set out in email correspondence on 15th January 2025 that they still had concerns over the safety of pedestrians using the level crossing to access facilities to the north of the railway, and pedestrians are still required to cross without an alternative means to provide a safer route to cross. The comments also set out that the most suitable mitigation would be the provision of a footbridge over the railway. The comments are contained in **Appendix 2**.
- 1.6 A meeting was held with Network Rail, Lucken Beck and HTp on 22nd January 2025 to review the concerns regarding pedestrian safety at the level crossing. This provided the opportunity to present the scheme, supporting analysis, the proposals and wider forthcoming highway improvements already secured from various planning permissions in the vicinity of the site.
- 1.7 It was discussed at the meeting that Network Rail consider that the current barrier infrastructure is as safe as it can be, and noted that there is not land available within the applicant's control or highway land to provide a footbridge over the level crossing.

- 1.8 To demonstrate that the proposed development will result in a minimal impact in pedestrian movements at the level crossing, and that no additional mitigation to further improve the safety of the level crossing can be provided at the Woodgate level crossing, this Technical Note draws out relevant information from the Transport Assessment and subsequent technical notes regarding:
- i. The existing footfall at the level crossing
 - ii. The expected footfall associated with the proposed development
 - iii. The proposed pedestrian and cycle improvements within the vicinity of Woodgate level crossing
 - iv. The Road Safety Audit of the proposals
- 1.9 This Technical Note confirms there is no material impact from the (small) increase in pedestrian movements associated with the proposals.

2.0 Response to Network Rail Comments

2.1 As set out at **Paragraph 1.8**, information is to be provided in this Technical Note on the following:

- i. The existing footfall at the level crossing
- ii. The expected footfall associated with the proposed development
- iii. The proposed pedestrian and cycle improvements within the vicinity of Woodgate level crossing
- iv. The Road Safety Audit of the proposals

2.2 These elements are addressed in turn.

Existing Footfall at the Level Crossing

2.3 The survey carried out on 25th October 2024 recorded the following pedestrian numbers in the peak hours:

- i. AM peak hour (0800-0900) – six pedestrians walking south and one pedestrian walking north
- ii. PM peak hour (1700-1800) – two pedestrians walking south and eight pedestrians walking north

2.4 It was confirmed by Network Rail during the meeting on 22nd January 2025 that the numbers recorded in the October 2024 survey corroborated their onsite survey.

2.5 It is therefore considered that the existing number of dwellings to the south of the railway do not currently result in a significant number of pedestrian movements across the railway line.

Expected Footfall Associated with the Proposed Development

2.6 The TRICS assessment contained in the Transport Assessment (HTp/2401/TA/01, dated July 2024) included the expected number of pedestrian arrivals and departures associated with up to 130 dwellings. The TRICS information is replicated in **Table 2.1** for ease of reference.

Table 2.1 – TRICS trip generation - pedestrian

	Trip Generation (130 Dwellings)				
	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour		Daily
	Arrival	Departure	Arrival	Departure	
Pedestrian	7	19	10	5	154

2.7 From **Table 2.1**, it can be seen that there could be up to 26 pedestrian movements in the AM peak hour, which is equivalent to one pedestrian every two minutes, and up to 15 pedestrian movements in the PM peak hour, which is equivalent to one person every four minutes.

- 2.8 It should be noted that **Table 2.1** provides all pedestrians movements, i.e. some pedestrians will continue south from the site, dog walkers, people visiting friends, etc. Therefore, it is considered that the number of pedestrian movements set out in **Table 2.1** is an over-estimate for forecasting pedestrian demand at the railway line itself.
- 2.9 In any event, reflecting on the 130 units proposed and the volume of existing residential properties south of the railway line, around 200 houses, and the caravan park, when considering existing pedestrian demand, only around 4-5% of those trips forecast in **Table 2.1** would generate a pedestrian movement across the railway line. Therefore, it is considered that the increase in pedestrians at the level crossing associated with the proposed development is likely to be very low.
- 2.10 Given that the level crossing is designed to national standard, and equipped with an audible warning and barriers, meaning pedestrians are unable to cross the level crossing while the barriers are down, it is considered that no further mitigation can be provided at Woodgate level crossing. Therefore, although there are still safety concerns with pedestrians at a level crossing, the insignificant increase of pedestrian numbers at the level crossing associated with the proposed development will not further exacerbate the safety of the level crossing to a significant level.

