

Our Ref: 3034-01/JW

3rd March 2023

Ms. Sarah Hill
Wrexham Borough Council
16 Lord Street,
Wrexham,
LL11 1LG

By Email Only

planning

transportation
planning

environment

design

Dear Ms Hill,

PROPOSED CHRISTMAS FARM, LAND TO THE SOUTH OF LLAY ROAD, CEFN-Y-BEDD, WREXHAM

PLANNING APPLICATION REFERENCE P/2022/0681

Introduction

Many thanks for forwarding, via the agent Mr Steve Goodwin, the latest consultation response prepared by the Local Highway Authority (LHA) dated 03/02/23 in relation to the above application (see **enclosure 1** for ease of reference).

I note from the response that our previous letter dated 02/12/22 has resulted in agreement on a number of issues that were identified in the LHA's previous response dated 30/08/22. In particular it appears the following matters are now agreed:-

- That there will be fluctuations in the number of visitors to the site depending on the seasonal activity;
- The existing access point off Park Road will be closed up as it is dis-used, although the access point to the south of the site will remain for agricultural access;
- The existing layby off Llay Road will be incorporated into the access design;
- The visibility splays from the site access junction are satisfactory (additional details regarding the forward visibility splays are set out later in this letter);
- The majority of vehicle trips are expected to take place outside of the weekday peak hours and there will be minimal impact on the wider highway network; and,
- Refuse collection can be satisfactorily accommodated.

Turning back to the latest response dated 03/02/23, this letter provides a further response to the residual matters. Our response is provided below, in the same order as originally presented.

Chester Office:
Well House Barns
Bretton
Chester
CH4 0DH

South Manchester Office:
Camellia House
76 Water Lane
Wilmslow
SK9 5BB

Comment 1: “The revised ‘Site Access Arrangement and Visibility Splays’ drawing (Drawing No. 3034-01-D02A) illustrates the revised site access arrangement on Llay Road, which includes the incorporation of the existing adjacent layby into the site access. It is noted that there is a highway interactive sign currently located within the existing layby. This sign will need to be relocated to a suitable location at the applicants cost. The new location of the sign will need to be agreed with WCBC Highways.

Since there will be an increase in vehicles slowing and turning into the proposed development site, new site access road signs on the approach to development in either direction will be required (detail and location to be agreed with WCBC Highways).

A planning condition in relation to a Section 278 agreement is required to introduce the proposed site access on Llay Road.”

It is accepted that the existing interactive sign in the layby will need to be relocated and that advance warning signs shall be located on the approaches to the junction. The proposed condition is accepted, and it is considered that details of the proposed new and relocated signage will be accounted for as part of the detailed design / Section 278 agreement stage.

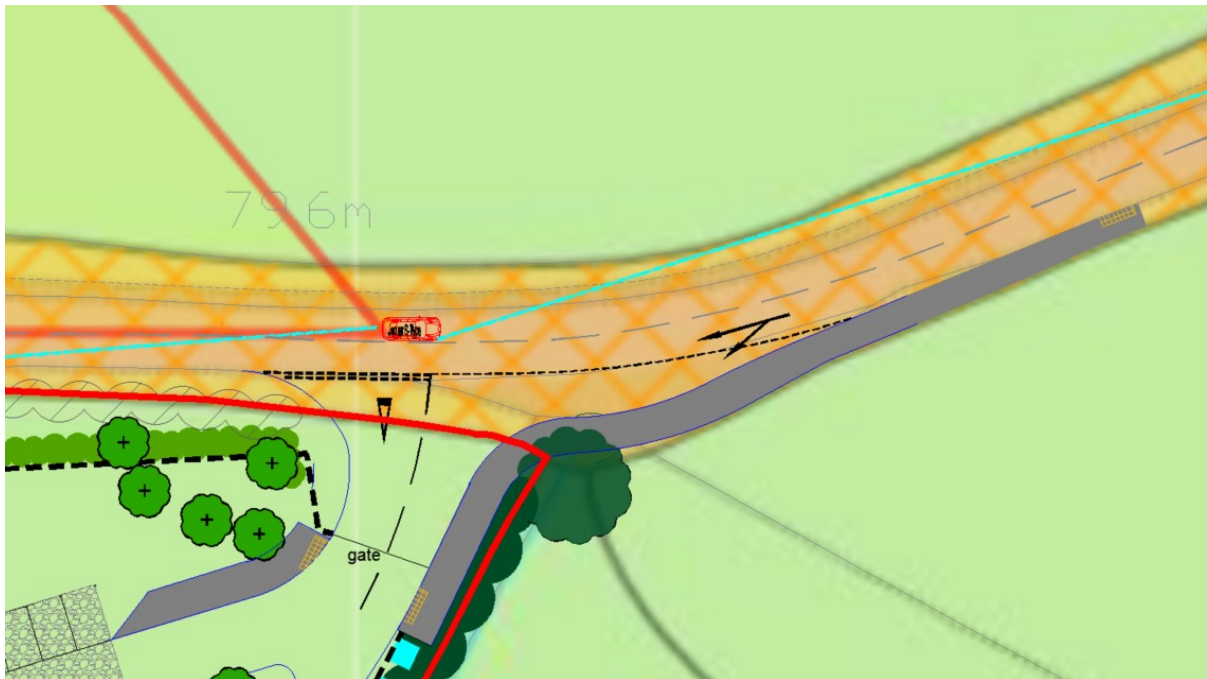
Comment 2: “The forward visibility splay shown on the drawing for 158m from a vehicle approaching the site from the west is achieved, where the splay touches the footway. However, the forward visibility splay shown on the drawing for 147m between a vehicle waiting to turn right into the site and a vehicle approaching the site from the east, is not achieved due to the existing hedgerow located on the northern extents of Llay Road obstructing the splay. The development site access as it is currently proposed cannot be approved, since inadequate visibility splays is a highway safety concern.

