

109/1/EC3/10



LOCAL PLAN

Ref:

(For official use only)

Publication Stage Representation Form

North West Leicestershire Local Plan Proposed Submission

Please return this form to North West Leicestershire District Council either by post:

Planning Policy, North West Leicestershire District Council, Council Offices, Whitwick Road, Coalville LE67 3FJ or email planning.policy@nwleicestershire.gov.uk no later than **5pm on 15 August 2016**.

This form has two parts-

Part A – Personal Details


Part B – Your Representation(s). Please fill in a separate sheet for each representation you wish to make.

Part A

1. Personal Details

2. Agent Details

**If an agent is appointed, please complete only the Title, Name and Organisation boxes below but complete the full contact details for the agent in 2.*

Title	<input type="text"/>	Mr	<input type="text"/>
First Name	<input type="text"/>	Jeremy	<input type="text"/>
Last Name	<input type="text"/>	Pyatt	<input type="text"/>
Job Title <i>(Where relevant)</i>	<input type="text"/>	Director	<input type="text"/>
Organisation <i>(Where relevant)</i>	TNT UK LTD	WYG	<input type="text"/>
Address Line 1	<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>
Line 2	<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>
Line 3	<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>
Line 4	<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>
Post Code	<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>
Telephone Number	<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>
Email Address <i>(Where relevant)</i>	<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>

Part B - Please use a separate sheet for each representation

Name or Organisation:

3. To which part of the Local Plan does this representation relate?

Paragraph(s) Policy Policies Map

4. Do you Consider the Local Plan is:

(Please tick as appropriate)

i) Legally Compliant	Yes	<input type="text" value="x"/>	No	<input type="text"/>
ii) Sound	Yes	<input type="text" value="x"/>	No	<input type="text"/>
iii) Complies with the Duty to co-operate	Yes	<input type="text" value="x"/>	No	<input type="text"/>

5. Please give details of why you consider the Local Plan not legally compliant or is unsound or fails to comply with the duty to co-operate. Please be as precise as possible.

If you wish to support the legal compliance or soundness of the Local Plan or its compliance with the duty to co-operate, please also use this box to set out your comments.

(Continue on a separate sheet/expand box if necessary)

6. Please set out what modification(s) you consider necessary to make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound, having regard to the test you have identified at 5 above where this relates to soundness. (NB Please note that any non-compliance with the duty to co-operate is incapable of modification at examination). You will need to say why this modification will make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording of any policy or text. Please be as precise as possible.

(Continue on a separate sheet/expand box if necessary)

Please note your representation should cover succinctly all the information, evidence and supporting information necessary to support/justify the representation and the suggested modification, as there will not normally be a subsequent opportunity to make further representations based on the original representation at publication stage.

After this stage, further submissions will only be at the request of the Inspector, based on the matters and issues he/she identifies for examination.

7. If your representation is seeking a modification, do you consider it necessary to participate at the oral part of the examination?

No, I do not wish to participate at the oral examination.

Yes, I wish to participate at the oral examination

8. If you wish to participate at the oral part of the examination, please outline why you consider this to be necessary:

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED LETTER

Please note the inspector will determine the most appropriate procedure to adopt to hear those who have indicated that they wish to participate at the oral part of the examination.

9. Signature:



Date:

11 Aug 2016

ALISON GIBSON

From: jeremy.pyatt [REDACTED]
Sent: 07 September 2016 14:26
To: PLANNING POLICY
Subject: Representor No: 109 - TNT Ltd in respect of land at Lount
Attachments: A099445TNTP01A Proposed employment allocation TNT Lount-min.pdf

Importance: High

Dear Sirs,

North West Leicestershire Local Plan - Representor No: 109

I spoke with a member of the Council's policy team this morning in respect of recent Local Plan representations made in regarding Lount by TNT UK Ltd. The representations aim to extend the existing employment designation and are made under representor number 109.

The plan that we originally submitted has a slight error and excludes a small area of land to the south that was originally covered by an employment designation that has subsequently been removed. I would be grateful if you could substitute the attached plan A099445TNTP01 for the one submitted (same reference).

Many thanks,

Jeremy Pyatt
Director

WYG

[REDACTED]

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Proposed employment allocation

Existing employment allocation
Policy EC3

Site: Distribution Depot Lount
Client: TNT UK Ltd
Job: A099445
Plan: Proposed employment allocation
Ref.: A099445TNTTP01
Revision: A
Drawn by: Nick Bowden
Date: August 2016
Scale: 1:5,000 @ A4



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Proposed employment allocation



Existing employment allocation
Policy EC3



Site: Distribution Depot Lount
Client: TNT UK Ltd
Job: A099445
Plan: Proposed employment allocation
Ref: A099445TNTPO1
Revision: Nick Bowden
Drawn by: August 2016
Date: 1:5,000 @ A4
Scale:



**Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
Photograph panels**

TNT UK Limited, Melbourne Road, Lount

**On behalf of TNT UK Limited
November 2015**





The following document comprises a series of photograph panels taken on and around the site on 24 April 2015.

Weather conditions were dry and clear but subject to some haze.

Images (a) to (d) comprise wider landscape photographs of the site and show its position within the landscape. Images (b) and (c) are composite images.

Images (e) to (k) are photographs taken from within the site.

