

**HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**Decision Report**

<b>Decision Maker:</b>	Regulatory Committee
<b>Date:</b>	20 April 2022
<b>Title:</b>	Realignment works and alterations to the northerly section of Blackbushes Road including the addition of a fourth arm on the A30/A327 Hartford Bridge Flats junction roundabout, plus changes to street lighting, road lining, road signing and drainage and new boundary fencing alongside the western and eastern boundaries at Blackbushes Road, Hartley Wintney and land to the west of Blackbushes Road (No. 22/00214/HCC) (Site Ref: HRH003)
<b>Report From:</b>	Assistant Director of Waste, Planning and Environment

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### **Recommendation**

1. That planning permission be GRANTED subject to the conditions listed in **Appendix A.**

### **Executive Summary**

2. The planning application seeks approval for a road improvement scheme at the junction of the A30/A327 'Hartford Bridge Flats' roundabout near to the A30's southern carriageway junction with Blackbushes Road, near Hartley Wintney in north-eastern Hampshire. The proposal would replace the existing staggered junction arrangement which includes a three-arm roundabout solution and nearby left turn into and out of Blackbushes Road with a four-armed roundabout, formally incorporating the A30, A327 and Blackbushes Road junctions.
3. The proposed scheme is part of a joint funded Hampshire County Council and Department for Transport '[Pinch Point' Programme Improvement Scheme](#) to replace the former staggered junction arrangement, with the three-arm roundabout solution, completed in May 2015. However, the scheme provided only a partial solution, as time constraints linked to funding precluding the provision of a fourth arm within Phase 1 of the scheme due to the requirement for land acquisition. Phase 2 - the subject of this proposal - is therefore required to complete the scheme to create a four-arm roundabout and ensure that the full benefits can be fully realised.
4. The addition of a fourth arm on the A30/A327 Hartford Bridge Flats Junction will provide direct access for traffic seeking to travel southbound on Blackbushes Road from the A327 southbound or A30 eastbound. This traffic will no longer be required to use a more convoluted route by diverting east along the A30 and u-

turning at A30 Blackbushes Roundabout. The northern section of Blackbushes Road will effectively be moved 35m westward to join the roundabout.

5. Alterations to street lighting, road lining, road signage, road drainage and new boundary fencing alongside the western and eastern boundaries are also included.
6. The purpose of the scheme is to reduce journey times for traffic currently using the roundabout junction, and in turn reduce emissions to the environment from vehicles making unnecessarily longer trips, including through delays at the existing staggered junction and its three-arm roundabout arrangement.
7. It is considered that the proposal would be in accordance with the relevant policies of the adopted [Hart Local Plan \(2020\)](#).
8. This application is being considered by the Regulatory Committee as it is considered to be a significant County Council Regulation 3 infrastructure development.
9. No statutory consultees objected to the proposal. No representations were received from members of the public.
10. The Regulatory Committee did not visit the site in advance of the Regulatory Committee meeting. This was due to there being a lack of safe parking and pedestrian areas adjoining the public highway.
11. In summary, it is considered that the proposal would:
  - meet an identified need;
  - be acceptable in terms of highway capacity and safety;
  - not adversely affect the local landscape;
  - not cause any additional flood risk and protect the quality of groundwater and surface water;
  - not adversely affect local archaeology and cultural heritage;
  - not have an adverse effect on ecology and biodiversity;
  - have a positive effect in terms of climate change; and
  - not cause unacceptable adverse amenity impacts.
12. Therefore, it is recommended that permission be GRANTED subject to the conditions in **Appendix A**.

## The Site

13. The proposed development is located within the administrative boundary of Hart District Council (HDC), situated approximately 1.5 kilometres (km) north-east of Hartfordbridge, 2.5km north-east of Hartley Wintney and 2.5km south-west/west of Yateley/Yateley Common (**see Appendix B - Committee Plan**).

14. The A30/A327 Hartford Bridge Flats junction site is located in north-east Hampshire close to the Surrey boundary. The A30 is recognised as an important link between towns in Hampshire, Surrey and Berkshire, and the Thames Valley and London.
15. The site is situated in the countryside and is flanked by woodland and mineral workings, some being active and some closed. Blackbushe Airport is situated approximately 450 metres (m) due east of the site.
16. The nearest residential properties, including isolated properties and the Star Hill Caravan Site, are situated due west of the site, within a 250m radius.
17. The site of the proposed development occupies approximately 3.2 hectares (**see Appendix C - Site Plan**). It comprises public highway maintained by the County Council - comprising sections of the east-west running A30, the north-south running A327 and the north-south running Blackbushes Road (a C road) and adjoining undeveloped land classified as 'public highway' also.
18. The application site is situated within close proximity to several designated sites and locations and known environmental constraints, including:
  - Thames Basins Heaths SPA;
  - Castle Bottom to Yateley and Hawley Commons SSSI - located to the east of the A327 and south of the A30 including the area known as Yateley Heath Wood, is designated for the presence of habitat suitable for a range of species including Dartford Warbler;
  - Bramshill Park (Historic Park and Garden);
  - Faeston Dic Linear earthwork Scheduled Ancient Monument;
  - Groundwater Vulnerability Zones; and
  - Blackbush Airport Safeguarding Area.
19. The application site's south-eastern margin lies within the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area (SPA). The SPA is designated as a sensitive habitat for ground nesting birds comprising the Dartford warbler, nightjar and woodlark.
20. The Environment Agency Flood Risk Map indicates that the site is wholly within Flood Zone 1, and does not lie within a Groundwater Source Protection Zone. It overlies a Secondary A bedrock aquifer and lies within a Drinking Water Safeguarded Zone.
21. The application site, specifically the A30, forms part of the Strategic Road Network.