To achieve the required SSD visibility, the vegetation located on the northern side of Llay Road, within the extents of the visibility splay, will need to be cleared. It is noted that the hedgerow on the northern extents of Llay Road is not within the applicant’s current ownership.”

The assertion that the requisite 147m forward visibility splay from vehicles approaching from the east towards vehicles turning right into the site is not achievable, without third party land, is technically incorrect.

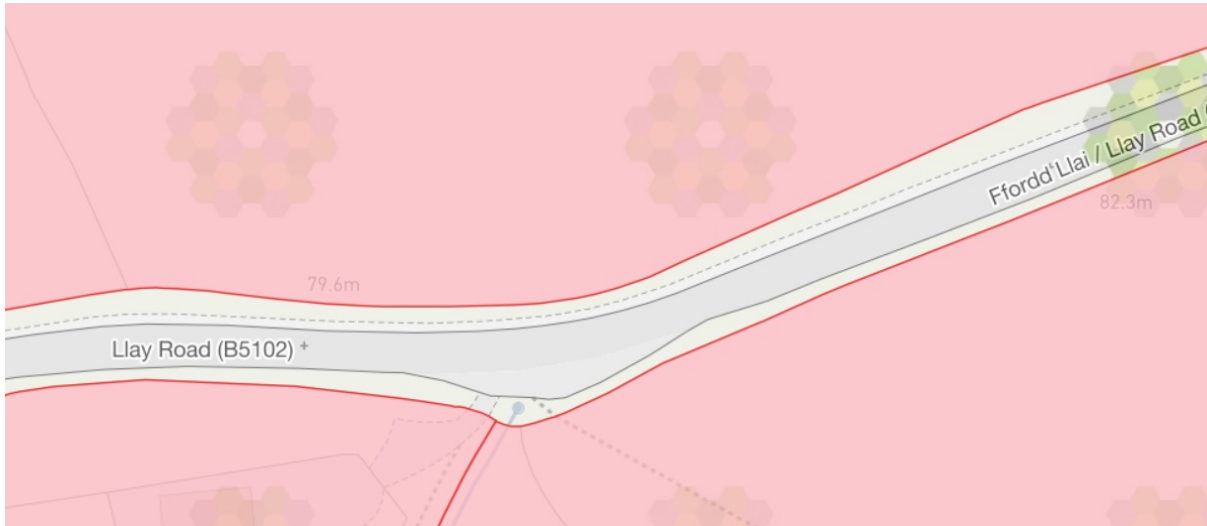
The extent of the adopted highway boundary has been obtained from the WCBC website (weblink [here](#)) and underlaid onto AXIS drawing number 3034-01-D02B.

A screenshot showing this exercise is provided below. Note that the adopted highway is shown in yellow hatch and the 147m forward visibility splay is shown in cyan:-



As shown above, the forward visibility splay falls wholly within the adopted highway boundary.

This is reinforced by land ownership boundary information obtained from HM Land Registry, which runs fully contiguous with the adopted highway record on the Council's website:-



It is nonetheless acknowledged that if the field boundary hedge on the northern side of Llay Road is significantly grown out from the boundary line between the highway and the third-party owned field to the north, then the effective achievable forward visibility will be reduced.

However, it is the Council's statutory duty to ensure that hedges are properly maintained, as set out in sections 154 and 41 of the Highways Act 1980.

Thus, if the hedge does grow so far out as to materially impair the achievable visibility splays, then the LHA should take steps to remedy the situation, either themselves or otherwise by serving notice on the responsible landowner.

This is a potential issue that affects all users of Llay Road currently and there has always been an access into the field at this location.