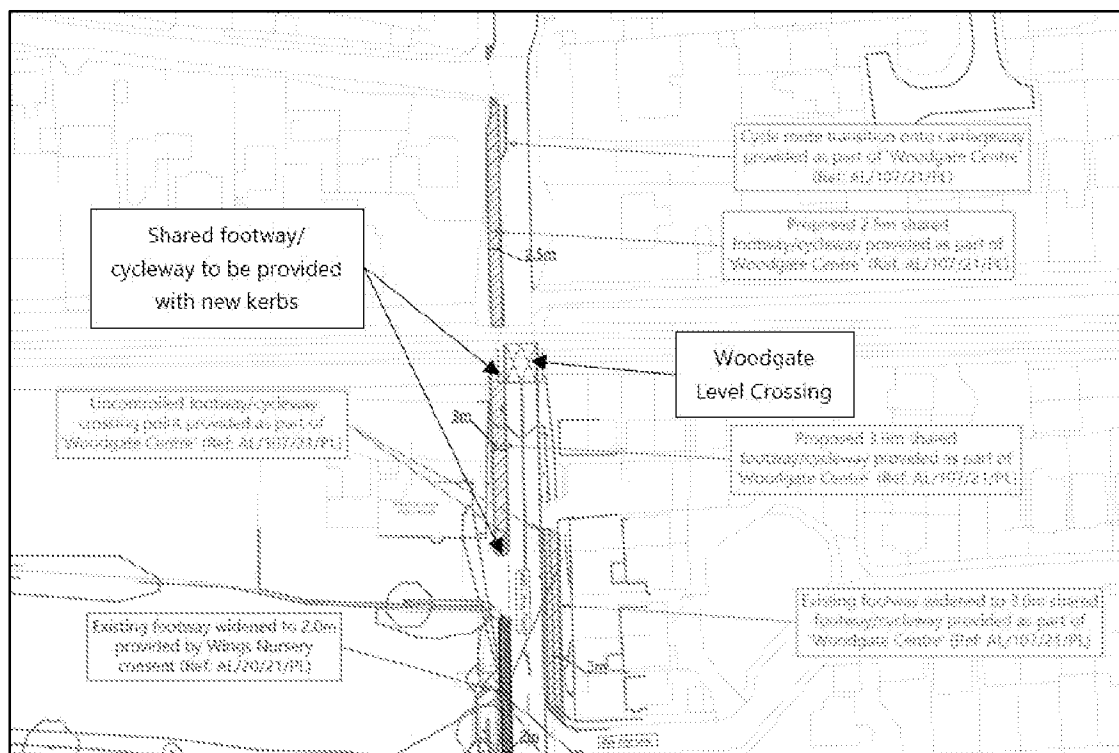
Proposed Pedestrian and Cycle Improvements within the Vicinity of Woodgate Level Crossing

- 2.11 The access arrangement that was granted planning permission as part of the 2022 planning application (ref: AL/129/21/OUT) includes a footway connection to the existing footway along the western side of the A29 Lidsey Road to connect with the existing shared footway/cycle path to the north. This shared path continues north towards Woodgate. The approved access arrangement was also included in the 2023 planning application (ref: AL/70/23/OUT).
- 2.12 The approved access junction can accommodate movements by all modes including foot and cycle.
- 2.13 To the north of the vehicular access, the existing footway along the western side of the A29 Lidsey Road has been widened to 2.0 metres. This widening has been provided as part of the 'Wings Nursery' consented development for up to 71 new units (ref: AL/20/21/PL and continued under s73 application ref: AL/34/22/PL). Along the site frontage of the Wings Nursery development, part of the footway has also been widened to 2.0 metres.
- 2.14 Additionally, the consented 'Woodgate Centre' development for up to 180 residential dwellings to the east of Lidsey Road (ref: AL/107/21/PL) also includes improvements to the existing footway and cycleway network, and improved connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists across the wider area.