## **Planning History**

22. There is no recent County Council planning history for the application site itself. Phase 1 was completed as 'highway improvement works' and as permitted development.

23. With the application site comprising public highway - section of the A30, A327 and Blackbushes Road - and adjoining land classed as 'highway land', the County Council as the 'Local Highway Authority' is responsible for the monitoring and maintenance of them, as well as any urgent repair works.
24. The County Council, in its role as the Minerals and Waste Planning Authority, has a long planning history with several sites in close proximity to the application site, the nearest being Bramshill Quarry. Bramshill Quarry is an active quarry, and comprises an area of approximately 120 hectares, north and south of the A30, west of the A327 and east and west of Blackbushes Road. The site entrance and plant site area lie to the west of the A327.
25. The Quarry also includes a conveyor bridge over the A30, which moves extracted sand and gravel northward toward its processing and storage areas. The bridge is located approximately 60m due west of the application site. Plant transporting extracted sand and gravel to the southern end of the conveyor bridge, crosses Blackbushes Road approximately 230m south of the A30 junction. This crossing point lies within the application's southern margin.
26. Both Bramshill Quarry and its conveyor bridge are the subject of separate planning applications (planning permissions [20/03153/HCC](#) and [21/00052/HCC](#)) seeking extensions of time for mineral extraction and the retention of the bridge to move extracted mineral until June 2026. These were approved by Regulatory Committee in November 2021 subject to conditions and the completion of section 106 legal agreements. These agreements are currently being prepared.

## The Proposal

27. A joint funded Hampshire County Council and Department for Transport '[Pinch Point](#)' Programme Improvement Scheme to replace the existing staggered junction arrangement with a three-arm roundabout solution was completed in May 2015 (see **Appendix D - Existing Layout**). However, the scheme provided only a partial solution, as time constraints linked to the 'Pinch Point' funding window precluded the provision of a fourth arm within Phase 1 of the scheme due to the requirement for land acquisition. Phase 2 - the subject of this proposal - is therefore required now to complete the scheme to ensure that the full benefits can be fully realised.
28. The addition of a fourth arm on the A30/A327 Hartford Bridge Flats Junction will provide direct access for traffic seeking to travel southbound on Blackbushes Road from the A327 southbound or A30 eastbound. This traffic will no longer be required to use a more convoluted route by diverting east along the A30 and u-turning at A30 Blackbushes Roundabout. The northern section of Blackbushes Road will effectively be moved 35m westward to join the roundabout (see **Appendix E - Proposed Layout**).
29. The purpose of the scheme is to reduce journey times for traffic currently using the roundabout junction, and in turn reduce emissions to the environment from

vehicles making unnecessarily longer trips, including through delays at the existing staggered junction and its three-arm roundabout arrangement.

30. The area formerly occupied by the northern end of Blackbushes Road would be replanted and restored to an agreed mix of species and vegetation type that would be appropriate to the locality and the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA).
31. Alterations to street lighting, road lining, road signage, road drainage and new boundary fencing alongside the western and eastern boundaries are also included.
32. Elements of the proposed development that would be undertaken as 'permitted development' by the Highway Authority (under the provisions of the [Town & Country Planning \(General Permitted Development \(England\) Order 2015](#) as amended.
33. All construction-related activities would be undertaken within a Construction Management Plan (CMP) to ensure road safety is maintained. This would include the compound required throughout the duration of the project to house materials, plant, machinery, vehicles, welfare facilities etc, which would all be contained within the red line application site.
34. The project would take 12 months to complete and construction hours, including the delivery and despatch of vehicles would be between the hours of 07:00 and 18:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 and 13:00 on Saturdays. There would be no working on Sundays or recognised Public or Bank Holidays.
35. Construction access would be via the A30 and a segregated feeder lane into and out of the compound area. Temporary traffic signals and lane closures are also likely to be employed.

## **Development Plan and Guidance**

36. Paragraph 47 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) (NPPF) requires 'applications for planning permission (to) be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise'. Therefore, consideration of the relevant plans, guidance and policies and whether the proposal is in accordance with these is of relevance to decision making.
37. The following plans and associated policies are considered to be relevant to the proposal:

### **National Planning Policy Framework (2021) (NPPF)**

38. The following paragraphs are relevant to this proposal:
  - Paragraph 2: Determination of planning permissions;
  - Paragraphs 10 - 12: Presumption in favour of sustainable development;

- Paragraphs 38 - 48: Decision making;
- Paragraphs 55 - 56: Planning conditions;
- Paragraph 57: Planning obligations;
- Paragraph 81: Support of sustainable economic growth;
- Paragraphs 84 - 85: Supporting a prosperous rural economy;
- Paragraph 92: Healthy, inclusive and safe places;
- Paragraph 100: Protecting and enhancing public rights of way and access;
- Paragraphs 104, 110 - 113: Sustainable transport;
- Paragraphs 119 - 120: Effective use of land;
- Paragraphs 126 - 136: Design;
- Paragraphs 153 - 158: Planning and climate change;
- Paragraphs 159 - 169: Planning and flood risk;
- Paragraphs 174, 180 - 182: Contributions and enhancement of natural and local environment and habitats and biodiversity;
- Paragraphs 180 - 181: Biodiversity and planning;
- Paragraphs 183 - 188: Ground conditions and pollution; and
- Paragraphs 189 - 208: Conserving and enhancing historic environment.