It should however be reiterated that the visibility splay is achievable within the confines of the adopted highway boundary and without recourse to third party land.

It is noted that Google Streetview imagery for 2009 indicates that the hedge had been well maintained at that time:-



The imagery indicates the presence of a fence within the hedge which presumably delineates the boundary line between the highway and the field (and which follows the line on the highway boundary plan and land registry plan above):



Notwithstanding the above, the applicant has discussed this issue with the landowner of the field to the north of Llay Road, who has confirmed that they would be willing to cut back the hedge to the extent required to improve the achievable forward visibility splay. It would however, as noted above, remain the LHA's statutory duty to ensure that vegetation growing within the highway is maintained if it interferes with the view of drivers.

Comment 3: "Although 100 parking spaces is significant there is concern that since it is not known how many actual trips will take place during the busiest periods that demand could be greater. The applicant states 'that on-site parking will be managed by staff during peak periods of parking demand (particularly during the Christmas period) and parking will be carefully controlled to ensure that the maximum car parking occupancy of the site is utilised'. The applicant is required to demonstrate how parking will be managed during busy periods to ensure that all parking takes place within the site and not on Llay Road, since any parking on Llay Road would present a road safety risk for all road users. It is considered appropriate to include a condition for a Car Parking Management Plan (CPMP) to ensure parking is managed / controlled so as not to have any negative impact on the existing highway and safety of road users. It is suggested that a booking system is put in place for visitors during the busiest periods. A planning condition in relation to the CPMP will be required."

The suggestion that a Car Park Management Plan (CPMP) is to be provided and secured by condition is accepted. Exact details of the control of parking will be provided in the CPMP, which will include details of car parking monitoring, signage, enforcement, and if demand requires it, an advance booking system.

Comment 4: "Sustainable travel to the proposed development is encouraged however, it is noted that the existing footway on the northern side of Llay Road is narrow and not suitable for all users. The applicant has provided detail regarding Active Travel improvements proposed, as discussed, and agreed with WCBC's Active Travel officer (Daniel Morris). Although there is an aspiration to introduce Active Travel infrastructure on the northern side of Llay Road there are currently no designs drawn up. Timescales for the delivery of improvements to the footway on Llay Road should be clarified as if the development site becomes popular and visitors choose to walk to the site, the current arrangements are not adequate."

AXIS understand from discussing this issue with the Active Travel Officer that a design and funding application for the Active Travel infrastructure is earmarked to take place in 2024.

Nonetheless, further improvements to the footway and crossing arrangements have been made to the proposed site access drawing (shown on **Drawing No. 3034-01-D02B** in **enclosure 2** and **Drawing No. 3034-01-ATR01B** in **enclosure 3**), which are considered to be proportionate to the modest scale and nature of the proposed development.

Comment 5: "The revised 'Site Access Arrangement and Visibility Splays' drawing (Drawing No. 3034-01-D02A) illustrates the site access has been amended to include a 3m shared foot / cycleway leading into the site and a tactile paving crossing point integrating the site into the proposed future Active Travel Network infrastructure on the northern side of Llay Road. Although the crossing point is welcomed, there is concern that the visibility on the northern side of Llay Road adjacent to the crossing point is

impeded by the bend in the road. It is suggested the tactile crossing point is relocated further east on Llay Road so as the adjacent crossing point will have better visibility for pedestrians waiting to cross and vehicles will also have better visibility of pedestrians, particularly if speeds are higher than the speed limit. Since there is an existing footway on the northern side of Llay Road, a tactile crossing point should be provided adjacent to the proposed tactile on the southern side of Llay Road to facilitate crossing in the interim."

As indicated above, the suggestion to locate the proposed tactile paving crossing point further to the east and to provide tactile paving on both sides of Llay Road is accepted. **Drawing No. 3034-01-D02B** in **enclosure 2** and **Drawing No. 3034-01-ATR01B** in **enclosure 3** show the revised crossing arrangements. The proposed foot / cycleway will be provided to a minimum width of 2.0m, widening to 2.5m and then 3.0m within the site. The proposed crossing point is positioned away from the bend to provide greater pedestrian visibility whilst crossing, as suggested in the most recent comments.

Comment 7: "The proposed tactile paving crossing point within the site access is welcomed however, the applicant must ensure that visibility for pedestrians at the tactile crossing point, particularly on the western side of the site access, is not impeded in any way by vegetation or infrastructure such as the site gate post / gate and fencing."

Vegetation / boundary hedges will be cut back and maintained to ensure that the junction bellmouth is visible for a pedestrian waiting to cross the proposed tactile paving crossing point. Fencing and any boundary treatments will be designed to provide adequate visibility over / through any possible obstruction.