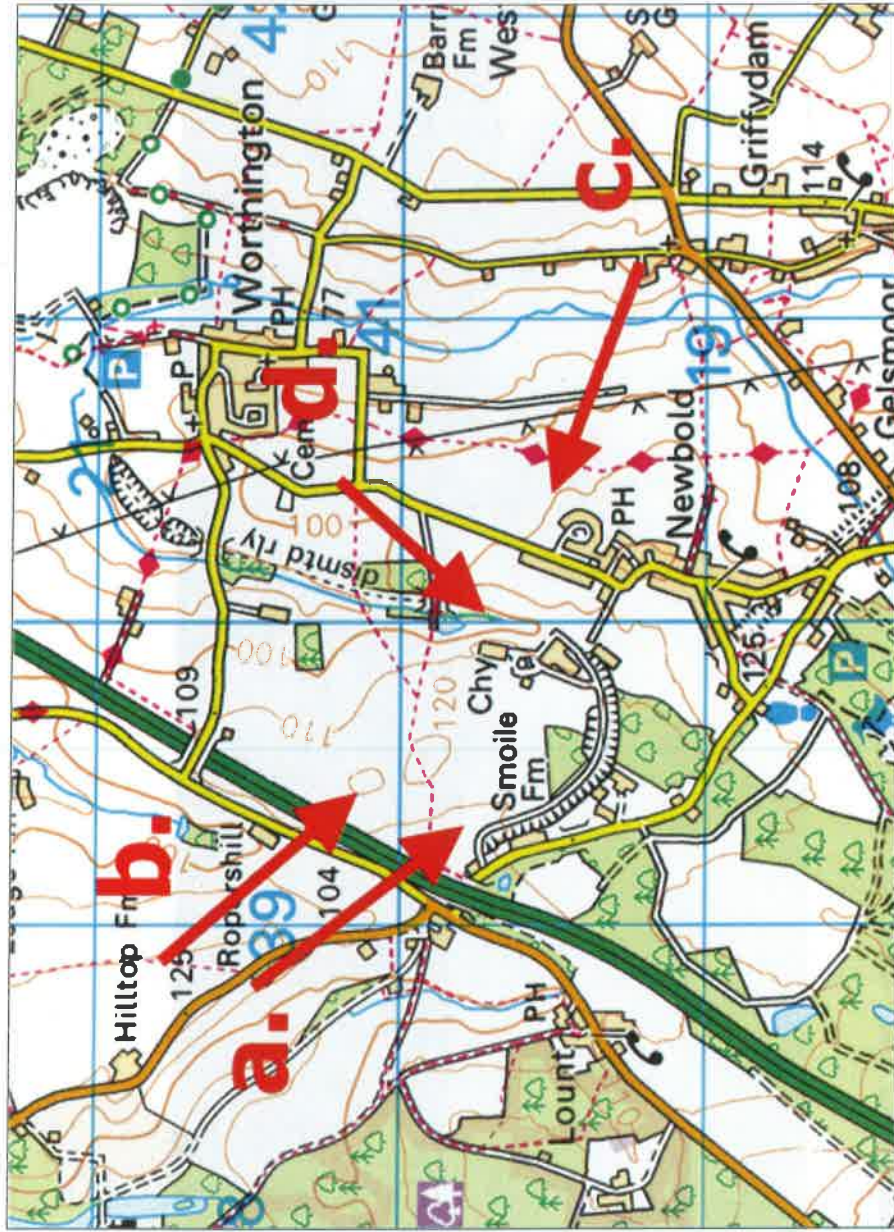




Image (a) southeast from B587 near Hill Top Farm





Image (b) southeast from footpath near Hill Top Farm

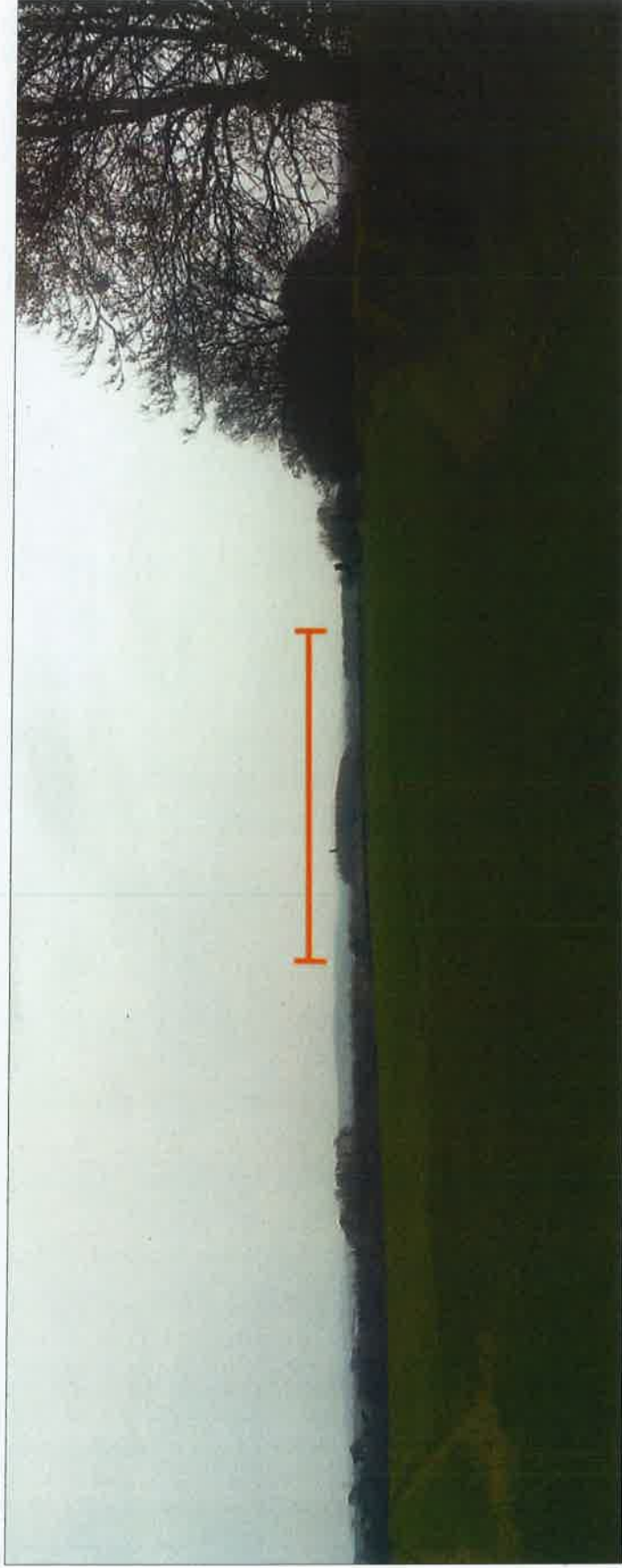




Image (c) west from Lower Brand





Image (d) south from junction of Newbold Lane and Main Street



Faint, illegible text, possibly a page number or reference code.





Image (e) north east showing eastern service wing to the existing depot.





Image (f) west showing the administration building about lorries within the depot.





Image (g) east showing existing tree belt surrounding industrial precinct adjacent to the site.





Image (h) west from the upper fields showing the north western copse.



Image (j) west along the existing access road.



Image (j) looking west along the existing access road. Utility pole and utility structure visible.





Image (k) west from copse towards access road and existing entrance lodge on Melbourne Road.





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Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

TNT UK Limited, Melbourne Road, Lount



On behalf of TNT UK Limited

November 2015

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Document Control

Project: TNT UK Limited, Melbourne Road, Lount, Leicestershire

Client: TNT UK Limited

Job Number: 5248

Document Checking:

Prepared by: Nick Bowden

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'N. Bowden', written over a light blue background.

Checked by: Jeremy Pyatt

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Pyatt', written over a light blue background.

Issue	Date	Revision
1	27 April 2015	Draft
2	12 May 2015	For client approval
3	26 November 2015	Final



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Attachments

1. Indicative masterplan
2. Landscape context photograph panels
3. Site photograph panels



1.0 Introduction

1.1 General

1.1.1 This landscape and visual assessment has been prepared to support TNT's planned expansion of the Lount depot. The aim of the landscape appraisal is to identify, predict and evaluate potential key effects arising from the proposed development. The appraisal was based on a site visit and a desk study. The desk study included a review of the 1:25,000 Ordnance Survey maps for the area, aerial photographs, relevant landscape-related designations and published landscape character assessments. The site visit confirmed the information arising from the desk study, produced a photographic record of the site, appraised any landscape features not already highlighted by the desk study and appraised views into and out of the site.

1.2 Range of assessment

1.2.1 This report addresses issues relating to the anticipated potential impacts upon the landscape character and visual amenity of the study area likely to result from the proposed dwellings. It describes and evaluates any changes to landscape character and features together with general impacts upon visual amenity. It describes and evaluates any changes to landscape character and features and visual amenity. The main objectives of the assessments are as follows:

- Establishment of the baseline conditions, including the sensitivity/value of receptors;
- Identification and assessment of the magnitude of any potential effects; and
- Appraisal of the significance of any effects.

1.2.2 The assessment is confined solely to the landscape and visual implications of the development of the site and does not seek to justify or criticise the proposed development nor consider the full range of planning merits for any scheme.



2.0 Scope of assessment and references

2.1 Context

2.1.1 The appraisal is based on the proposals set out in the indicative master plan (which is included with this assessment as Attachment 1) and having regard to the existing site survey and layout. The assessment broadly assumes that large areas of the site will be given over to buildings and areas of hardstanding with suitable landscaping and dedicated to a warehouse and distribution centre of a national magnitude.

2.1.2 Specific detail regarding the project has not been finalised aside from the general intention to develop the site to provide TNT's national distribution centre comprising approximately 25,000 square metres of warehouse floorspace, together with large scale parcel distribution hub and associated administrative office and welfare accommodation. In this assessment the following parameters are assumed:

- The site will be developed for a large scale warehouse and distribution centre;
- Buildings will be predominantly very large warehouse structures ranging in height to up to around 12-15 metres.
- Large areas of the site will be dedicated to vehicle (including HGVs) loading, parking and manoeuvring;
- All protected trees will remain;
- All other significant trees (category B and above) will remain;
- Category C trees may be removed but will be replaced with similar trees or alternative landscaping where this is not feasible;
- Field hedges and areas of established woodland will be retained; and
- The site will be landscaped in its own right.

Aerial image of site and surroundings



2.2 Criteria of assessment

- 2.2.1 The assessment considers two points in time; namely year 0 during the winter at construction phase and during summer at year 15. Those points in time being in effect the 'worst' and 'best' scenarios in terms of landscape and visual effects, with the latter allowing for the establishment of the development and associated planting.
- 2.2.2 The assessment is made on the basis of one site visit to both the subject site and surrounding area, including local residential areas, park lands and other sensitive areas including those in the vicinity affected by special designations. Ideally two visits would be made, one in spring/summer/autumn, the other in winter in order to establish the best (summer) and worst (winter) baseline condition. This was not possible in this instance and only one visit has been undertaken which was carried out in mid-spring.

2.2.3 The site visit was undertaken on 24 April 2015 and inspections of the site and surroundings occurred over the course of the day from around 10am in the morning to approximately 3pm in the afternoon. The weather conditions were dry, partly cloudy and hazy. The site was clear in all relevant views from the both short, medium and long range vantages although longer range views were sub-optimal due to haze but still above average by comparison to the annual average expected conditions.

2.2.4 A desk based analysis of the site has also been undertaken which included reviews of the following documentation:

- Saved policies of the North West Leicestershire Local Plan;
- Conservation area appraisals;
- Natural England: National Character Area Profile 70 – Melbourne Parklands;
- Natural England: National Character Area Profile 73 – Charnwood;
- A review of the English Heritage historic gardens database;
- English heritage listing database;
- Relevant extracts of ordnance survey maps and aerial imagery.

2.2.5 Various terms are used in this assessment and are broadly defined as follows:

- **Site** means the application site itself as defined by the land edged red on the submitted plans.
- **Landscape** means the wider area context and macro scale impressions and includes the general undulation and topography of the land in the vicinity, the distribution and prevalence of trees, hedgerows and natural features, the presence of buildings and other man made structures and their contribution to the broad setting.