### **National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)**

41. Elements of National Planning Practice Guidance NPPG (Live) are also relevant, those being:
- Air quality (1 November 2019);
  - Climate change (15 March 2019);
  - Flood risk and coastal change (20 August 2021);
  - Healthy and safe communities (1 November 2019);
  - Historic environment (23 July 2019);
  - Light pollution (1 November 2019);
  - Natural environment (21 July 2019);
  - Noise (22 July 2019);
  - Travel plans, transport assessments and statements (6 March 2014);
  - Use of planning conditions (23 July 2019); and
  - Water supply, wastewater and water quality (22 July 2019).

### **South East Plan (SEP)**

40. The following saved policy is relevant to the proposal:
- Policy NM7: Thames Heath Special Protection Area (saved policy).

### **Hart Local Plan (2020)**

42. The following policies are relevant to the proposal:
- Policy SD1 (Sustainable development);
  - Policy NBE1 (Development in the countryside);
  - Policy NBE2 (Landscape);
  - Policy NBE3 (Thames Basin Heaths SPA);

- Policy NBE4 (Biodiversity)
- Policy NBE5 (Managing flood risk);
- Policy NBE6 (Water quality);
- Policy NBE8 (Historic environment);
- Policy NBE9 (Design);
- Policy NBE11 (Pollution);
- Policy INF2 (Green infrastructure); and
- Policy INF3 (Transport).

### Hartley Wintney Neighbourhood Plan (2017 - 2032) (2019)

43. The Plan's purpose is to guide and influence development in the Parish using its policies, alongside the Hart Local Plan and its policies, to improve the lives of residents, businesses and visitors and quality of the environment within it.

### Hampshire Local Transport Plan (2011 to 2031) version 3 (Reviewed 2013)

44. The County Council's 'Transport vision' includes ensuring that when the residents of Hampshire travel, they can:
- Reliably get to the places they need to go to;
  - Choose how, when (and whether) to travel;
  - Travel safely, for themselves and others; and
  - If possible, enjoy their journey.
45. The County Council's intentions are to deliver "*Safe, efficient and reliable ways to get around a prospering and sustainable Hampshire*".

### **Consultations**

46. **County Councillor Davies:** Was notified.
47. **Hart District Council Planning:** No objection.
48. **Hart District Council Environmental Health:** Was notified.
49. **Eversley Parish Council:** Proposal is welcomed.
50. **Hartley Wintney Parish Council:** Supports proposal.
51. **Local Highway Authority:** No objection subject to a Construction Traffic Management Plan being imposed via condition.
52. **Lead Local Flood Authority:** No objection to the proposed drainage measures being implemented in full.
53. **County Arboriculturist:** Applicant's tree protection plan and supervision during works agreed with.

54. **County Archaeologist:** No issues.
55. **County Ecologist:** No objection subject to the mitigation measures being implemented within the Sections 5.3-5.12 of their Ecological Appraisal (May 2021).
56. **County Landscape:** No objection but the roadside planting and restoration works, including details on soil and species' mixes are required, to prevent weed growth and encourage biodiversity. Concerns raised over appearance of palisade fencing on western side of road.
57. **Blackbushe Airport:** Supports proposal. New signage and lampposts must be no higher than existing and the methods of installing these should not use cranes that exceed the existing treeline. Any new lighting must not cause dazzling risks to aircraft.
58. **Farnborough Airport:** No objection.
59. **Ministry of Defence (RAF Odiham):** No objection.

## Representations

60. Hampshire County Council's [Statement of Community Involvement \(2017\)](#) (SCI) sets out the adopted consultation and publicity procedures associated with determining planning applications.
61. In complying with the requirements of the SCI, Hampshire County Council:
  - Published a notice of the application in the Hampshire Independent;
  - Posted 4 site notices around the site;
  - Consulted all statutory and non-statutory consultees in accordance with [The Town and Country Planning \(Development Management Procedure\) \(England\) Order 2015](#); and
  - Notified all residential properties (by letter) within 50 metres from the site boundary, and the nearby Star Hill Caravan Site situated approximately 260m due west/north-west.
62. As of 05 April 2022, no representations to the proposal have been received.

## Commentary

### Principle of the development

63. The principle of the construction and delivery of these road improvement works is part of an agreed and approved joint funded Hampshire County Council and Department for Transport '[Pinch Point](#)' Programme Improvement Scheme.
64. Completed in May 2015, Phase 1 replaced the former staggered junction arrangement, with the current three-arm roundabout solution and staggered



junction between the southern westbound carriageway of the A30 and Blackbushes Road. However, as already noted, the scheme provided only a partial solution, as time constraints linked to funding precluding the provision of a fourth arm within Phase 1 of the scheme due to the requirement for land acquisition.