Conditions

The LHA's response also includes a number of suggested conditions, as follows:

- 1) Condition in relation to the S278 in place for all works on highway associated with the existing layby on Llay Road including, the relocation of the existing highway interactive sign and new site access road signs on the approach to development in either direction***
- 2) Condition in relation to the clearance and continued maintenance of vegetation to ensure visibility requirements are met on Llay Road***
- 3) Condition in relation to ensuring visibility for pedestrians at the proposed tactile crossing at the site access is not impeded in anyway by vegetation or infrastructure such as site gates / fencing***
- 4) A Car Park Management Plan is provided and approved***
- 5) A Construction Traffic Management Plan (including details of contractor parking) is provided***

The above conditions are acceptable to the applicant although we would reiterate that the continued maintenance of vegetation within the highway is a statutory duty for the LHA to carry out.

Conclusion

In view of the above, it is considered that the outstanding issues raised by the LHA have been satisfactorily addressed.

I trust this is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Jamie Whittall
Transport Planner
For and on behalf of Axis

Enc: Enclosure 1 – LHA Comments Dated 03/02/23
Enclosure 2 – Drawing No. 3034-01-D02B: Proposed Site Access Arrangements and
Visibility Splays
Enclosure 3 - Drawing No. 3034-01-ATR01B: Swept Path Analysis

ENCLOSURE 1 – LHA COMMENTS DATED 03/02/23

MEMORANDUM



From:	Chief Officer, Environment & Technical	To:	Chief Officer Planning & Regulatory
		FAO:	Sarah Hill
Our Ref:	ET/DC/PP/P/2022/0681	Your Ref:	P/2022/0681
Date:	3 rd February 2023		

Christmas Farm, Llay Road, Cefn Y Bedd, Wrexham, LL12 9UG

Further to your email / consultation dated 08/12/2022 please see the following comments: -

A Highways response to the above planning application was provided August 2022 (dated 24th August 2022). Within the response additional information in relation to highways was requested. This memorandum reviews the additional information since provided by the applicant. This response should be read in conjunction with the previous Highways response for this planning application.

It is noted that the application for the site is, *'mixed use for agricultural use (Christmas Tree Farm) and outdoor recreation to include a reindeer centre, paddle boarding, water related activities, engineering operations to extend the existing lake, creation of bark footpath, erection of cedar clad agricultural building to provide office, machine and equipment store, hay/straw storage, sick bay and maternity bay space for reindeer, creation of a car park, creation of a new access onto Llay Road and landscaping'*.

It is accepted that there will be fluctuations in the number of visitors to the site depending on the seasonal activity. It is considered the spring / summer months will have a higher demand of visitors associated with the water related activities and the autumn / winter months will have a higher demand of visitors associated with the Reindeer Centre. Seasonal events on site such as Pumpkin Picking and a Christmas Grotto will also attract a higher number of visitors.

Access

The existing site access on Llay Road is to be formalised, with the existing highway layby incorporated into the site access, as recommended in the previous Highways response (dated 25th August). The applicant has confirmed that the existing access point off Park Road will be closed up as it is disused however, the more formal gated access to the south of the site is to remain for agricultural vehicles to maintain the surrounding land. The applicant states that this access will not provide access to the application site and will not be used by visitors.

The revised *'Site Access Arrangement and Visibility Splays'* drawing (Drawing No. 3034-01-D02A) illustrates the revised site access arrangement on Llay Road, which includes the incorporation of the existing adjacent layby into the site access. It is noted that there is a highway interactive sign currently located within the existing layby. This sign will need to be relocated to a suitable location at the applicants cost. The new location of the sign will need to be agreed with WCBC Highways.

Since there will be an increase in vehicles slowing and turning into the proposed development site, new site access road signs on the approach to development in either direction will be required (detail and location to be agreed with WCBC Highways).

A planning condition in relation to a Section 278 agreement is required to introduce the proposed site access on Llay Road.

Visibility

The revised '*Site Access Arrangement and Visibility Splays*' drawing (Drawing No. 3034-01-D02A) shows visibility splays to the left and right of the proposed site access are achievable providing the existing vegetation west of the site access is cleared. It is noted that the hedgerow will be removed and replanted behind the visibility splay. The applicant will need to ensure that the new hedgerow is maintained so as not obstruct the visibility splay in future.

The revised '*Site Access Arrangement and Visibility Splays*' drawing (Drawing No. 3034-01-D02A) illustrates a forward visibility splay of 158m from a vehicle approaching the site from the west, and a forward visibility splay of 147m between a vehicle waiting to turn right into the site and a vehicle approaching the site from the east, based on the 52.6mph and 50.00mph observed 85th percentile speeds, respectively. The splays are in line with Stopping Sight Distances (SSDs) in Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB), which is considered appropriate for the type of road being assessed. Both sides of Llay Road are lined by an existing hedgerow that bounds several parcels of land. The forward visibility splay shown on the drawing for 158m from a vehicle approaching the site from the west is achieved, where the splay touches the footway. However, the forward visibility splay shown on the drawing for 147m between a vehicle waiting to turn right into the site and a vehicle approaching the site from the east, is not achieved due to the existing hedgerow located on the northern extents of Llay Road obstructing the splay. The development site access as it is currently proposed cannot be approved, since inadequate visibility splays is a highway safety concern.