- **Landscape feature** means a feature of particular note that defines and/or influences a landscape. Although many individual features will make up part of a landscape they are generally unlikely to define it. Examples of landscape features include listed buildings, ancient monuments and individual trees of a truly exceptional quality or historic relevance. Historic churches with spires or steeples are the most common example of landscape features as these often represent a cultural and visible reference point.
- **Sensitive receptor or sensitive user** means an aspect or viewpoint of perceived value and includes protected or significant landscape views such as those from a hillside or of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the visibility and prominence of notable features of value such as listed buildings or scheduled ancient monuments together with general outlook from public footpaths or those from habitable room windows to dwellings. A sensitive receptor may be, but is not necessarily, a fixed point so can range from the perception of pedestrian passing through an area to the outlook from a residents living room window.

3.0 Appraisal

3.1 Appraisal methodology

3.1.1 The appraisal is broken down into two key sections. The **landscape appraisal** considers the implications of the development on the landscape in accordance with the definition given above. The **visual amenity appraisal** gives a slightly more localised and user oriented perspective of the proposal and considers the impact of the development on users of the more immediate area such as residents and visitors (as applicable).

3.2 Landscape appraisal methodology

3.2.1 Different landscapes are affected in different ways depending upon the nature, recognised value and perception of such landscapes. This can be explored in differing ways and used to extrapolate the impact of any proposal.

3.2.2 Sensitivity to change concerns the degree with which certain landscapes (the sensitive receptor) can accommodate change in the context of the nature and form of the proposals and their impact on landscape character. This has been evaluated with reference to scenic quality and value, and rated as being high, medium or low. This three point scale uses the following criteria:

- **High sensitivity:** A highly-valued landscape of high scenic quality susceptible to change arising from development, and/or small scale, complex landforms and land cover characteristics with distinctive landscape features. Such sites are often (but not always) granted nationally recognised status such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- **Medium sensitivity:** A medium-valued landscape of moderate scenic quality which may be reasonably tolerant of change arising from development, and/or medium scale landforms and land cover in combination and occasional distinctive landscape features. Such areas may be recognised on a local level and reflected in development plans or other such publications.



- **Low sensitivity:** A lower valued landscape of minor scenic quality, which is tolerant of change arising from development, and/or large scale, simple landforms and land cover characteristics with no distinctive landscape features. Such areas may be appreciated locally by residents but are unlikely to warrant any special degrees of landscape protection.

3.2.3 Magnitude of effects has been assessed on a four point scale of high, medium, low or negligible. Further categories of neutral or no change are also used. These changes will be either beneficial or adverse and are concerned with the scale of the change. These criteria are described as follows:

- **High:** Very noticeable indirect change in landscape characteristics over an extensive area, or direct change to landscape components/character over a less extensive area.
- **Medium:** Noticeable indirect change in landscape characteristics over less extensive area, or direct change to landscape components/character over a localised area.
- **Low:** Perceptible indirect change in landscape characteristics over a contained area, or direct change to landscape components/character over a very localised area.
- **Negligible:** Virtually imperceptible or no indirect change in landscape characteristics over a very localised area, or virtually imperceptible or no direct change to landscape components/character.

3.2.4 The assessment of impacts compares the magnitude of change experienced by a designated site or landscape character area, to its sensitivity to change of the type proposed and provides the significance of the impact. It also takes into account direct impacts upon existing landscape elements, features and key characteristics, and assesses whether these would be lost or their relationships modified, in the context of their importance in determining the existing sensitivity of the character area in question.

3.2.5 Anticipated impacts are reported in terms of a descriptive scale ranging from substantial through

negligible. The criteria adopted for the assessment of landscape effects are as follows:

- **Substantial** adverse or beneficial impact: Very noticeable deterioration/improvement in the existing landscape.
- **Moderate** adverse or beneficial impact: Noticeable deterioration/improvement in the existing landscape.
- **Slight** adverse or beneficial impact: Perceptible deterioration/improvement in the existing landscape.
- **Negligible** impact: Virtually imperceptible deterioration/improvement in the existing landscape.
- **Neutral** impact: Perceptible change that is neither positive nor negative.

3.2.6 These criteria are a combination of receptor sensitivity and magnitude of effects as combined in table 1 below.

Table 1: Significance criteria matrix

Sensitivity of receptor	Magnitude of change			
	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
High	Substantial	Moderate	Slight	Negligible
Medium	Moderate	Slight	Slight	Negligible
Low	Slight	Slight	Negligible	Negligible

3.3 Landscape baseline conditions

3.3.1 The planning authority for the area is North West Leicestershire Council. The current development plan for the area comprise the saved policies of the North West Leicestershire Local Plan. The site is located within an area designated as countryside under policy S3 but is not otherwise affected by any other special landscape designations. The site is not nationally or locally designated for its



landscape value. The site is not within a conservation area.

3.3.2 There are no listed buildings within the immediate vicinity of the site. Only one listed building exists in fair proximity to the site. The extract from the English heritage list description describes this as:

- Elms Farmhouse. South part rendered brickwork, C19 or earlier. 1 storey with upper storey in large gabled dormers. Main facade of 2 gables with central doorway between. Doorway and windows (casements) have thin ornamental hood moulds over. To the north a long 1½ storey timber framed range (C17) roughcast with timber panelling visible in gable wall, with brick infill.

3.3.3 To the south lie two scheduled ancient monuments, both of these comprise former coal workings. The nearest of these is approximately 1Km away and comprises:

- Coal mining remains 600m south west of Smoile Farm. The monument lies in woodland, around 1.5km north west of Coleorton. It includes the earthworks and buried remains of coal mining in an area which forms part of the Coleorton mining landscape.

3.3.4 The site is set within Natural England Character Area 70 – Melbourne Parklands however it is also in very close proximity to National Character Area Profile 73 – Charnwood.

3.3.5 The Melbourne Parklands National Character Area (NCA) is an undulating landscape that extends through South Derbyshire from the Staffordshire border in the west into Leicestershire in the east. The parklands rise abruptly out of the Trent Valley, where the undulating mixed farmland conceals woodlands, reservoirs, landscaped parklands with grand country houses, and scattered villages. The settlement pattern comprises predominantly large, nucleated villages, those furthest from the Trent Valley built of attractive, mellow yellow brick, with a few surviving timber-framed buildings.

3.3.6 Significant infrastructure projects have had an impact on the character of the NCA. The M1, Britain's first official motorway, was opened in 1959, and crosses the NCA close to its eastern boundary. Also in the east, East Midlands Airport, which opened in 1965, has been developed and expanded since its original use as a world war two airfield. Road enhancement schemes such as the A42 have also impacted on the character of the NCA. Large quarries straddle the southern boundary of the NCA and are a localised feature in an otherwise agricultural landscape.

3.3.7 Charnwood includes a distinctive area of elevated land, with rugged, rocky outcrops that rise above the surrounding lowland plain. The predominantly pastoral agricultural land is divided up by a regular field pattern of medium to large fields, with low, clipped hedgerows and stone walls. The planned appearance of the landscape is emphasised by straight, wide verged enclosure roads.

3.3.8 The area contains limited individual landscape features as the nearby listed building and scheduled ancient monuments do not feature in any noteworthy views nor are they apparent in the wider context. The most significant landscape features comprise the unlisted former brickworks chimney stack on the site together with the A42.

3.3.9 The site itself is largely unremarkable and is not at all dissimilar to surrounding land. Most of the site is given over to gently rolling agricultural fields separated by field hedges interspersed with small pockets of woodland.

3.3.10 Key landscape characteristics comprise:

- Relatively large and uninterrupted fields;
- Hedgerow boundaries to fields;
- Small, clustered settlement patterns with outlying farms;

- Sporadic but well established woodland copses, particularly to the west;
- Gently undulating land;
- Occasional natural, semi-natural and man made escarpments.

3.4 Effects on landscape character and landscape features

3.4.1 Table 2 appraises any potential effects on landscape character, showing that there will be a high magnitude of change to the landscape character within the study area. The assessment results are largely the same for both Year 0 and Year 15 as whilst the impacts will be different, the size of the site and extent of works proposed are sufficiently dramatic so as to deliver comparable results. The rationale for the impacts are discussed further below.

Table 2: Nature of change table (landscape effects)

Designation/feature/character area	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change		Significance of change	
		Year 0	Year 15	Year 0	Year 15
National landscape designations					
None	-	-	-	-	-
Local landscape designations					
Open countryside	Low	High	High	Slight	Slight
Conservation areas					
None	-	-	-	-	-
Listed buildings and ancient monuments					
Elm Farmhouse	High	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
Coal mining remains	High	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible
Landscape features					
Chimney stack	Medium	Moderate	Moderate	Slight	Slight
Village of Newbold	Low	High	High	Slight	Slight
Village of Worthington	Low	High	High	Slight	Slight
Village of Worthington	Low	High	High	Slight	Slight

3.4.2 Although the magnitude of change is indicated to be high, the site is located within an area of low sensitivity. Where sensitive assets or areas are present these are typically well removed from the area in question such that the consequent impacts are mitigated. Indeed, the study area in question exhibits a general lack of any assets of note.