2.15 The pedestrian and cycle connections on the A29 and within the vicinity of the site are shown on drawing HTP/2401/09/A, contained in **Appendix 3**, with an extract of the drawing showing the approved works at the level crossing shown in **Figure 2.1**. The cumulatively approved works are summarised below:

- i. A new section of footway on the eastern side of Lidsey Road south of the Willows Caravan Park access
- ii. Widening of existing footways to 2.0 metres
- iii. Upgrades of footways to shared use footway/cycleways, with associated widening and the inclusion of kerbs
- iv. New pedestrian and cycle crossing points

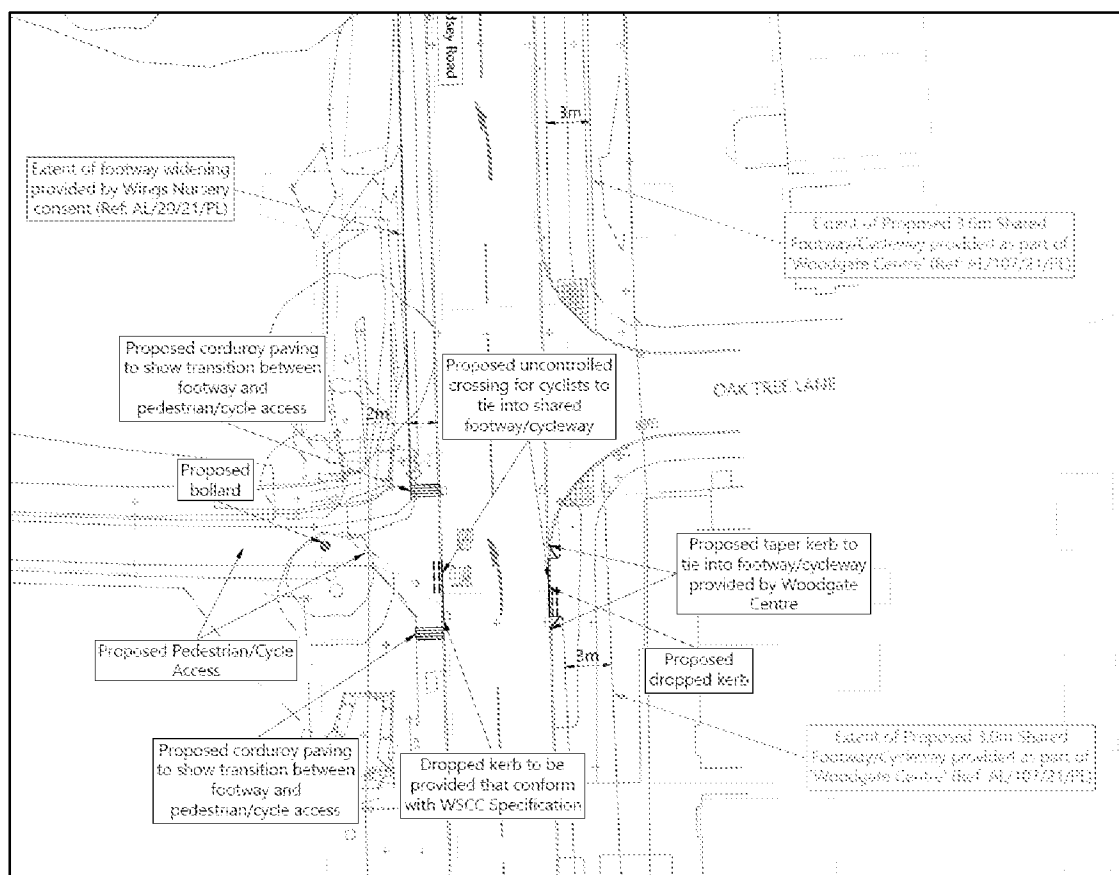
Figure 2.1 – Annotated extract of drawing HTP/2401/09/A



2.16 Given that the existing pedestrian infrastructure will be improved to provide wider footways/cycleways, and that the existing footways will be kerbed, it is considered that the approved works will provide an improvement to the existing infrastructure.