66. With land acquisition now nearing completion, the required Phase 2 - the subject of this proposal - to complete the scheme to create a four-arm roundabout and ensure that the full benefits can be fully realised. This is supported by Policy INF3 (Transport) of the adopted [Hart Local Plan \(2020\)](#). This policy states that Hart District Council will support development that:
- a) integrate into existing movement networks;*
  - b) provide safe, suitable and convenient access for all potential users;*
  - c) provide an on-site movement layout compatible for all potential users;*
  - d) provide appropriate parking provision, in terms of amount, design and layout, in accordance with the Council's published parking standards, or as set out in Neighbourhood Plans;*
  - e) provide appropriate waste and recycling storage areas and accessible collection points for refuse vehicles;*
  - f) do not have a severe impact on the operation, safety or accessibility of the local or strategic highway networks;*
  - g) mitigate impacts on the local or strategic highway networks, arising from the development itself or the cumulative effects of development; and*
  - h) protect and where possible enhance access to public rights of way.*
67. The Policy's aims are to support development proposals that '*integrate into existing movement networks*' and which will not have a '*residual impact on the operation, safety or accessibility to either the local or strategic highway networks*'. The proposal would satisfy both of these criteria through linking into the existing road network and improving operations and accessibility for road users whilst maintaining current levels of safety.
68. The County Council's [Local Transport Plan \(2013\)](#) seeks to help road users '*reliably get to the places they need to go to*' and '*if possible, enjoy their journey*', whilst delivering "*Safe, efficient and reliable ways to get around a prospering and sustainable Hampshire*". The completion of Phase 2 and the installation of a four-arm roundabout would reduce travel times, avoid vehicles having to make unnecessary u-turns and maintain the existing levels of safety on this section of the County's local and strategic road network.
69. Therefore, the principle of the development is supported by Policy INF3 (Transport) of the [Hart Local Plan \(2020\)](#) and the Hampshire [Local Transport Plan \(2013\)](#), and as such is considered to be in accordance with the Development Plan.

## Demonstration of need

70. As previously stated, the assessment of need for Phase 2 - to complete the approved scheme to create a four-arm roundabout - of the joint funded Hampshire County Council and Department for Transport '[Pinch Point Programme Improvement Scheme](#)' remains accurate and relevant today. The delay was due to problems completing land acquisition, which in turn affected the funding window in the last decade.
71. With land acquisition progressing, the deliverability of the agreed and approved scheme can now be more certain. Should planning permission be granted, the applicant would have three years to commence the development. This is sufficient time to ensure that funding can still be secured and there is sufficient time to complete the project.
72. The A30 (south-west corridor at this location) provides a strategic and important link between towns in Hampshire, Surrey and Berkshire, and the Thames Valley and London. This includes to and from the M3 motorway and the nearby Blackbushe Airport.
73. In the intervening years since Phase 1 was completed, traffic usage has increased on this section of the A30 and the delays for vehicles wanting to enter and exit Blackbushes Road from the A30 whether travelling west or east remains.
74. Therefore, the proposed development remains identified as a new scheme that can contribute significantly to reducing journey times in accordance with Policy INF3 (Transport) of the [Hart Local Plan \(2020\)](#) and the Hampshire [Local Transport Plan \(2013\)](#).

## Highway capacity and safety

75. The proposed development has already been assessed through modelling and feasibility studies in terms of ensuring highway capacity can be satisfied and maintained through its delivery prior to Phase 1 being completed in 2015.
76. Whilst the delay in implementing Phase 2 (also approved pre-2015) would result in increased levels of traffic using the affected road network, the principal behind the scheme - reducing journey times for vehicles joining and leaving the A30 from Blackbushes Road - remains current and relevant. Capacity would not be adversely affected, nor would it be a reason to resist the proposal.
77. Looking at road safety, the Highway Authority has assessed the details of the visibility splays at the junctions along the link road and swept path analyses of appropriate vehicle type/s for the road proposed within the Transport Assessment and have accepted them.
78. In terms of the construction of the fourth arm of the roundabout, the Highway Authority has assessed this also. The proposed construction period would be

nine months with the construction compound and activities all being located within the application site. All construction traffic would use the A30 as usual. Traffic flow although disrupted temporarily, would be maintained in a safe manner.

79. In order to ensure the development is constructed safely and existing highways users and residents living and working close by (including quarrying operations crossing Blackbushes Road) are not adversely affected, a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) (to include details on the daily and total number and size of lorries accessing the site, the turning of delivery vehicles and lorry routing as well as provisions for removing mud from vehicles) and a programme of works would be required by condition. This condition would need to be satisfied and approved prior to the commencement of development.
80. The Local Highway Authority has no objection to the proposal subject to a planning condition requiring the submission and implementation of an approved Construction Traffic Management Plan to be implemented during the construction phase being imposed. This condition is included in **Appendix A**. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of highway capacity and road safety and is in accordance with Policy INF3 (Transport) of the [Hart Local Plan \(2020\)](#).

## Design

81. The design of the proposed development is limited. It amounts to effectively the movement westward by approximately 30 metres (m) of an existing country road (Blackbushe Road), and its connection to the A30/A327 three arm roundabout.
82. The design of the relocated road and junction has taken into account the need to incorporate the new structures into the surrounding landscape, through sensitive design, minimising light spill, retention of as many trees as possible and planting of replacement vegetation where required.
83. The relocated road will still be a single carriageway, rural road and will be finished in traditional surfacing materials involving an engineered base and tarmac finish to match the existing road it is being connected with.
84. Boundary planting and drainage measures would be incorporated to mitigate planting lost and restore the former route of Blackbushes Road, plus to ensure surface water drainage is still controlled. The key considerations are:
  - Providing a design that reflects the link road's location within a rural/semi-rural area and aims to keep vehicle speeds the same;
  - Ensuring the scheme design take account of the needs of all road users, including non-motorised users such as cyclists/ horse riders and any pedestrians;
  - Noise and other environmental impacts;
  - Providing and maintaining existing areas of landscaping;
  - Providing adequate drainage; and

- Providing appropriate street lighting and road signage.
85. The proposed design of this road scheme is deemed to be proportionate to the scale of the development proposed. The above points will be discussed within subsequent sections of the report.
86. Overall, the proposal is considered to have had regard to the context of the receiving environment and been designed in a sensitive manner seeking to avoid impacts to the environment and residential properties where possible. As such the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policies NBE1 (Development in the countryside), NBE9 (Design), INF2 (Green Infrastructure) and INF3 (Transport) of the [Hart Local Plan \(2020\)](#).