3.4.3 The landscape surrounding the study area comprises pleasant countryside however many of its characteristics stem from the industrialised past. Field sizes remain fairly large and sporadically characterised by remnants of the extractive and agricultural industry heritage. The area is divided by historic and current (and indeed planned) infrastructure including roads, railways and overhead power lines.

3.4.4 The landscape setting remains fairly unremarkable as is acknowledged by the lack of special designations on either a local or national level. The gently rolling landscape assists in softening longer range views such that even relatively dramatic features such as the A42 quickly blend into the overall topography.

3.4.5 There are no conservation areas within the study area. There remain only three designated heritage items in the study area.

3.4.6 Elms Farmhouse comprises the only listed building within the immediate vicinity. This is located within the village of Newbold and has largely been encircled by the more modern development of the village. There are no direct views to or from this building from the site. Although the village of Worthington contains two churches (both without spires) and a number of listed buildings, this settlement is too distant for there to be any impacts. Neither the village of Lount nor the village of Newbold contain historic places of worship.

3.4.7 Two scheduled ancient monuments, which comprise coal mining remains, are located to the south.

These remains are ground based and have to all intents and purposes becoming integrated with the landscape. In any event these do not have intervisibility to and from the study area.

3.4.8 Although it is not located within the TNT site, the former Newbold Brickworks chimney remains an unlisted building which retains interest as one of the few widely visible landscape features and an item of heritage interest. The chimney can be viewed from a wide area and forms a noteworthy landmark that is useful for site identification in longer range views. The immediate setting of this structure may be impacted by the development however its general landscape context remains largely unaltered due to the undulating nature of the land.

3.4.9 The surrounding villages of Lount, Newbold and Worthington would remain largely insulated from the development site due to the undulation of the land and the absence of any direct landscape views. This is with the exception of the village of Newbold where short range views of the site would be available. However this is largely off-set by the undulating nature of the land and a lack of direct, public accessible vantage points.

3.5 Visual amenity appraisal methodology

3.5.1 For there to be a visual impact there is the need of an individual receptor (viewer). Receptors include users/occupiers of residential properties, work places, recreational facilities and other outdoor sites used by the public such as, roads, railways and footpaths which would be likely to experience a change in existing views as a result of the construction and operation of the proposed development.

3.5.2 The sensitivity of a receptor to the proposed development considers the nature of the receptor and offers a more individualistic impression that has a greater emphasis on the user of the immediate environment. Residents and recreational users of an area or the landscape are classified as being of the highest sensitivity, whilst road users and workers are classified as having the lowest sensitivity.

- **High** sensitivity users include residents of dwellings, users of public recreational footpaths, tracks and vantage points, tourists, users of outdoor recreational facilities where visual setting forms an important part of the experience (ie. golf courses or country parks).
- **Medium** sensitivity users typically form those using recreational facilities where the setting is of less importance (ie. a local recreation ground or football pitch), slow moving users such as pedestrians or cyclists simply passing through an area with a functional objective.
- **Low** sensitivity users include vehicle users passing through an area at a reasonable or high speed, outdoor workers, occupants of places of employment, education. Such users may appreciate the context of the area they are in but are unlikely to be in that location due to its aesthetic quality.

3.5.3 From a visual amenity perspective, the proximity of the user can also heavily influence their sensitivity. Consequently a high sensitivity user with no direct line of sight to the site will therefore be far less sensitive than one with an immediate vantage. This is considered in table 3 below.

Table 3: Sensitivity matrix

Sensitivity of receptor	Distance			
	Within direct line of sight and less than 50 metres	Within sporadic line of site or direct line of sight between 50 to 100 metres	Not directly visible or fleetingly visible	Not visible
High	High	Medium	Low	Negligible
Medium	Medium	Low	Negligible	Negligible
Low	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible



3.5.4 The magnitude and significance of the change is considered in the same vein as set out in the paragraphs above in relation to landscape effects. Again this is translated into the significance criteria matrix detailed in table 1 having regard to the proximity principles outlined above.

3.6 Visual amenity baseline conditions

3.6.1 The nearest users to the site comprise the occupants of the small industrial precinct to the north of the existing depot which is very broadly centred around the existing chimney stack. The users of such premises are unlikely to be overly concerned about the context and setting of the location and are thus unlikely to be impacted by any changes. The same principles would apply to farming activities on surrounding agricultural land.

3.6.2 The next closest set of users comprise those using the public footpath and bridleway which extends across the northern part of the site. Although this footpath and bridleway appears, notionally, not to be particularly heavily used; its relevance as the most prominent area of public access remains. Although much of this footpath extends through relatively large open fields, part of this also passes through an area of woodland to the west. Users of this footpath are likely to appreciate the setting of these contexts the most and are in closest proximity to the affected area.

3.6.3 Residents of houses which address Worthington Lane within the village of Newbold comprise the residential properties most conscious of changes within the study area. Some of these homes presently have vantage across the TNT site itself being set just shy of 200 metres distant. The distance involved should ameliorate the impacts of any development of the site upon these users.

3.6.4 Other users who may have an impression of the site would typically be those utilising the surrounding road network for travel purposes. In any case such views are likely to be fleeting and typically fairly inconsequential, particularly from larger through routes along the A42 and B587.

3.7 Effects on visual amenity

3.7.1 Table 4 presents the main impacts upon potential or actual users. In this table impacts recorded as being substantial or moderate are regarded as being significant to this assessment.

Table 4: Nature of change table (visual amenity)

Visual amenity areas	Sensitivity	Magnitude of change		Significance of change	
		Year 0	Year 15	Year 0	Year 15
Melbourne Road - junction with Nottingham Road/A42 underpass	Low	Low	Low	Negligible	Negligible
Melbourne Road - Smoile Farm	Low	Low	Low	Negligible	Negligible
Worthington Lane - near Cloud View Hill	High	Medium	Medium	Moderate	Moderate
Worthington Lane - near Vicarage Close	High	Medium	Medium	Moderate	Moderate
Footpath crossing northern part of site	High	High	High	Substantial	Substantial
Industrial precinct around chimney stack	Low	High	High	Slight	Slight
Working farmland surrounding site	Low	Medium	Medium	Slight	Slight
A42 and B587	Low	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

3.7.2 In a similar vein to the impacts upon landscape character, the changes to the study area are similar between both year 0 and year 15. The impacts of a building site during construction clearly being of a differing nature to that of a working depot but the magnitude and significance of these changes remaining similar.

3.7.3 From Melbourne Road, much of the site would be indeterminate or only visible in fleeting views. This

road is typically used by passing traffic and is unlikely to be frequented by walkers or cyclists appreciating the area for its general amenity value. The impression of changes from this aspect would typically be confined to alterations to the gatehouse and views available through fairly infrequent gaps in hedging or landscaping. The impression of heavy goods vehicles coming and going from the site would likely be appreciated given the nature and size of the project during construction and year 15 operation. However as noted, this is unlikely to be of great consequence to the low sensitivity users here.

3.7.4 The nearest settlement to the site comprises the village of Newbold. A number of houses addressing Worthington Lane would have vantage across the site. As noted in the previous section though this is well removed by around 200 metres and the closest part of the site to these users is likely to remain relatively unchanged by comparison to the overall site and study area. These users would clearly have an impression of changes at the site and potentially an appreciation of the scale of activity however the distances involved are such that direct impacts would be mitigated.

3.7.5 The footpath and bridleway traversing the northern part of the site enjoys an elevated position and fairly clear views across the site. It is likely that users of this footpath would be the most significantly impacted by the development as it would result in a large scale and fundamental change in the nature of the environment.

3.7.6 The industrial precinct immediately to the north of the existing site together with surrounding working farmland would certainly appreciate the change occurring. However, as work places that are typically impacted at a lower level by the nature of the environment, the significance of the change would remain fairly low.

3.7.7 The main strategic routes near to the site comprise the A42 and B587 to the west. These both comprises arterial roads through the area and will not be affected by the development were any views available. In any case both routes would have negligible views of the site and such views would



typically be fleeting due to the speed of traffic. The A512 to the south is too distant to garner any appreciation of the changes to the site.



4.0 Summary and conclusions

4.1 Overview

- 4.1.1 A survey and appraisal has been undertaken of the landscape character and features of the TNT Melbourne Road site. The appraisal seeks to predict whether a proposed development of a large warehouse and distribution complex will have any significant adverse effects on the landscape and visual amenity of the site or its surrounding area.
- 4.1.2 The site and wider study area has no local or national landscape designations. There are no conservation areas, listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments within visual distance of the site.
- 4.1.3 The study area lies within National Character Area 70; the Melbourne Parklands character area and immediately on the boundary with. Both character areas in the vicinity of the site are subject to modification and scarring from man-made activities including overhead power cables, major strategic infrastructure and industrial and residential development.
- 4.1.4 The scale of effects upon the landscape would be significant, largely as a consequence of the size of the development. However the general rolling nature and low sensitivity of the surrounding area is such that these impacts are ameliorated due to a lack of features of any particular note.
- 4.1.5 The main localised visual effects would be upon the footpath the traverses the northern part of the site which would have a full appreciation of the nature of changes. This would result in a significant and sustained degradation to the natural quality of the environment. Homes within the village of Newbold would likely appreciate that changes would be occurring but are unlikely to have any significant change in the quality of the visual amenity for these users.