2.17 As part of this planning application, it is proposed to provide a pedestrian/cycle connection from the site to Lidsey Road which will tie into the 3.0 metre wide footway/cycleway provided by the Woodgate Centre application. The proposed connection is shown in **Figure 2.2**, for reference.

Figure 2.2 – Pedestrian and cycle access arrangement



2.18 Given the approved footway and cycleway improvements on Lidsey Road, it is considered that the proposed development will be able to tie into these works, which provides a benefit to pedestrians and cyclists associated with the proposed development.

Road Safety Audit

2.19 An Independent Stage 1 Road Safety Audit was carried out as part of the Transport Assessment works, to review the proposed pedestrian/cycle access shown in **Figure 2.2**. The Road Safety Audit and Designer's Response was accepted by WSCC Highways.

2.20 The independent Road Safety Audit made reference to the level crossing, however, no issues were raised. Given this it is considered that the independent Road Safety Audit did not identify any safety concerns or impacts, related to the proposed development, on the existing level crossing.

2.21 Therefore, it is further considered that the level crossing is acceptable in its current form and the impact of the proposed development, especially with regard to the number of pedestrians continuing north, is minimal.

3.0 Summary

- 3.1 This Technical Note has provided further information to Network Rail with regard to the following:
- i. The existing footfall at the level crossing
 - ii. The expected footfall associated with the proposed development
 - iii. The proposed pedestrian and cycle improvements within the vicinity of Woodgate level crossing
 - iv. The Road Safety Audit of the proposals
- 3.2 It has been demonstrated that the impact of the proposed development, with regard to pedestrian movements, is minimal and there is no material impact from the small increase in pedestrian movements associated with the site.
- 3.3 Furthermore, it has been confirmed that the safety of pedestrians at the level crossing cannot be mitigated any further than is currently in place.
- 3.4 At our meeting with Network Rail on the 22nd January it was concluded that a review of the context and available information provided by HTp, and further assessment by Network Rail, had satisfactorily resolved the previously raised concerns and that Network Rail were therefore minded to remove their objection to the scheme.

Appendix 1

Network Rail Comments – 19th September 2024

Arun District Council, Civic Centre, Maltravers Rd
Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 5LF

www.arun.gov.uk

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<https://www1.arun.gov.uk/planning-application-finder>



From: Craig Hatton [REDACTED]

Sent: Friday, September 20, 2024 9:46 AM

To: Planning <Planning@arun.gov.uk> [REDACTED]

Subject: Network Rail response to AL/89/24/OUT

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organisation. You should take extra care when clicking links or opening attachments - if you are unsure the content is safe contact the IT Helpdesk before clicking or opening.

OFFICIAL

Good Morning

Please find attached Network Rail’s objection to the planning application ref: AL/89/24/OUT

Also attached are our standard informatives related to ASPRO engagement as referred to in the letter



Craig Hatton MA MRTPI
Senior Town Planner
Network Rail Property (Southern)
Office Address: 1 Puddle Dock, London, EC4V 3DS


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Network Rail
1 Puddle Dock
London
EC4V 3DS

Via email only

Network Rail Consultation Response

To	Leanne Richardson – Arun District Council
Application Reference	AL/89/24/OUT
Location	Land at Woodgate Nurseries
Date	19/09/2024

Dear Leanne

Thank you for providing Network Rail with the opportunity to make comment on the above application.