To achieve the required SSD visibility, the vegetation located on the northern side of Llay Road, within the extents of the visibility splay, will need to be cleared. It is noted that the hedgerow on the northern extents of Llay Road is not within the applicant's current ownership.

Traffic Generation, Parking and Turning Provision

Due to the nature of the proposed development, it is likely that most trips will be made by vehicle however, they are likely to occur outside of the weekday peak periods and therefore, there should be minimal impact on the wider highway network.

The applicant has provided detail regarding how traffic generation associated with the proposed development and the number of car parking spaces proposed has been estimated based on a survey undertaken at Tarvin Sands Reindeer Centre and Fishery, Tarvin, Chester.

The applicant states that a log of all traffic entering Tarvin Sands Reindeer Centre and Fishery was recorded over the course of 5 days in one week in September 2022. The survey results have not been provided however, the applicant states that the results of the survey indicate that the development experienced a maximum of 87 one-way visitor trips per day during the weekdays, 108 one-way visitor trips during the Saturday and 107 one-way trips on the Sunday. The overall average across the entire week was 92 one-way visits. The applicant considers that the proposed development will feature a similar level of traffic generation and therefore have estimated approximately 100 one-way visitor trips per day for the proposed development.

It is assumed that the majority of the trips recorded during the survey were associated with the Fishery rather than the Reindeer Centre due to the relatively high numbers recorded both during the week and weekends for September. The watersports element of the proposed development is not

comparable to a Fishery therefore, it is difficult to know if the estimated number of visitors to the proposed development is accurate. Furthermore, the survey was conducted during September and is not comparable to the seasonal fluctuations expected for the proposed development.

Although 100 parking spaces is significant there is concern that since it is not known how many actual trips will take place during the busiest periods that demand could be greater. The applicant states *'that on-site parking will be managed by staff during peak periods of parking demand (particularly during the Christmas period) and parking will be carefully controlled to ensure that the maximum car parking occupancy of the site is utilised'*. The applicant is required to demonstrate how parking will be managed during busy periods to ensure that all parking takes place within the site and not on Llay Road, since any parking on Llay Road would present a road safety risk for all road users. It is considered appropriate to include a condition for a Car Parking Management Plan (CPMP) to ensure parking is managed / controlled so as not to have any negative impact on the existing highway and safety of road users. It is suggested that a booking system is put in place for visitors during the busiest periods. A planning condition in relation to the CPMP will be required.

Details of where refuse / recycling is to be collected from and facilities proposed have been provided and agreed with WCC's Waste Strategy Officer (Catherine Golightly). A swept path drawing (Drawing No. 3034-01-ATR01A) has been provided indicating that a refuse vehicle can enter and exit the site safely. It is shown that on refuse collection days some parking will need to be coned off by staff of the development to facilitate safe passage of the refuse vehicle internally.

Active Travel

It is approximately 11 minutes' walk from Llay to the proposed development and approximately 15 minutes' walk from Cefn-y-bedd to the proposed development therefore, it is possible that some visitors to the development will be attracted to walk. Sustainable travel to the proposed development is encouraged however, it is noted that the existing footway on the northern side of Llay Road is narrow and not suitable for all users. The applicant has provided detail regarding Active Travel improvements proposed, as discussed, and agreed with WCBC's Active Travel officer (Daniel Morris). Although there is an aspiration to introduce Active Travel infrastructure on the northern side of Llay Road there are currently no designs drawn up. Timescales for the delivery of improvements to the footway on Llay Road should be clarified as if the development site becomes popular and visitors choose to walk to the site, the current arrangements are not adequate.

The revised 'Site Access Arrangement and Visibility Splays' drawing (Drawing No. 3034-01-D02A) illustrates the site access has been amended to include a 3m shared foot / cycleway leading into the site and a tactile paving crossing point integrating the site into the proposed future Active Travel Network infrastructure on the northern side of Llay Road. Although the crossing point is welcomed, there is concern that the visibility on the northern side of Llay Road adjacent to the crossing point is impeded by the bend in the road. It is suggested the tactile crossing point is relocated further east on Llay Road so as the adjacent crossing point will have better visibility for pedestrians waiting to cross and vehicles will also have better visibility of pedestrians, particularly if speeds are higher than the speed limit. Since there is an existing footway on the northern side of Llay Road, a tactile crossing point should be provided adjacent to the proposed tactile on the southern side of Llay Road to facilitate crossing in the interim.