4.2 Summary of findings

- 4.2.1 The proposals will have a significantly adverse short and long term effects on the study area. Such impacts however will largely be mitigated by the ability of the surrounding area to cope with these changes due to being predominantly a low sensitivity environment. The visual amenity of most affected users would be maintained due to the significant separation distance between users and the affected area together with the undulating nature of the land.



11 August 2016

Planning Policy
North West Leicestershire District Council
Council Offices
Whitwick Road
Coalville
Leicestershire
LE67 3FJ

Dear Sirs,

**North West Leicestershire Publication Local Plan
Submission on behalf of TNT UK Limited
Land at Melbourne Road, Lount**

On behalf of TNT UK Limited, I have pleasure in submitting representations in respect of the abovementioned premises. It is noted that, following representations made at the consultation draft stage, the historical employment area designation at Lount has been reinstated under policy Ec3 and shown on the main Proposals Map as an existing employment area.

We welcome the reinstatement of the Ec3 existing employment area designation but wish to see this extended to include the area identified in red on the attached plan.

For the purposes of this submission please find attached:

- Completed representations form
- Plan showing proposed extent of existing employment designation
- Illustrative master plan
- Highway and transport statement
- Landscape and visual impact statement
- Ecological appraisal

Background

TNT are an international express logistics operator with a global reach. A key feature of TNTs network is the ability to ensure express next day delivery; the regional distribution hubs being a core element of this network. Nationally, a total of 800 people work in TNTs distribution centres every night and process 830 parcels per minute in order to ensure that the 2.7 million kilos of parcels and packages are delivered in time for the next working day.

The TNT Lount hub comprises one of three distribution hubs that are located within the midlands at Atherstone, Kingsbury and Lount. All are located with good access to a variety of motorway routes





including the M1, M6, M42 and M69 in addition to other important trunks routes such as the A5, A45, A46 and A50.

Typically these distribution centres serve different areas, with the Lount hub generally focusing on operations towards the north of the UK in addition to some overflow from the smaller air-hub at East Midlands airport. However, as TNT are an express logistics operator, ensuring that parcels are delivered for the start of the following working day (for domestic deliveries) is an essential component of the business operation.

Having three distribution centres in relatively close proximity allows for redundancy in the event that there is any significant disruption to parts of the road network. For example, a serious incident on the road network around Birmingham (M6/M42) may significantly delay vehicles arriving at the Kingsbury hub. In such circumstances, the receiving distribution hub(s) can be switched from Kingsbury to Atherstone and/or Lount for the duration of the disruption which allows operations to continue without any material impact upon the delivery of TNTs services.

TNT predominantly caters for the business to business market with the three regional hubs predominantly servicing domestic parcels delivered via road. Other markets served include Europe which would come from the Channel or east of England ports via the European Road Network Hub in the south east or from Ireland via Holyhead. Express airfreight may also arrive from East Midlands airport. Due to the time critical nature of TNTs parcels, rail freight is typically too slow and additionally lacks the degree of redundancy offered by road freight.

At present TNTs Lount hub is the smallest of the three regional hubs, with an operational area slightly in excess of 4 hectares. By comparison, the centres at Atherstone and Kingsbury each extend to around 8 hectares.

As a consequence of TNTs continually expanding operation, the Lount site is already operating at capacity and therefore struggles to assist the Atherstone and Kingsbury hubs in the event of any disruption to the road network in the West Midlands. This is of particular significance given that both Atherstone and Kingsbury are in fairly close proximity to each other and are thus likely to be affected by disruptions on the M6 and M42 fairly equally. Conversely, the Lount hub is well positioned in order to be able to use alternative routes via:

- The A50 and M1 from the north west
- The A43 and M1 from the south west
- The A46, M69 and M1 from the west

Likewise, in the event of disruption on the M1, parcels to and from the north east and south east can be sent via alternative routes into Atherstone and/or Kingsbury.

In order to maintain TNTs ability to provide next day delivery on parcels, it is necessary to expand the Lount hub to increase its overall capacity in addition to building in extra capacity should the Atherstone or Kingsbury hubs be subject to operational interference or require essential maintenance to be carried out at either of the sites.

TNT's expansion plans are likely to result in a significant increase in the number of staff present at the site in the order of around 950 people. However the increase in the number of jobs will be heavily dependent



upon the development of the Lount hub. In the absence of any ability to expand the Lount site, TNT would have to seriously consider the relevance of the site as an alternative site would have to be identified.

The Site

The current TNT facility is well suited to its specialised logistics functions and makes an important contribution to the District's existing employment land supply. TNT operates a substantial modern and purpose built 8,250 sq.m cross bay logistics warehouse with associated facilities and large hardstanding. This is a specialised facility that provides a modern, purpose built 24hr parcels logistics operation, with a dedicated access and secure location.

The TNT facility is a major employment operation which also provides significant economic activity in an area that has in the past suffered from the decline in traditional industries and skilled employment. The TNT facility currently employs over 200 staff and provides a wide range of skill levels including management, administrative, professional skilled and semi skilled work, providing significant and varied local employment in the area.

The TNT site lies to the east of the A42 a short distance to the north east of Ashby de la Zouch, accessed off and to the north of Melbourne Road. The ownership of the site extends to some 28.3 ha with circa 4ha being developed previously as a key logistics facility.

A private access road runs to the south of the site giving vehicular access to the depot. This adjoins Melbourne Road close to the A42 and occupies an area that was once former railway sidings. The A42 is accessed via the site access onto Melbourne Road and Nottingham Road to the A511 and its junction with the A42.

Planning History

The current logistics facility has been a safeguarded site for some years and we are pleased to see that the site has been reinstated in the Publication Local Plan. Previous correspondence with your authority has sought to retain this safeguarding and provide for the future potential expansion of the facility through the North West Leicestershire Local Plan Review.

Representations were originally made in January 2012 and September 2013 in respect of the shaded red land identified on the enclosed plan. This 3.54 ha area of land was promoted for employment use through the "call for sites" and subsequently included in the Council's Employment Land Availability Assessment of April 2013.

A further submission sought to expand and include the 13.3 ha area of land to be used for employment purposes and was also later included in the Council's Employment Land Availability Assessment. This land lies to the east of the A42 a short distance to the north east of Ashby de la Zouch and just south of the junction of the A42 and M1. The site is accessed off Melbourne Road. In identifying an appropriate area of land we have considered the possible alignment of HS2 which is currently planned to bisect TNT's landholding. The western boundary of the site abuts this safeguarded route which would form a natural boundary.

North West Leicestershire Local Plan

Further to our earlier representations through the call for sites and consultation draft Local Plan the primary purpose of this submission is to request that the area hatched red on the attached plan be



included as an extension to the existing employment area (Policy Ec3), as reinstated on the Publication Plan Proposals Map, in order to provide for the future growth of the business.

There is a very strong case to provide for the protection and promotion of further growth at the facility in order to retain an important employment location and provide for its continued success and development.

It is anticipated within the plan period that there will be a need to expand the logistics facility at the site to provide for growth and the additional capacity required. The demand for modern, strategic facilities of the type currently operated at the site is recognised as being an important part of the overall provision for specialised distribution uses, which in turn are a key part of potential employment growth within the District. As recognised through the call for sites process any new development should be considered as an extension to the existing facility, rather than a new use.

The future success of the business depends on the development of the logistics operation at a single Lount site in order to ensure the most efficient and effective operation, together with the benefits from economies of scale that this would deliver. The facility requires updating to meet current operational requirements and this investment needs to be carried out as part of an expansion plan.

It is important also to appreciate that this is a dedicated facility that is not capable of being accommodated in a typical warehouse or other employment location. It has specific requirements that dictate the form of the building, its location and the nature and timings of the operations carried out. It is important to maintain existing employment generating uses in key locations such as this as they will play a decisive role in supporting the economy of North West Leicestershire.

It is the case that in a number of instances these modern employment uses focus on key sites in rural areas, outside of settlement boundaries, reflecting the pattern of communities and employment that resulted from traditional industries. In consolidating such uses, where they have replaced former traditional industries (as is the case here) expansion opportunities such as this represent a sustainable approach which reflect the District's historic patterns of land use.

Where these have comprised modern development, meeting a clear market requirement and have resulted in significant committed investment, this should be recognised in the emerging Local Plan. The investment made at this site in terms of infrastructure, facilities and personnel is substantial and significant.