### Visual impact and landscape

87. The proposed development is situated within a countryside location comprising heathland and plantation woodland. It is not situated within a sensitive or specifically designated landscape setting.
88. A preliminary assessment of landscape and visual sensitivity, tree survey and **Arboricultural Impact Assessment** were all undertaken in order to identify and assess the significance of changes resulting from the proposed scheme on existing landscape features and on local visual amenity.
89. The introduction of a new road and junctions, albeit through a 30 metre (m) westward movement of the current Blackbushes Road, would result in changes in local landscape character, as would the loss of trees and vegetation, and changes to street lighting. Despite the relatively remote nature of the location, with the application site forming part of an established transport corridor, effects are considered to be greater during the construction phase due to the additional noise and visual intrusion of working machinery and plant, as well as the effect resulting from the removal of vegetation. Construction impacts and their effects are all temporary disturbances, it must be noted.
90. In terms of construction-related impacts, these would be short-term and temporary in nature with short-term adverse effects on local road users, residents and businesses. The applicant advises that these impacts could be minimised through mitigation Road users, including cyclists, horse riders, and any pedestrians would also be affected by short-term adverse effects.
91. The proposed scheme would involve the removal of nineteen trees (mainly pine, several oak and a single birch) within the application site to accommodate the relocated Blackbushes Road. All other trees and planting would be retained and managed in accordance with the applicant's tree protection plan via condition.
92. All mitigatory planting and landscaping works would be controlled by conditions, incorporating the recommendations within the applicant Arboricultural Impact Assessment with all planting protected for a period of 5 years after completion of the construction of the road or on completion of planting, with any dying, being

damaged or being removed having to be replaced with similar species. Conditions are included in **Appendix A** relating to these issues.

93. Concerns raised over appearance of palisade fencing on western side of road by the County Landscape Architect would be alleviated through the use of finishes and/or planting to disguise it and help integrate it into its setting and the surrounding plantation woodland. This would be achieved via condition.
94. All new street lighting required for the route of the link road would be designed to face and 'light up' that area of the highway in line with highway safety standards. LED lighting would be installed which has less problems of glare and light spill associated with it. Mitigation, comprising measures such as shrouding and shielding of the light fittings themselves would be employed, and controlled by conditions should planning be granted.
95. The concerns raised by Blackbushe Airport over the potential use of cranes during construction that exceed the existing tree line and new lighting impacts both during construction and post-construction to their existing aircraft operations is a significant concern that needs to be mitigated. The applicant has been working with the Airport and has confirmed that no development or works would exceed the airport safeguarding's 50 foot high limit.
96. In terms of lighting impacts, the applicant advises that agreement has been reached between the two parties concerning the use of temporary lighting and aircraft taking off and/or landing. This would need to be controlled by conditions should planning permission be granted. This is covered by conditions set out in **Appendix A**.
97. On the basis of the proposed mitigation measures and conditions set out in **Appendix A**, the proposal is considered to have had regard to the context of the receiving environment and been designed in a sensitive manner seeking to avoid impacts to the environment, the local airport and local amenity where possible. As such the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policies NBE1 (Development in the countryside), NBE2 (Landscape), NBE9 (Design) and NBE11 (Pollution) of the [Hart Local Plan \(2020\)](#).

#### Water Environment & Flood Risk

99. The proposed relocated Blackbushes Road and its junction with the current three-arm A30-A327 roundabout would be drained in the same manner that is currently used, using Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and linking into the existing highway surface water drainage regime.
100. The site is situated in Flood Zone 1, which is the lowest risk flood zone with a less than 0.1% chance of flooding in any year. No historic flood events have been recorded here. The site is not situated within a groundwater sensitive area.

101. The submitted **Drainage Assessments** and **Methodologies** have been accepted by the Lead Local Flood Authority to be achievable with risks to the water environment through flooding and to water quality not considered to be significant. The installation and use of a 2m wide 'v-shaped' SWALE running parallel to the western edge of the relocated Blackbushes Road would ensure surface water run-off is suitably stored and controlled before entering the existing piped system adjoining the A30. The Lead Local Flood Authority has no objection to the proposal based on the submitted drainage details.
102. By mimicking natural drainage regimes, SuDS aim to reduce surface water flooding, improve water quality and enhance the amenity and biodiversity value of the environment. The drainage system would need to be maintained by the County Council as the Local Highway Authority once the new road layout came into use.
103. It is considered that the drainage system would not have a significant negative impact on the locality, including on properties around the site, and would not adversely affect the water environment. As such the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policies NBE5 (Managing flood risk), NBE6 (Water quality), NBE11 (Pollution) and INF2 (Green infrastructure) of the [Hart Local Plan \(2020\)](#).

#### Cultural and Archaeological Heritage

104. There are no designated sites within a 250m radius of the application site boundary. The Scheduled Monument known as '*Linear earthwork known as the Festaen Dic*' lies approximately 300m due east, adjoining the southern boundary of the A30. No works proposed would affect this designation.
105. The County Archaeologist advises that due to the lack of proximity to known and recorded heritage assets and that much of the land in question has been impacted by the existing highway layout, there would be very limited impacts created. The County Archaeologist has no objection to the proposal.
106. The proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policy NBE8 (Historic environment) of the [Hart Local Plan \(2020\)](#).