Network Rail is the statutory undertaker responsible for maintaining, operating and developing the main railway network and its associated estate. Our aim is to protect and enhance the railway infrastructure, therefore any proposed development which is in close proximity to the railway line or could potentially affect Network Rail's specific land interests will also need to be carefully considered.

Network Rail have reviewed the submitted documents with the application and **object** to the application.

Reasons

- The proposed development will cause an increase of usage at Woodgate level crossing which is located immediately to the north of the site. The crossing is already extremely busy with traffic flowing over the crossing constantly and additional flows from the proposed development will further exacerbate this. The amenities serving the development are north of the railway and it is likely that most vehicle and pedestrian users will engage the level crossing which brings with it increased risk of safety and queuing due to barrier down time. The development fails to propose any mitigation for pedestrians or vehicles to minimise use and safety risk.
- The Transport Assessment has based its calculations using survey data taken in June 2023 which precedes the additional stopping and non-stopping services running on the West Coastway line to and from Barnham station, introduced in June 2024. These additional services will increase the time that the level crossing barrier is down for. This will impact on congestion and queuing times and thorough assessment of the service changes is required.
- The application also relies on the A29 re-alignment being brought forward to reduce local congestion and traffic over the level crossing. The alignment is somehow from being fully funded and deliverable and therefore cannot be relied upon as a reasonable form of mitigation. Should the re-alignment not materialise there will be no alternative means of reducing traffic over the level crossing. Network Rail does not consider that the A29 re-alignment to be a suitable form of mitigation to reduce the traffic over the level crossing.

In addition to the above, Network Rail has standard informatives that are needed to be adhered to in order to ensure no impact on the safe and efficient running of the railway. Engagement is required with Network Rail's Asset Protection Team (ASPRO).

I trust the above is clear however please do not hesitate to contact me if further discussion is required on any of the points raised above.

Craig Hatton MRTPI
Senior Town Planner



Asset Protection Informatives for works in close proximity to Network Rail's infrastructure

The developer must ensure that their proposal, both during construction and after completion does not:

- encroach onto Network Rail land
- affect the safety, operation or integrity of the company's railway and its infrastructure
- undermine its support zone
- damage the company's infrastructure
- place additional load on cuttings
- adversely affect any railway land or structure
- over-sail or encroach upon the air-space of any Network Rail land
- cause to obstruct or interfere with any works or proposed works or Network Rail development both now and in the future

Network Rail strongly recommends the developer complies with the following comments and requirements to maintain the safe operation of the railway and protect Network Rail's infrastructure.

Future maintenance

The applicant must ensure that any construction and subsequent maintenance can be carried out to any proposed buildings or structures without adversely affecting the safety of/or encroaching upon Network Rail's adjacent land and air-space. Therefore, any buildings are required to be situated at least **2 metres (3m for overhead lines and third rail)** from Network Rail's boundary.

This requirement will allow for the construction and future maintenance of a building without the need to access the operational railway environment. Any less than **2m (3m for overhead lines and third rail)** and there is a strong possibility that the applicant (and any future resident) will need to utilise Network Rail land and air-space to facilitate works as well as adversely impact upon Network Rail's maintenance teams' ability to maintain our boundary fencing and boundary treatments. Access to Network Rail's land may not always be granted and if granted may be subject to railway site safety requirements and special provisions with all associated railway costs charged to the applicant.

As mentioned above, any works within Network Rail's land would need approval from the Network Rail Asset Protection Engineer. This request should be submitted at least 20 weeks before any works are due to commence on site and the applicant is liable for all associated costs (e.g. all possession, site safety, asset protection presence costs). However, Network Rail is not required to grant permission for any third-party access to its land.

Plant & Materials

All operations, including the use of cranes or other mechanical plant working adjacent to Network Rail's property, must at all times be carried out in a "fail safe" manner such that in the event of mishandling, collapse or failure, no plant or materials are capable of falling within 3.0m of the boundary with Network Rail.