This approach is fundamental to ensuring continued sustainable economic development in the rural areas. Where such sites are meeting a current market requirement that can grow in the future these locations can play a major role in stimulating the District's economy.

The identification of the expanded site, on the Proposals Map and under Policy Ec3, will bring economic benefits to the locality and wider rural area and is consistent with the aims and objectives of the council's Economic Strategy. In particular the expansion and future proofing of the site will assist the Council in delivering the following key principles:

- Make provision for a range of sites of different sizes and characteristics;
- Safeguard existing employment sites where they are recognised as being of sufficient quality and importance to the local economy to merit their retention; and
- Facilitate the growth of businesses wherever possible.

It is considered that the identified site has the potential to provide for the further expansion of the facility and is well located in relation to the strategic road network. The site identified can accommodate additional



development with minimal impact on the environment or local amenities. The possible future expansion of the logistics facility will not only help secure the existing 200 jobs but will provide for a significant increase in local employment at the site.

Securing the future of the existing investment will help safeguard its wider contribution to the local economy through employment and the purchase of local goods and services.

It is considered that the site is visually well contained and can be developed without there being any significant impact on the wider countryside. The current safeguarded route of HS2 could provide a logical boundary to future development.

The area identified on the plan has been the subject of a range of studies which were submitted initially in respect of the consultation draft plan. These related to highways and transport, landscape and visual impact and ecology. These reports are attached again for completeness, the key findings of which are as follows:

Highways and Access

The highways and transport report produced by AECOM shows that vehicle trips generated from the site can be accommodated on the local and strategic road network. Irrespective of the outcome of the submission the vehicle access to the site would have to be re positioned as a consequence of the proposed line of HS2. In any event both the existing site and any new access can accommodate vehicle traffic on the local road network before reaching the strategic A42. Vehicles are required to enter and exit the site from the north (via the B587) as a consequence of existing traffic regulations and would thus avoid villages and smaller roads around Newbold and Coleorton. The access to the site, the junction onto the B587 and junction 13 onto the A42, are all of an adequate capacity to accommodate heavy vehicle access onto the road network.

Amenity

The site exists in close proximity to the village of Newbold to the south. It is believed that the operation of the site does not cause any noise or disturbance to residents of the village. This is of particular note to TNT as much of their operations on the site occur overnight. The expansion of the site would be directed to locations further away from the village such that there would not be any greater impact (if any) on the residents of the village.

Landscape and visual impact

The site is located within the open countryside and would result in a noteworthy impact upon the rural nature of the area. This impact is explored in greater detail within the landscape and visual impact assessment which supports the submission. There would clearly be an impact on the countryside as a consequence of any development of the site. Such impacts would have to be balanced against the significant employment generating potential of the enlarged site and the valuable addition the site makes to the economy. It is important to note that areas of protected woodland would be retained as part of the expansion plans.

Ecology

Much of the site is presently dedicated to species poor farmland which is further eroded as a consequence of the fairly large field boundaries. Some parts of the site feature pockets of woodland which would be



retained and enhanced through structural and connective planting in any expansion of the facility.

A Preliminary Ecology Appraisal, produced by EDP, supports this submission which demonstrates that the site could be developed without any harmful impact upon native species. This would be subject to more detailed consideration at the design stage and careful planning of the development. However, the indicative master plan shows that the site can be developed with minimal impact upon established and significant areas.

Flood Risk

The site is located entirely within Environment Agency flood zone 1 and thus is at low risk of flooding. However, as the site is in excess of 1 hectare any planning application would have to consider the flood risk implications of a development of this magnitude. The enclosed flood risk assessment illustrates how the development of the site can be achieved without resulting in an increased flood risk on site or on the surrounding downstream environment.

The Plan lists numerous other sites which have been identified for employment growth. However, none of these are of sufficient size to accommodate TNT's requirements which typically need to be in excess of 8 hectares.

Conclusion

TNT are proposing an expansion of their established Lount hub and wish to see the Proposals Map extended to include the land to be covered by Policy Ec3. This statement and supporting documents aim to demonstrate that the site can be developed in a responsible sustainable manner. Significantly:

- The site is centrally located to the UK market and is a major local employer, the expansion plans would secure its ongoing function as part of TNTs midlands network;
- TNTs expansion plans would see the creation of an additional 950 jobs;
- The site takes advantage of its enviable strategic location close to the road network;
- The proposal represents a significant opportunity to enhance an existing major employer for the area and create new employment opportunities for local people;
- The site can accommodate the development without a significant impact upon the environment;
- Although the site is located in an open countryside location, the area does not benefit from any regionally or locally significant landscape designations;
- Local woodland can be protected and enhanced through additional tree planting. This will also have the added bonus of assisting in screening and mitigating impacts from the line of HS2;
- Potential adverse impacts can be mitigated or are sufficiently minor that the merits of the proposal are such that the development of the site is warranted.



To enable these important expansion plans we would therefore request that the existing employment designation at Lount be expanded accordingly to include subject site to be covered by the criteria contained in Policy Ec3.

Yours faithfully,



Jeremy Pyatt
Director
For and on behalf of WYG

**Land East of A42,
Newbold, Lount,
Leicestershire**

**Ecological
Appraisal**

Prepared by:
**The Environmental
Dimension
Partnership Ltd (EDP)**

On behalf of:
TNT

May 2015
Report Reference
C_EDP2412_01



ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING, DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT SERVICES
FOR ALL INVOLVED IN PROPERTY AND DEVELOPMENT



THE
ENVIRONMENTAL
DIMENSION
PARTNERSHIP

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Plans

Plan EDP 1 Habitat Features
(EDP2412/01 24 April 2015 JTF/JG)

This version intended for electronic viewing only

For EDP use	
Report no.	C_EDP2412_01
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Section 1 Introduction

Introduction

- 1.1 The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd (EDP) was commissioned by TNT to undertake an ecological appraisal of a parcel of land east of the A42, Newbold, Lount, Leicestershire (hereafter referred to as 'the site'). The site is centred approximately on Ordnance Survey Grid Reference (OSGR) SK 397 196.
- 1.2 The ecological appraisal has been commissioned to inform the potential allocation of the land for employment purposes as part of North West Leicestershire District Council's emerging Local Plan. The land is being promoted for the development of B1, B2 and B8 employment uses.
- 1.3 EDP understands that representations on behalf of TNT were submitted with respect to the Council's 'Call for Sites' in September 2013. Following the submission of these representations, it is understood that the Council will consider the inclusion of the land within its Employment Land Supply Report which is due to be published in due course. Given that further consultation by the Council with respect to employment land allocations is due later during 2015, this ecological appraisal has been prepared to inform the potential allocation of the site through identifying any "in principle" ecological constraints to development or any ecological opportunities and constraints which would need to be addressed in detail at a later planning stage (e.g. planning application stage) in the event that the site is allocated. In the absence of emerging Local Plan policies which could be afforded weight, opportunities and constraints have been identified with reference to national planning policy guidance and relevant ecological legislation.
- 1.4 No masterplan of the proposals was available prior to the preparation of this report. Therefore recommendations are made in relation to ecological aspects that will need to inform and influence the masterplan for the proposals as they emerge and develop.
- 1.5 The remainder of this report is structured as follows:
 - **Section 2** sets out the methodology used in completing the ecological appraisal;
 - **Section 3** sets of the findings of the ecological appraisal; and
 - **Section 4** considers these findings in light of relevant ecological planning policy and legislation.

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Section 2 Methodology

Desk Study

- 2.1 In order to supplement the field survey detailed below, a desk study was undertaken to collect relevant ecological information pertaining to the site and immediate surrounding area. Leicestershire and Rutland Environmental Records Centre (LRERC), the local biodiversity records centre for the county, was commissioned to provide data in April 2015. In addition, given the extent of the area of search (as detailed below), Derbyshire Wildlife Trust (DWT) was also contacted given that part of the 4km search radius for bats extended into parts of Derbyshire.
- 2.2 Records and information relating to the following ecological receptors and distances around the site was requested from LRERC and, where pertinent, DWT:
- Details of statutory sites of nature conservation importance for a 5km radius. In addition, subject to relevant adopted or emerging planning policy, designations further than a 5km radius may also be considered as necessary;
 - Details of non-statutory sites of nature conservation importance for a 2km radius;
 - Records of protected species and species of conservation importance (e.g. UK Biodiversity Action Plan, (BAP) Red List) for a 2km radius; and
 - Records of bats for a 4km radius.

Field Study

- 2.3 An Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey of the site was undertaken by one of EDP's qualified Ecologists and full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management.
- 2.4 The survey was undertaken on 02 April 2015. Weather conditions at the time of survey were clear and sunny; the conditions posed no constraints to the findings of the survey.
- 2.5 The methodology broadly followed that outlined in the 'Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey' (Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) 2010¹). It involved categorising areas of the site into their principal habitat types, mapping their extent and identifying characteristic or dominant plants species.