The proposed tactile paving crossing point within the site access is welcomed however, the applicant must ensure that visibility for pedestrians at the tactile crossing point, particularly on the western side of the site access, is not impeded in anyway by vegetation or infrastructure such as the site gate post / gate and fencing.

Conclusion

The following matters require some amendment or clarification prior to approving planning permission:-

- 1) Timescales of the delivery of Active Travel measures on the northern extents of Llay Road. Suitable arrangements for the footway on the northern extents of Llay Road are required since it is considered some visitors will use the footway to access the site. The current footway is not appropriate, yet the proposed development may encourage more use; and
- 2) The proposed tactile crossing point on Llay Road should be moved further east to improve visibility for pedestrians and vehicles. A tactile crossing should be provided on the northern side of Llay Road, adjacent to the proposed tactile paving on the southern side of Llay Road, irrespective of future Active Travel infrastructure proposals.

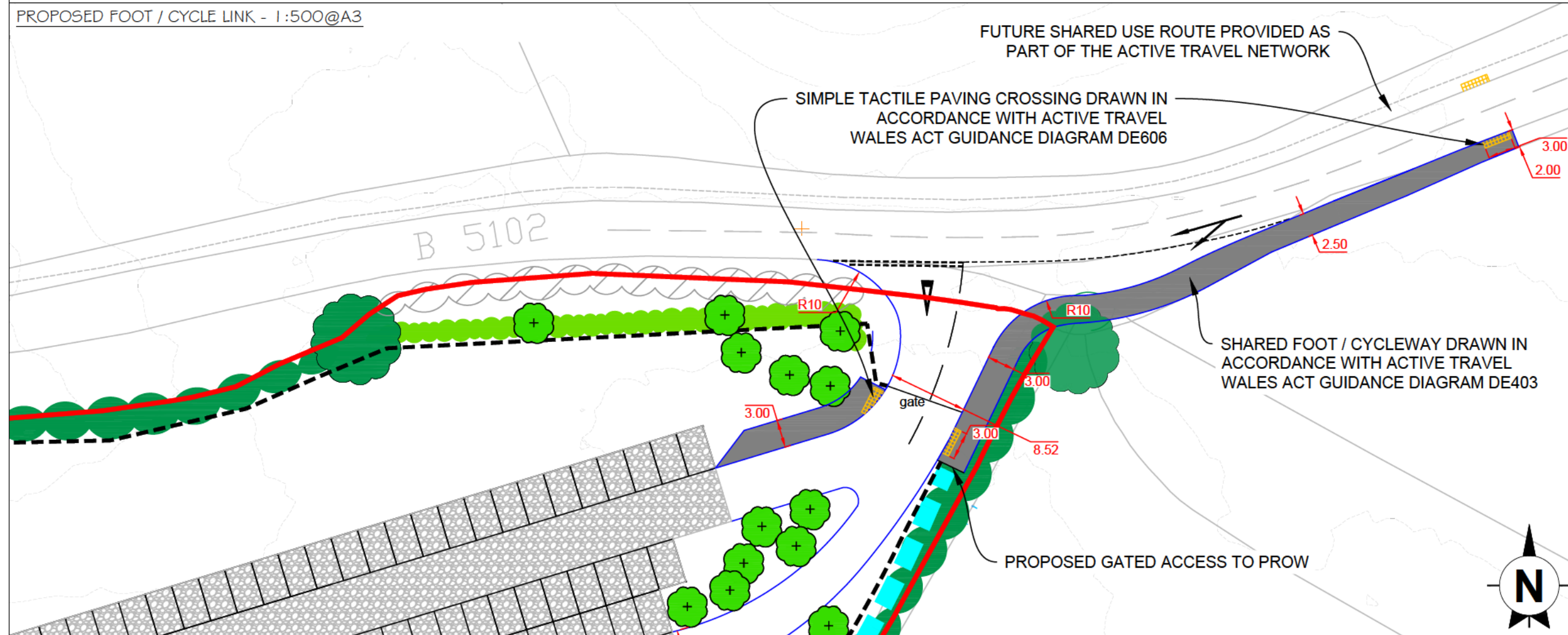
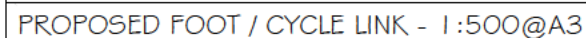
HIGHWAY CONDITIONS

No part of the development shall commence until a detailed highway scheme for the construction of the following has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:

- 1) *Condition in relation to the S278 in place for all works on highway associated with the existing layby on Llay Road including, the relocation of the existing highway interactive sign and new site access road signs on the approach to development in either direction*
- 2) *Condition in relation to the clearance and continued maintenance of vegetation to ensure visibility requirements are met on Llay Road*
- 3) *Condition in relation to ensuring visibility for pedestrians at the proposed tactile crossing at the site access is not impeded in anyway by vegetation or infrastructure such as site gates / fencing*
- 4) *A Car Park Management Plan is provided and approved*
- 5) *A Construction Traffic Management Plan (including details of contractor parking) is provided*

Chief Officer, Environment & Technical

**ENCLOSURE 2 – DRAWING NO. 3034-01-D02B: PROPOSED SITE ACCESS
ARRANGEMENTS AND VISIBILITY SPLAYS**



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Follow any figured dimensions - do not scale for construction purposes. IF IN DOUBT ASK.