Drainage

Storm/surface water must not be discharged onto Network Rail's property or into Network Rail's culverts or drains except by agreement with Network Rail. Suitable drainage or other works must be provided and maintained by the Developer to prevent surface water flows or run-off onto Network Rail's property. Proper provision must be made to accept and continue drainage discharging from Network Rail's property; full details to be submitted for approval to the Network Rail Asset Protection Engineer. Suitable foul drainage must be provided separate from Network Rail's existing drainage. Soakaways, as a means of storm/surface water disposal must not be constructed within **20 metres** of Network Rail's boundary or at any point which could adversely affect the stability of Network Rail's property. After the completion and occupation of the development, any new or exacerbated problems attributable to the new development shall be investigated and remedied at the applicants' expense.

Scaffolding

Any scaffold which is to be constructed within 10 metres of the railway boundary fence must be erected in such a manner that at no time will any poles over-sail the railway and protective netting around such scaffold must be installed. The applicant/applicant's contractor must consider if they can undertake the works and associated scaffold/access for working at height within the footprint of their property boundary.

Piling

Where vibro-compaction/displacement piling plant is to be used in development, details of the use of such machinery and a method statement should be submitted for the approval of the Network Rail's Asset Protection Engineer prior to the commencement of works and the works shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved method statement.

Fencing

In view of the nature of the development, it is essential that the developer provide (at their own expense) and thereafter maintain a substantial, trespass proof fence along the development side of the existing boundary fence, to a minimum height of 1.8 metres. The 1.8m fencing should be adjacent to the railway boundary and the developer/applicant should make provision for its future maintenance and renewal without encroachment upon Network Rail land. Network Rail's existing fencing / wall must not be removed or damaged and at no point during or post construction should the foundations of the fencing or wall or any embankment therein, be damaged, undermined or compromised in any way. Any vegetation within Network Rail's land boundary must not be disturbed. Any fencing installed by the applicant must not prevent Network Rail from maintaining its own fencing/boundary treatment.

Lighting

Any lighting associated with the development (including vehicle lights) must not interfere with the sighting of signalling apparatus and/or train drivers' vision on approaching trains. The location and colour of lights must not give rise to the potential for confusion with the signalling arrangements on the railway. The developers should obtain Network Rail's Asset Protection Engineer's approval of their detailed proposals regarding lighting.

Noise and Vibration

The potential for any noise/vibration impacts caused by the proximity between the proposed development and any existing railway should be made aware to the future occupiers of the site. It must also be assessed in the context of the National Planning Policy Framework which holds relevant national guidance information.

The current level of usage may be subject to change at any time without notification including increased frequency of trains, night-time train running and heavy freight trains. The appropriate building materials should be used to reduce any potential noise disturbance from the railway.

Vehicle Incursion

Where a proposal calls for hard standing area/parking of vehicles area near the boundary with the operational railway, Network Rail would recommend the installation of a highways approved vehicle incursion barrier or high kerbs to prevent vehicles accidentally driving or rolling onto the railway or damaging lineside fencing.

Landscaping

Any trees/shrubs to be planted adjacent to the railway boundary these shrubs should be positioned at a minimum distance greater than their predicted mature height from the boundary. Certain broad leaf deciduous species should not be planted adjacent to the railway boundary as the species will contribute to leaf fall which will have a detrimental effect on the safety and operation of the railway. Network Rail wish to be involved in the approval of any landscaping scheme adjacent to the railway. Any hedge planted adjacent to Network Rail's boundary fencing for screening purposes should be so placed that when fully grown it does not damage the fencing or provide a means of scaling it. No hedge should prevent Network Rail from maintaining its boundary fencing. If required, Network Rail's Asset Protection team are able to provide more details on which trees/shrubs are permitted within close proximity to the railway.

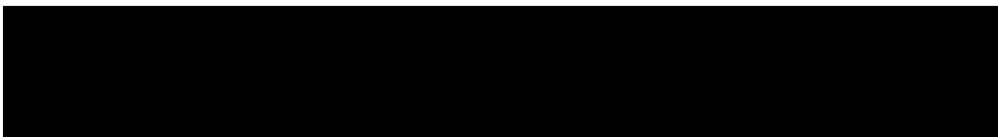
Existing Rights

Whilst not a planning matter, we would like to remind the applicant of the need to identify and comply with all existing rights on the land. Network Rail request all existing rights, covenants and easements are retained unless agreed otherwise with Network Rail.