#### Ecology and biodiversity

107. An **Ecological Appraisal** was undertaken across the site to assess the potential for impacts arising from the proposal and to provide any necessary recommendations and mitigation to make the development acceptable.
108. The appraisal noted that the application site's south-eastern margin lies within the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA). The SPA is designated as a sensitive habitat for ground nesting birds comprising the Dartford warbler, nightjar and woodlark. It is afforded a high level of protection from all development types.

109. The applicant undertook a detailed **Ecological Assessment** of the application site and impacts and effects on the Thames Basin Heaths SPA. It included numerous European and UK protected species, their habitats which included feeding, roosting and nesting areas, as well as tree and vegetation clearance and protection works.
110. The County Ecologist has assessed the application and concludes that the application site is not considered to have any functional impact pathways connecting the proposed works with the Special Protection Area (SPA), and its sensitivities. Therefore, the proposal does not have any significant increase on any adverse impacts the wider site may have had, and a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) is not required to be submitted.
111. The findings of the applicant's **Ecological Appraisal** are accepted by the County Ecologist who requires the mitigation measures within the Sections 5.3-5.12 of their Ecological Appraisal (May 2021) to be imposed and implemented as stated by planning condition should planning permission be granted. This is included in **Appendix A**. Without these, the development proposal would result in a net loss of biodiversity, and negative impacts on reptiles and breeding birds, undermining the designated status of the SPA.
112. Subject to conditions, the proposal is therefore considered to have been designed in a sensitive manner seeking to avoid impacts to local ecology and biodiversity where possible, in an area of high ecological value and sensitivity. As such the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policies NBE3 (Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area) and NBE4 (Biodiversity) of the [Hart Local Plan \(2020\)](#). It is also considered to be in accordance with saved Policy NM7: Thames Heath Special Protection Area (saved policy) of the South East Plan (SEP) in relation to the parts of the site which lie in the SPA.

#### Climate change and sustainability

113. The applicant has acknowledged the County Council's Climate Strategy and Action Plan [Hampshire County Council - Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan](#) and has attempted to offer mitigation through the proposal.
114. The proposed four-arm roundabout seeks to reduce journey times and congestion and as a direct result fuel usage and the resultant emissions to the atmosphere for vehicles wishing access Blackbushes Road from the A30, through relocating Blackbushes Road approximately 30m westward.
115. Furthermore, the footprint of the former Blackbushes Road would be broken up and perforated and left in-situ to reduce wastage and increase permeability, to allow the area to support relocated and replacement planting. It would mean using less imported virgin soil. In terms of sustainable drainage, highways drainage would employ Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to control, store and reuse run-off.

116. Within the footprint of the proposed Blackbushes Road, existing heathland scrub would be preserved on removal and relocated within the application site to help maintain and protect local biodiversity, only using imported materials should sufficient quality material be lacking.
117. It is considered that the proposal would have a positive impact in terms of its impacts on climate change and sustainability. As such the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policies SD1 (Sustainable development), NBE7 (Sustainable water use) and INF2 (Green infrastructure) of the [Hart Local Plan \(2020\)](#).

### Noise and Vibration

118. The applicant advises that post-development traffic noise would not be any different to that pre-development as the new Blackbushes Road and its junction with the current three-arm A30/A327 roundabout as it is not a new public highway catering for increased levels of traffic from a specific development or developments. The same could be said for any vibration impacts although this has been examined.
119. The scheme's construction activities have the potential to cause short-term, temporary impacts in the local area during the nine-month construction period. The applicant advises that these effects would be likely be insignificant due to its remote nature from residential dwellings, those being usually the most sensitive receptors.
120. Whilst the Environmental Health Officer (EHO) at Hart District Council has not provided any direct comments to the consultation request, the District Council Planning Team raises no objection to the proposed scheme.
121. In terms of controlling construction-related impacts, the applicant has advised that impacts from construction traffic, noise, lighting, hours of use as well as general site safety measures to protect the local population from unacceptable and significant disturbance would be imposed. There is also a requirement for a Construction Traffic Management Plan as set out in **Appendix A**.
122. It is considered that the proposal would not have a significant negative impact on the locality, including on the nearest residential properties around the site, by virtue of noise. As such the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policy NBE11 (Pollution) of the [Hart Local Plan \(2020\)](#).

### Air Quality

123. The applicant advises that post-development traffic emissions to air would not be any different to that pre-development as the new Blackbushes Road and its junction with the current three-arm A30/A327 roundabout as it is not a new public highway catering for increased levels of traffic from a specific development or developments.



124. The scheme's construction activities have the potential to cause short-term, temporary impacts in the local area during the nine-month construction period. The applicant advises that these effects would be likely be insignificant due to its remote nature from residential dwellings, those being usually the most sensitive receptors.
125. Whilst the Environmental Health Officer (EHO) at Hart District Council has not provided any direct comments to the consultation request, the District Council Planning Team raises no objection to the proposed scheme.
126. In terms of controlling construction-related impacts, the applicant has advised that impacts from construction traffic, noise, lighting, hours of use as well as general site safety measures to protect the local population from unacceptable and significant disturbance would be imposed.
127. It is considered that the proposal would not have a significant negative impact on the locality, including on the nearest residential properties around the site, by virtue of emission to air. As such the proposal is considered to be in accordance with Policy NBE11 (Pollution) of the [Hart Local Plan \(2020\)](#).