¹ JNCC (2010). Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey - A technique for environmental audit.

- 2.6 During the Phase 1 Habitat Survey, an initial assessment was made of the status of protected species on the site (an 'Extended' Phase 1 Habitat Survey). This involved recording any signs confirming the presence of protected species or evaluating their likelihood to occur on the site based on: the type of habitats present, the nature of the adjoining land and its connectivity to the site and any existing ecological records. Where it was considered that there was a need to conduct further surveys to establish the presence and status of protected species on the site, these have been recommended in **Section 4** of this report.
- 2.7 Phase 1 Habitat surveys are broad and preliminary walkover surveys are not intended to produce a complete floral and faunal inventory for a site. The results of any survey represent a synopsis of the ecological characteristics of a site at a particular point in time and it should be noted that their assemblage of habitats and species can change over time.

Section 3 Results

Designated Sites

Statutory

- 3.1 Statutory sites of nature conservation importance refer to international or national designated sites. International sites include Natura 2000 sites regarded as being important at a European level, including Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and globally important wetlands designated as Ramsar sites. Nationally important statutory designations are termed Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), whereas locally important statutory designations are referred to as Local Nature Reserves (LNRs).
- 3.2 The site is not covered by, and does not lie adjacent to, any statutory ecology designation. There are no designated sites of international note within 5km of the proposals.
- 3.3 In relation to nationally important sites, there are a small number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) within a 5km radius of the proposals, however the majority are in excess of 2km from the proposal. All of these designations are noted for their woodland habitat and, in some cases, also additionally for the acid or calcareous grassland that they support. Due to their spatial separation from the site, the designated interest that they support and the nature of the proposed land use change, it is considered unlikely that these SSSIs will be significantly affected by the proposed land use change of the site from agriculture to employment uses.
- 3.4 Within 2km of the site, there is one SSSI namely: Lount Meadows. The SSSI consists of three separate parcels of land which are designated collectively as an SSSI. Two of the parcels lie to the west of the A42. One of the parcels, however, lies to the east of the A42 and lies approximately 200m to the south of the land proposed for employment use.
- 3.5 Lount Meadows SSSI collectively covers approximately 9.2 hectares (ha); of which the parcel east of the A42 accounts for approximately 1.8ha. With reference to Natural England's citation for the SSSI, it is primarily designated since "*the site includes some of the best examples of slightly acidic neutral grassland in Leicestershire and is representative of such grasslands in the English Midlands*". The citation further describes the SSSI collectively as "*a very fine series of meadows and pasture land developed on somewhat acidic neutral soils derived from shales of the Carboniferous Coal Measures*". The parcel of the SSSI east of the A42 is described as "*a fine hay meadow having a sward characterised by the dominance of red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), meadow fescue (*F. pratensis*), crested dog's-tail (*Cynosurus cristatus*) and *Agrostis capillaris*. The sward is particularly notable for its diversity of grass species and also for its range of other herbs*".

which includes a strong colony of Adder's tongue fern (Ophioglossum vulgatum). There is also an area of marsh dominated by plicate sweet grass (Glyceria plicata) and water horsetail (Equisetum fluviatile)".

- 3.6 With reference to Natural England's condition assessment of the SSSI, collectively, all the SSSI is in unfavourable condition with approximately half in recovery and half in decline. The parcel east of the A42 is in unfavourable/recovering condition. The main reason for the declining condition is stated by Natural England to be due to under grazing which reflects in a lack of positive key indicator species and a high proportion of negative key indicator species.

Non-Statutory

- 3.7 Non-statutory designations are also commonly referred to in planning policies as 'local sites', although in fact these designations are typically considered to be of importance at a county level or less. In Leicestershire, designations of county importance are named as Local Wildlife Sites (LWS). Additional designated sites which should be considered at this level include Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and Ancient Semi-natural Woodland (ASNW) where these are not covered by other designations.
- 3.8 No part of the site is covered by any non-statutory designation. However, within 2km of the site there are several LWS; some of which are identified as candidate or potential LWS. Following a review of the information provided, it is considered that there are two pertinent LWSs, namely:
- Newbold Woodland Candidate LWS (Site Reference 70271). This cLWS lies immediately south of the site and is designated for its woodland habitat which covers approximately 9.75ha. It is also closely related spatially to two other LWS which lie to the south and west of it respectively namely: Melbourne Road Woodland and Newbold New Plantation (Site References 70783 and 62701). Both these LWS are designated as candidate LWSs primarily for their woodland habitat and, collectively with Newbold Woodland cLWS cover an area of approximately 13.6ha; and
 - Newbold Pond and Scrub Candidate LWS (Site Reference 70828). This cLWS lies immediately adjacent to the site towards its north eastern corner and is designated for its scrub habitat; however a pond and small stream are noted. The cLWS extends over an area of approximately 2.6ha.

Habitats

- 3.9 The distribution of different habitat types within and adjacent to the site is illustrated on **Plan EDP 1 - Habitat Features**. Details of the extended Phase 1 habitat survey, including lists of plants species recorded are provided in **Appendix EDP 1** Phase 1 Habitat Descriptions and a summary is provided below.

- 3.10 The Phase 1 Habitat Survey completed by EDP confirmed that the site comprises three arable fields delineated by hedgerows with two blocks of woodland, W1 and W2 present to the south and west. Within the site are three ponds with a further two ponds present adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site, including within the Newbold Pond and Scrub cLWS described above.
- 3.11 The arable fields to the north and west contained stubble at the time of the survey, with the third field located centrally and to the south of the site supporting improved grassland likely grown as a silage crop. All the fields support 1-2 m wide field margins which contain species poor semi-improved grassland. The areas of arable land are considered to be of negligible importance.
- 3.12 Woodland W1 is an area of semi-natural broad-leaved woodland with an affinity with the National Vegetation Community (NVC) W10, supporting dominant oak (*Quercus robur*) with a ground flora dominated by bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.). Around the edges of the woodland, bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) forms dominant swards. Although bluebell is present, no other ground flora species indicative of ancient woodland were recorded and the woodland is not shown on the ancient woodland inventory map². However, the woodland, being an area of semi-natural broad-leaved woodland is likely to qualify as a 'habitat of principle importance' as listed on the England Biodiversity List produced as a requirement of Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006³ and is therefore considered to be of at least local importance. In addition, woodland also forms part of a patchwork of woodland habitat locally, including with those areas of woodland offsite which are covered by non-statutory designations as described above.
- 3.13 The second area of woodland, W2, is an area of broad-leaved plantation woodland which supports semi-mature to mature silver birch and has a ground flora dominated by common nettle. This woodland therefore has limited intrinsic ecological value.
- 3.14 None of the hedgerows within the site are considered to be species rich or likely to qualify as 'important' under the ecology criteria of the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. The hedgerows on the whole comprised of co-dominant hawthorn and blackthorn, although some mature oak standards are present within the hedgerows. As the hedgerows within the site comprise more than 50% native woody species along their length they are likely to qualify as 'habitats of principle importance' as listed on the England Biodiversity List produced as a requirement of Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. As such the hedgerows within the site are considered to be of local importance.
- 3.15 Pond 1 is located within the centre of the site. This is a relatively large pond surrounded by scattered trees which include alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) and ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and semi-improved grassland. The central section of the pond supports dominant reed mace

² <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx> [Accessed April 20 2015]

³ <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140605090108/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/biodiversity/protectandmanage/habsandspeciesimportance.aspx> [Accessed April 27 2015]

(*Typha latifolia*) with floating sweet grass (*Glyceria fluitans*) also present. Two small ponds (Ponds 2-3) are present within the north western section of woodland W1. Pond 2 is a relatively small circular pond which at the time of the survey did not support any submerged aquatic plants or marginal plants which suggest this pond may dry out in most years. Pond 3 is a wet depression adjacent to Pond 2 which supports hard rush and again is also likely to dry out in most years. Pond 4 and 5 are located offsite. Pond 4 is a large lake which may have resulted from quarrying. A cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) was observed fishing on the lake and fishing platforms for anglers were also recorded suggesting the pond is stocked with coarse fish. Pond 5 appears to be an attenuation pond and appears to be dry the majority of the year, including during the survey visit. Further details on each pond with regards their potential to support protected and notable species are provided in the sections below.

- 3.16 No records of protected/notable plant species were received from the LRERC.

Species

- 3.17 The likelihood of presence, or confirmed presence, of protected/and or notable wildlife species within the site is summarised below with reference, where relevant/available, to desk study records, habitat suitability and detailed surveys. Details of the protected and notable species records received from LRERC and DWT are presented in **Appendix EDP 1** - Phase 1 Habitat Descriptions, with these results summarised below.