Property Rights

notwithstanding the above, if any property rights are required from Network Rail in order to deliver the development, Network Rail's Property team will need to be contacted.

If you would like to discuss any of the above, please contact your local Network Rail's Asset Protection team:



To identify your route, please use the link: <https://www.networkrail.co.uk/running-the-railway/our-routes>

Appendix 2

Network Rail Comments – 15th January 2025

Alice Howse

From: Craig Hatton
Sent: 15 January 2025 09:39
To: Alice Howse
Cc: Fiona Bennett
Subject: RE: (2401) Land at Woodgate Nurseries (ref: AL/89/24/OUT) - Network Rail Consultation Response

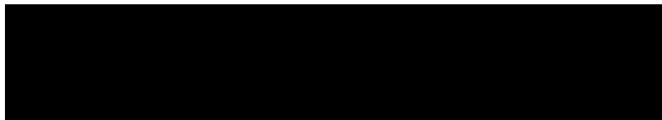
OFFICIAL

Hi Alice

We acknowledge the comments from WSCC however we still have concerns over the safety of pedestrians using the crossing to access facilities to the north of the railway. This still requires pedestrians to cross without an alternative means to provide a safer route to cross



Craig Hatton MA MRTPI
Senior Town Planner



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Alice Howse

From: Williams, Suzanna (Capita Public Service)
Sent: 15 January 2025 14:54
To: Nigel Jarvis
Cc: David Easton
Subject: Woodgate Nurseries - Network Rail response

Afternoon Nigel,

Happy New Year to you.

Network Rail have come to me with the below:

The comments from WSCC are noted however Network Rail retain concerns over increased usage of Woodgate level crossing from this, and other proposed or consented development schemes nearby.

Of particular concern is pedestrians using the level crossing to access the facilities to the north of the railway, including the primary school, local shops and other community facilities. The BEW allocation potentially created an opportunity to allow the level crossing to be closed however, in the absence of this, the existing barriers provide a high degree of protection for motorists to ensure they stop when a train is passing. However, the lack of protection or alternative means of crossing for pedestrians remains a significant concern for Network Rail.