## Conclusions

128. The proposal seeks approval for a road improvement scheme at the junction of the A30/A327 'Hartford Bridge Flats' roundabout near to the A30's southern carriageway junction with Blackbushes Road, near Hartley Wintney. The proposal would replace the existing staggered junction arrangement which includes a three-arm roundabout solution and nearby left turn into and out of Blackbushes Road with a four-armed roundabout, formally incorporating the A30, A327 and Blackbushes Road junctions. The proposed scheme is part of a joint funded Hampshire County Council and Department for Transport '[Pinch Point' Programme Improvement Scheme](#) to replace the former staggered junction arrangement, with the three-arm roundabout solution, completed in May 2015. The addition of a fourth arm on the A30/A327 Hartford Bridge Flats Junction will provide direct access for traffic seeking to travel southbound on Blackbushes Road from the A327 southbound or A30 eastbound. This traffic will no longer be required to use a more convoluted route by diverting east along the A30 and u-turning at A30 Blackbushes Roundabout. The northern section of Blackbushes Road will effectively be moved 35m westward to join the roundabout.
129. The purpose of the scheme is to reduce journey times for traffic currently using the roundabout junction, and in turn reduce emissions to the environment from vehicles making unnecessarily longer trips, including through delays at the existing staggered junction and its three-arm roundabout arrangement.

130. It is considered that the proposal would be in accordance with the relevant policies of the adopted [Hart Local Plan \(2020\)](#) as well as the Hampshire [Local Transport Plan \(2013\)](#). It is considered that the proposal would:

- meet an identified need;
- be acceptable in terms of highway capacity and safety;
- not adversely affect the local landscape;
- not cause any additional flood risk and protect the quality of groundwater and surface water;
- not adversely affect local archaeology and cultural heritage;
- not have an adverse effect on ecology and biodiversity;
- have a positive effect in terms of climate change; and
- not cause unacceptable adverse amenity impacts.

### **Recommendation**

That planning permission be GRANTED subject to the conditions in **Appendix A**.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Conditions

Appendix B – Committee Plan

Appendix C – Site Plan

Appendix D – Existing Layout

Appendix E – Proposed Layout

Other documents relating to this application:

<https://planning.hants.gov.uk/Planning/Display/HCC/2022/0047>

**REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:**

**Links to the Strategic Plan**

<b>Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:</b>	No
<b>People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:</b>	No
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:</b>	No
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:</b>	No
<b>OR</b>	
<b>This proposal does not link to the Strategic Plan but, nevertheless, requires a decision because:</b>	
the proposal is an application for planning permission and requires determination by the County Council in its statutory role as the minerals and waste or local planning authority.	

**Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents**

**The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)**

Document

Location

22/00214/HCC

Hampshire County Council

Site Ref: HRH003

Realignment works and alterations to the northerly section of Blackbushes Road including the addition of a fourth arm on the A30/A327 Hartford Bridge Flats junction roundabout, plus changes to street lighting, road lining, road signing and drainage and new boundary fencing alongside the western and eastern boundaries at Blackbushes Road, Hartley Wintney and land to the west of Blackbushes Road

## **EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:**

### **1. Equality Duty**

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

Officers considered the information provided by the applicant, together with the response from consultees and other parties, and determined that the proposal would have no material impact on individuals or identifiable groups with protected characteristics. Accordingly, no changes to the proposal were required to make it acceptable in this re

## CONDITIONS

### Commencement

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date on which this planning permission was granted.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 (as amended) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

### Hours of Working

2. No heavy commercial vehicles shall enter or leave the site and no plant or machinery shall be operated except between the following hours: 07:00 - 18:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 - 13:00 on Saturdays. There shall be no working on Sundays or recognised Public Holidays.

Night works shall only take place Monday - Friday following the advance agreement of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the amenities of road users and the occupiers of nearby properties during the construction period in accordance with policy NBE 11 (Pollution) of the Hart Local Plan (2020).

### Construction Management Plan

2. No development hereby permitted shall commence until a Construction Traffic Management Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Plan should include, but not be limited to the daily and total number and size of lorries accessing the site, the turning of delivery vehicles and lorry routing, provisions for removing mud and debris from vehicles prior to exiting the site, segregation of construction works from road traffic and a programme of works. Once approved, the scheme shall be implemented in full throughout the duration of the construction period.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and in accordance with Policy INF3 (Transport) of the Hart Local Plan (2020). This is a pre-commencement condition required to ensure the development is constructed in a manner which ensures existing levels of highway safety are maintained and thus goes to the heart of the permission.

### Lighting Scheme

4. Notwithstanding the approved 'Street Lighting Proposed Layout' (ref: CJ008986-ECH-HLG-16708356-DR-LE-0100 S3 P0), no development hereby permitted shall commence until a lighting scheme detailing

mitigation measures ensuring that no adverse impacts from light intensity and spillage during construction and on a permanent basis affecting road users, the nearest neighbouring properties and aviation traffic using Blackbushe Airport are created has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Once approved, the scheme shall be implemented in full.

Reason: To protect the safety and amenities of road users, occupiers of nearby properties and aviation traffic using Blackbushe Airport from light pollution in accordance with Policy NBE11 (Pollution) of the Hart Local Plan (2020).