KEY

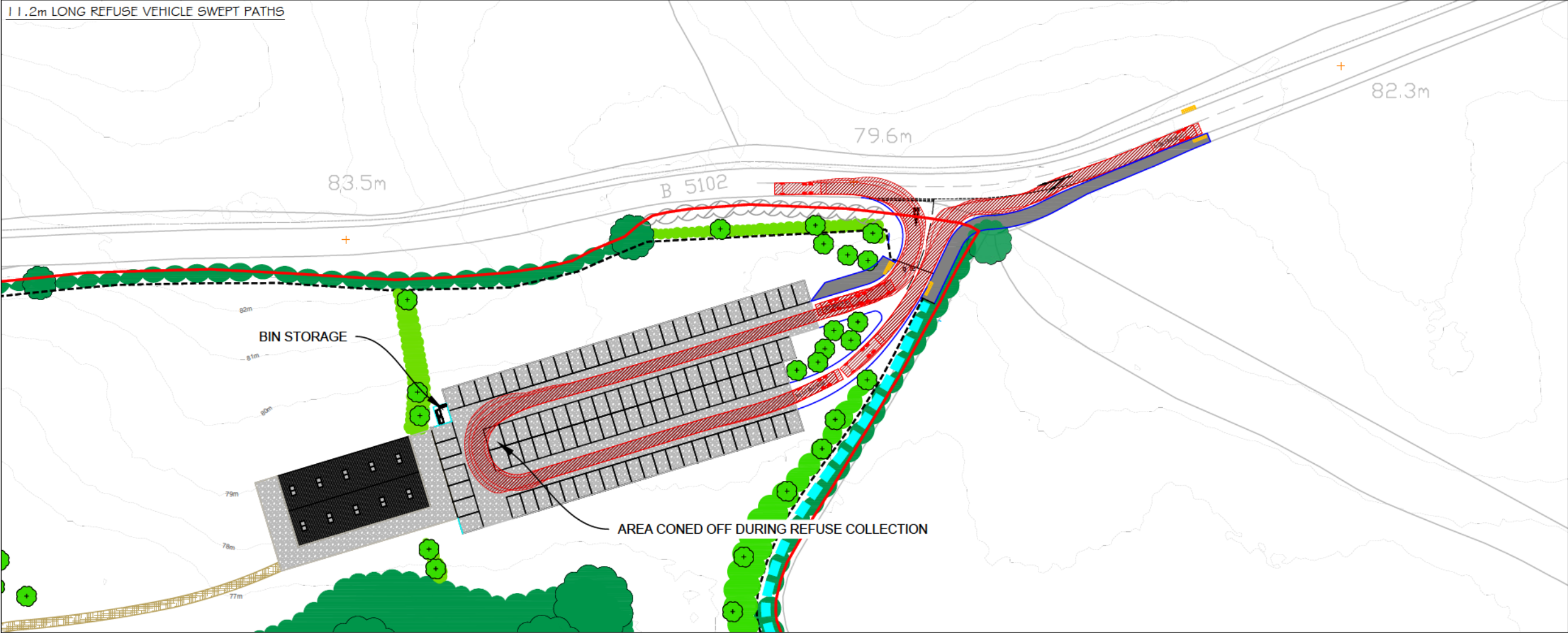
-  Site application boundary
-  Public right of way (Llay 12)
-  Existing tree, retained
-  Existing woodland/ hedgerow/ scrub, retained
-  Existing hedgerow, removed

Note - the junction visibility splays shown on this drawing are commensurate with the observed 85th percentile design speed of traffic, recorded by ATC in July 2021.