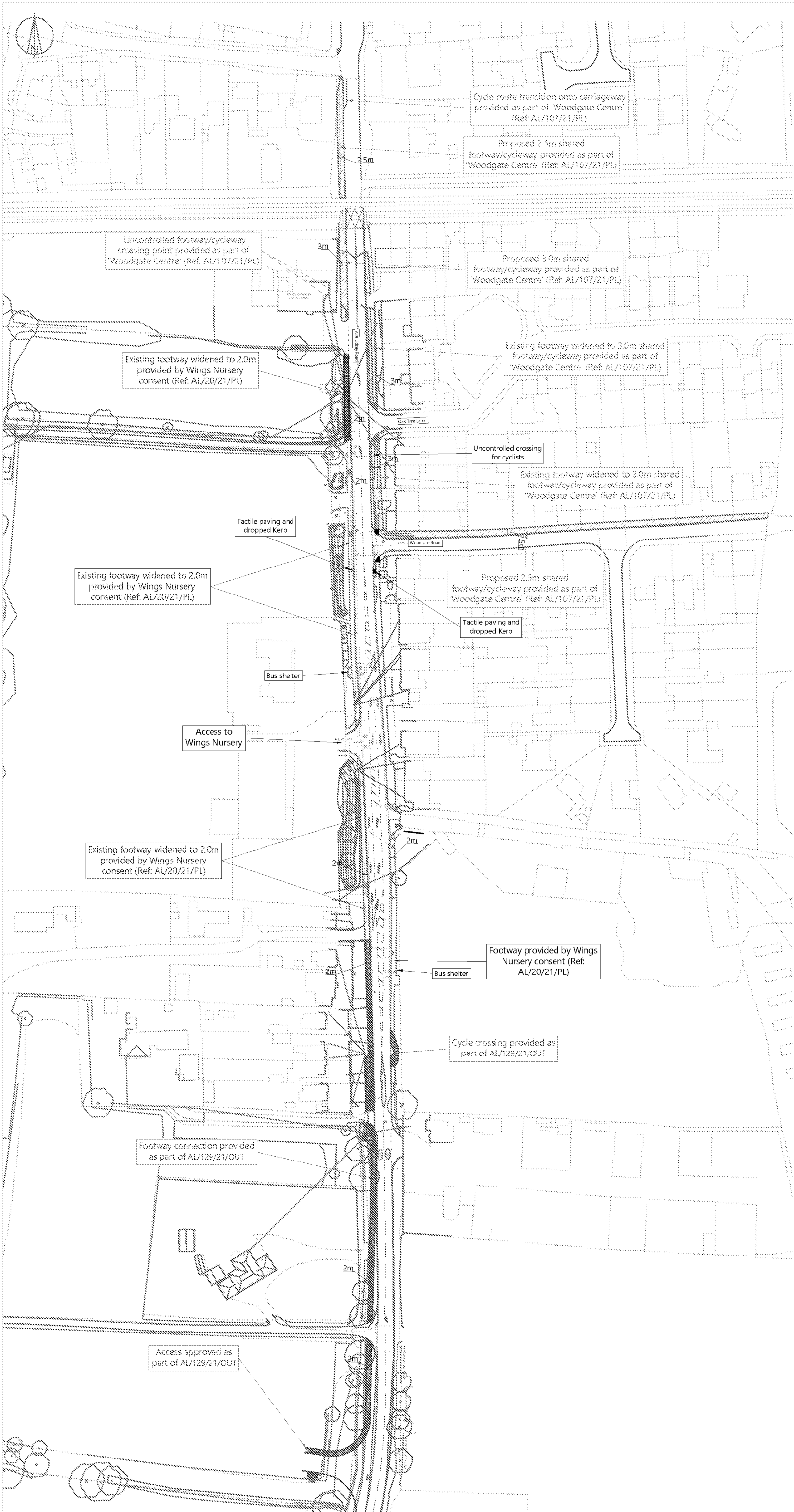
Based on the current layout of the crossing, the most suitable mitigation for pedestrians would be the provision of a footbridge over the railway, thereby ensuring pedestrians have the choice not to interact directly with the crossing and provides a safe means of crossing. This would significantly improve the current safety concerns, albeit not entirely remove them.

Kind Regards
Suzanna

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Appendix 3

Drawing HTP/2401/09/A – Approved Footway and Cycleway Improvements on A29



NOTES:

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Drawing based on Topographical Survey (Ref: 17661126) v3 produced by Ollington Land Surveys Ltd and dated 03/05/2024

KEY

Proposed widening as part of AL/107/21/PL Application

Proposed widening as part of AL/20/21/PL Application

Footway and access proposed as part of AL/129/21/PL Application

A	Updated topographical survey	AH	10/06/24
CSH	ISSUED FOR REVISION	BY	DATE

PROJECT: LAND AT WOODGATE NURSERIES		
CLIENT: HANBURY PROPERTIES		
PROJECT REF: 2401	DRAWING NUMBER: 09	SCALE (AS SHOWN): 1:1,500
SHEET NUMBER: SHEET NUMBER 1 OF 1		
SCALE BAR:		
HighgateTransportation www.highgatetransportation.co.uk First Floor, 43-45 Park Street Bristol BS1 5NL 01179 349 121 © Highgate Transportation Limited		
TITLE: APPROVED FOOTWAY AND CYCLEWAY IMPROVEMENTS ON THE A25		
DATE: 24/04/24	DRAWN BY: JT	CHECKED BY: AH