### **Tree and Planting Protection Scheme**

5. The recommendations within the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment (dated 03 April 2021, ref: SS HDC HtfdBgFlts AIA WI 1.2) and Tree Protection Plan (dated 04 February 2021, ref: 1.1) shall be implemented in full throughout the construction period and in accordance with the approved soil management plan required by Condition 6 below.

Any trees or other planting that are removed, damaged, or begin dying either during construction or within a five year period following completion of the development hereby permitted shall be replaced with a similar species in that location as agreed in writing with the Local planning Authority.

Reason: To protect retained, relocated and newly planted trees and planting in accordance with Policies NBE2 (Landscape), NBE3 (Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area) and NBE4 (Biodiversity) of the Hart Local Plan (2020).

### **Soil Management Plan**

6. Notwithstanding the approved Tree and Planting Protection Scheme required by Condition 5. above, no development hereby permitted shall commence until a soil management plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The plan shall include:
  - Measures to protect, handle, store and replace existing soils to preserve the seed bank and avoid contamination with aggressive weed species, to encourage successful establishment of heathland scrub;
  - Details of the removal or remediation of the former carriageway to facilitate natural regeneration of vegetation;
  - Details of tree planting proposed for the area between the old and new carriageway together with establishment maintenance to provide mitigation for those lost due to construction; and
  - Specification for seeding mix on the proposed swale to encourage biodiversity.

Once approved, the plan shall be implemented in full.

Reason: To protect the local landscape and visual appearance of the locality in accordance with Policies NBE1 (Development in the countryside), NBE2 (Landscape), NBE3 (Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area), NBE4 (Biodiversity) and NBE9 (Design) of the Hart Local Plan (2020). This is a pre-commencement condition required to ensure effective soil management, restoration works and biodiversity protection and enhancement works throughout the construction and following completion of the development hereby permitted and thus goes to the heart of the permission.

### **Ecological Appraisal**

7. The recommendations within sections 5.3 - 5.12 of the submitted Ecological Appraisal (dated May 2021 and updated November 2021, ref: C.J008986.01) that provides mitigation to address vegetation clearance and to nesting birds and reptile habitats during site clearance works, the construction period and completion of the development shall be implemented in full at all times.

No works to trees or planting, including removal, shall be carried out within the bird nesting season which usually runs from March to September inclusive. If it becomes necessary for work to commence in the nesting season, then a pre-commencement inspection of the vegetation for active bird nests should be carried out by an experienced ecologist. Only if there are no active nests present should work be allowed to commence following confirmation in writing from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the designated Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area, breeding birds, reptiles and their habitats in accordance with Policies NBE3 (Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area) and NBE4 (Biodiversity) of the Hart Local Plan (2020).

### **Fencing**

8. Prior to the installation of the palisade boundary fencing, details of materials and finishes and / or proposed planting schedules (that accord with the requirements of Condition 5 above) shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for written approval. Once approved, the details shall be implemented in full, with all planting maintained and protected for a period of five years following the completion of the development hereby permitted.

Reason: To protect the local landscape and visual appearance of the locality in accordance with Policies NBE1 (Development in the countryside), NBE2 (Landscape), NBE3 (Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area), NBE4 (Biodiversity) and NBE9 (Design) of the Hart Local Plan (2020).

## **Crane use**

9. Cranes shall be not used during the construction period within the application site unless prior written approval has been received from the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the safety of aviation traffic using Blackbushe Airport in accordance with Policy NBE11 (Pollution) of the Hart Local Plan (2020).

## **Unsuspected Contamination**

10. In the event that unsuspected contamination is found at any time when constructing the development hereby permitted, work in that area shall cease and it must be reported in writing immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken to identify what remediation is necessary with a remediation scheme prepared and submitted to the Local Planning Authority for their written approval. Once the remediation works have been completed, a verification report conforming this shall be provided to the Local Planning Authority for written approval. Once approved, the scheme shall be implemented in full throughout the duration of the construction period.

Reason: To protect the health of construction workers and the general public and quality of the water environment from the effects of contamination in accordance with Policy NBE11 (Pollution) of the Hart Local Plan (2020).

## **Surface Water Drainage Scheme**

11. The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until the approved drainage system has been installed in accordance with the Drawing ref: CJ008986-ECH-HDG-16708356-DR-HE-0501. The Local Planning Authority shall be notified in writing when the system has been fully installed. Thereafter, the approved system shall be fully implemented and maintained throughout its operational life.

Reason: To ensure that the development is satisfactorily and safely drained to prevent flood risk and pollution of the local water environment in accordance with Policies NBE5 (Managing flood risk), NBE6 (Water quality), NBE11 (Pollution) and INF2 (Green infrastructure) of the Hart Local Plan (2020).

## **Plans**

12. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Drawing 001, CJ008986-ECH-HGN-16708356-DR-HE-0101 S2 Rev P 02, CJ008986-ECH-HGN-16708356-DR-



HE-0102 S2 Rev P 03, CJ008986-ECH-HGN-16708356-DR-HE-0100 S3  
Rev P 01, CJ008986-ECH-HDG-16708356-DR-HE-0501 S3 Rev P 01.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

### **Note to Applicants**

1. In determining this planning application, the Local Planning Authority has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner, seeking solutions to problems arising in relation to dealing with the planning application by liaising with consultees, respondents and the applicant/agent and discussing changes to the proposal where considered appropriate or necessary. This approach has been taken positively and proactively in accordance with the requirement in the NPPF (2021), as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order (2015).
2. This decision does not purport or convey any approval or consent which may be required under the Building Regulations or any other Acts, including Byelaws, orders or Regulations made under such acts.