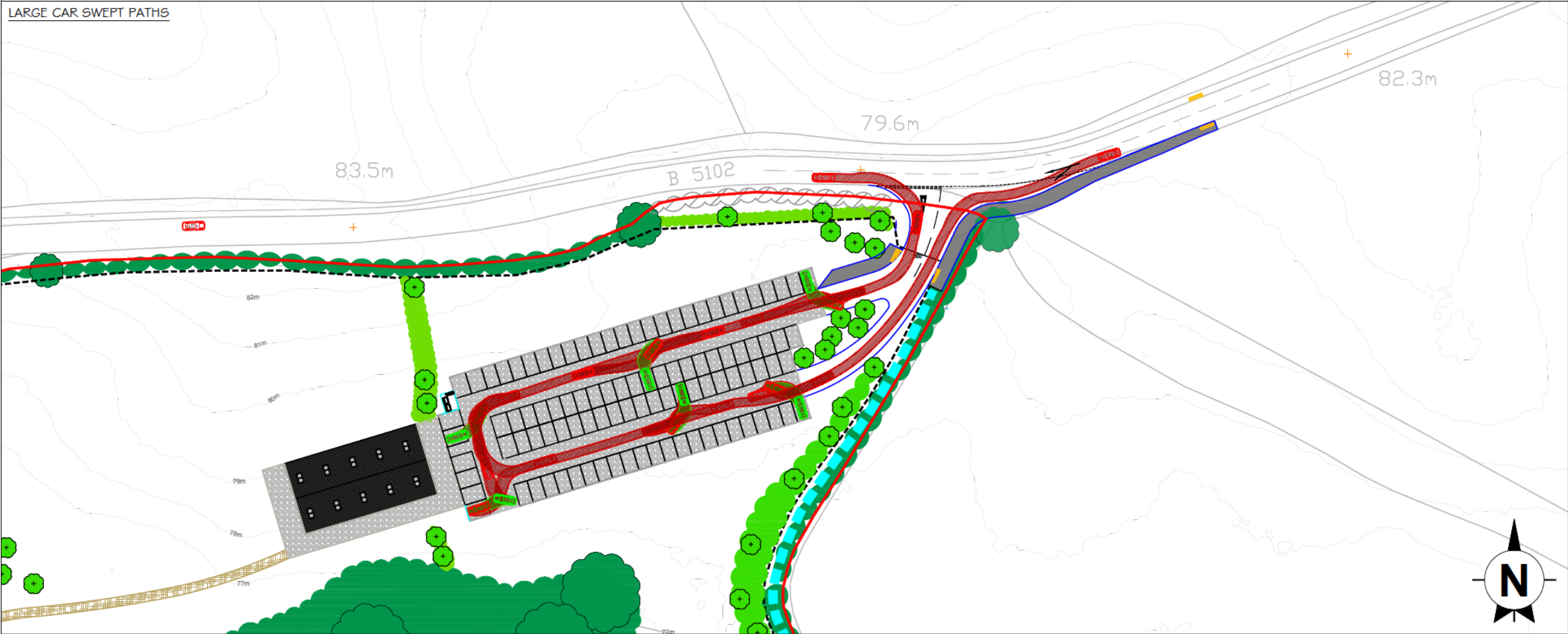
Chester Office 160 Chester Drive Box 10 Chester CH4 1DH		South Manchester Office Central House 75 Old Lane Manchester M16 5SD		axis
OR 0750 007 - www.axispad.co.uk				
client: MR. CLINT J SHAW				
project: CHRISTMAS FARM, LILAY ROAD, CEFN-Y-BEDD				
drawing title: PROPOSED SITE ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS AND VISIBILITY SPLAYS				
date: 20 09 22			drawn by:	checked:
drawing number: 3034-01-002			JW	LK
			status: PRELIM	
scale(s): AS STATED@AS			rev: B	
planning environment design				

ENCLOSURE 3 - DRAWING NO. 3034-01-ATR01B: SWEPT PATH ANALYSIS

11.2m LONG REFUSE VEHICLE SWEPT PATHS



LARGE CAR SWEPT PATHS



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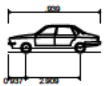
Follow any figured dimensions - do not scale for construction purposes. IF IN DOUBT ASK.

Revision History		Date
A	FOOT / CYCLE ARRANGEMENTS BASED ON COMMENTS PROVIDED BY ACTIVE TRAVEL OFFICER	03.11.22
B	FOOTWAY EXTENDED TO EAST	17.2.23

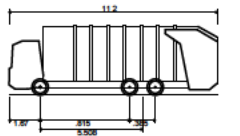
KEY

- Site application boundary
- Public right of way (Llay 12)
- Existing tree, retained
- Existing woodland/hedgerow/scrub, retained
- Existing hedgerow, removed

VEHICLE USED IN TRACKING



Jaguar S-Type	4.630m
Overall Length	1.878m
Overall Width	1.474m
Overall Body Height	0.259m
Min Body Ground Clearance	1.544m
Max Track Width	4.00s
Lock to lock time	6.000m
Kerb to Kerb Turning Radius	



Phoenix 2 Duo (P2-15W with Elite 6x4 chassis)	11.200m
Overall Length	2.530m
Overall Width	3.751m
Overall Body Height	0.304m
Min Body Ground Clearance	2.500m
Track Width	4.00s
Lock to lock time	9.500m
Kerb to Kerb Turning Radius	