Amphibians

- 3.18 Records for common amphibian species, including common frog (*Rana temporaria*), common toad (*Bufo bufo*) and smooth newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris*) were received during the desk study, with the closest record being that for common toad, located 400m north east of the site. Great Crested newts (GCN) have also been recorded 800m south of the site.
- 3.19 The ponds recorded on site, in particular Pond 1 have potential to support amphibians, including GCN. The adjacent terrestrial habitat, in particular the hedgerows and woodlands W1 and W2 potentially provide good terrestrial foraging, refuge and hibernating habitat for amphibians.
- 3.20 A Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) assessment was undertaken of each of the ponds present within and immediately adjacent the site to assess their suitability to support GCN. The results of this assessment are summarised in **Table EDP 3.1** overleaf.

Table EDP 3.1: HSI scores for ponds on and adjacent to site

Pond number	HSI Score and suitability
Pond 1	0.86 Good.
Pond 2	0.46 Below average.
Pond 3	0.51 Average.
Pond 4	0.63 Below average.
Pond 5	Pond dry at time of survey therefore not possible to undertake HSI assessment.

Reptiles

- 3.21 A record for grass snake (*Natrix natrix*) 900m west of the site was received. No records for any other reptile species were received as part of the desk study. The site offers limited suitable habitat to support grass snakes, although as this species is known to have a large range it may infrequently occur on site, in particular within the areas of woodland and ponds. However, it is not considered likely that the site supports a significant population of grass snake.

Invertebrates

- 3.22 Records for dingy skipper (*Erynnis tages*) and gizzled skipper (*Pyrgus malvae*), both species of conservation concern were recorded approximately 300m and 800m south of the site respectively. The records were made within Lount Meadow SSSI; described in detail above. Dingy skipper feeds on bird's-foot trefoil, of which none was recorded within the site at the time of survey. Grizzled skipper feeds on a range of plants, including bramble, however, their key requirements are for the presence of these food plants within sheltered sunny/warm areas and it is not considered that significant areas of such conditions exist on site. Therefore it is very unlikely that these two species are present within the site.
- 3.23 Generally, the site overall has low potential to support either a notable assemblage or significant populations of one or more notable species. However, the areas of woodland (in particular W1) and ponds (in particular P1) are likely to support a more diverse assemblage of invertebrates than the remainder of the habitats within the site.

Birds

- 3.24 A large number of records for birds were received with the majority of these records originating 800m south the site. No records directly from the site were received however, the site does provide habitat for a range of farmland and woodland birds, some of which may be of conservation concern. During the extended Phase 1 habitat survey, lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*), a species listed on the red list of Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC), were observed exhibiting breeding behaviour (pairs displaying to each other) on the western field and the field located north west of this field.

Bats

- 3.25 Records of common and widespread bats such as pipistrelles were received with these records being from 3km or greater from the site. No records directly from the site were received. It is however considered, that the site does provide commuting and foraging habitat for bats. In addition, some of the mature trees within the woodland areas and the standards within the hedgerows may also provide potential to support roosting bats.

Badgers

- 3.26 A number of badger setts were recorded within woodland W1. These all appeared to be single to double holed outlier setts, with no obvious footpaths leading beyond the woodland to a main sett or foraging areas. Woodland W1 and W2 do provide suitable sett building habitat although the remainder of the site provides limited foraging habitat.

Other Species

- 3.27 No other protected or notable species, other than those described above are considered likely to occur within the site.

Section 4 Discussion and Recommendations

The Proposed Development

- 4.1 As detailed in **Section 1** of this report, the site is being sought to be allocated for employment uses (B1, B2 or B8) with the Council's emerging Local Plan. The uses sought are described as follows:
- **B1 Business** - Offices (other than those that fall within A2), research and development of products and processes, light industry appropriate in a residential area;
 - **B2 General Industrial** - Use for industrial process other than one falling within class B1 (excluding incineration purposes, chemical treatment or landfill or hazardous waste); and
 - **B8 Storage or distribution** - This class includes open air storage.
- 4.2 At the time of writing this report no masterplan was available to inform the conclusions and recommendations set out below.
- 4.3 Overall, there were no 'in principle' constraints to the development of the site. However, opportunities and constraints were identified which will need to inform the detail of the proposals as these emerge and are progressed through the planning process following any allocation. These opportunities and constraints will need to be addressed at later planning stages in order to fully satisfy planning policy and legislative requirements.

Statutory Designations

- 4.4 The site is not covered by, and does not lie adjacent to, any land covered by a statutory designation made on ecological/nature conservation grounds. It is considered that the only pertinent statutory designation to the proposed development is Lount Meadows SSSI.
- 4.5 The SSSI receives legal protection in the UK via the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The SSSI is also protected by national planning policy. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 118 states that, with respect to SSSIs, proposed development on land within or outside a SSSI likely to have an adverse effect on the interest of the SSSI should not normally be permitted.

- 4.6 The site lies within Natural England's Impact Risk Zones (IRZ) as illustrated with reference to the Government's MAGIC website⁴. With reference to Natural England's guidance⁵, the proposed land use change (agriculture to employment uses as summarised above) does not clearly fall into one of the categories of land use identified by Natural England as likely to have a significant impact on the SSSI. However, with respect to air pollution, "*any other development/industrial commercial processes that could cause air pollution*" are noted while with respect to water supply, "*large infrastructure such as warehousing/industry where the net additional gross internal floor space is greater than 0.1ha*" is noted.
- 4.7 With reference to air pollution, it is not considered that any of the proposed land uses will involve processes that would generate significant air pollution and therefore it is considered that the proposed land use change is unlikely to result in significant air pollution impacts on Lount Meadows SSSI.
- 4.8 With reference to water supply, although there is some reference to part of the SSSI supporting "*marsh*", the dominant habitat for which the SSSI is designated are drier habitats not significantly dependent on the hydrology of the surrounding landscape to be maintained in order to maintain the designated interests. It is therefore considered unlikely that the proposed land use change would result in significant adverse impacts relating to the water supply of the SSSI.
- 4.9 Although, with reference to Natural England guidance, it is not considered that the proposed land use change would result in any significant adverse impacts on Lount Meadows SSSI, it is prudently recommended that when any planning application is prepared that Natural England is consulted on the detailed proposals at the pre-application stage.

Non-Statutory Designations

- 4.10 Non-statutory designations generally received planning policy protection at a local level. Currently, no draft policies relating to Local Wildlife Sites are available however it is anticipated that such policies are likely to be included within the emerging Local Plan.
- 4.11 The site is not covered by any non-statutory designation and therefore it is considered unlikely that the proposed land use change would result in any direct significant adverse impacts on non-statutory designations.
- 4.12 In relation to the non-statutory designations considered pertinent and adjacent to the site, it is considered that any planning application would need to include measures to avoid any indirect significant impacts on the designated interest of the non-statutory designations both during construction and operation.

⁴ www.magic.gov.uk

⁵ http://www.magic.gov.uk/Metadata_for_magic/SSSI%20IRZ%20User%20Guidance%20v2.1%20MAGIC%2009Mar%202015.pdf

- 4.13 At the construction stage, key measures will include the following:
- Measures to prevent and avoid incursion into the non-statutory designation by personnel, construction machinery or construction materials;
 - Measures to prevent direct or indirect light spillage into the non-statutory designations e.g. security lighting from construction compounds;
 - Measures to avoid indirect changes in water quality/flow within adjacent ponds/water course; and
 - Measures to minimise dust pollution during the construction activities.
- 4.14 It is considered that the above measures are standard construction measures which are typically pertinent to the majority of development types and generally considered good practice.
- 4.15 At the operational stage, it is considered that opportunities would be taken during the masterplanning proposals to maintain the connectivity of the non-statutory designations to other retained or created habitats within the development proposals. Therefore measures will be necessary to deliver such connectivity through the delivery of any new landscaping as part of the proposals. It is not considered that the proposals would contribute any significant increase on recreational pressures which may exist within the non-statutory designations.
- 4.16 Overall, it is considered that subject to the recommendations above being implemented during the next planning stages that the proposals are likely to be consistent with any emerging local planning policy which may be applied to avoid adverse impacts on such local designations.

Habitats

- 4.17 With respect to habitats, National Planning Policy Framework states that *"to minimise impacts on biodiversity, planning policies should: promote the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species populations, linked to national and local targets"* (Paragraph 117). In addition, it advises that *"when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by applying the following principles:*
- *If significant harm resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;*

- *Opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged; and*
 - *Planning permission should be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and the loss of aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland, unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss".*
- 4.18 As detailed in **Section 3**, the majority of the site's habitats are considered to be of negligible value due to the dominance of arable land. However, the woodland, together with associated ponds, and hedgerows are of local importance and are also likely to be considered '*Habitats of Principle Importance*' with reference to the NERC Act. In addition, the woodland blocks are likely to form part of the patch work of other woodland within the vicinity of the site which includes some areas which are already covered by non-statutory designation.
- 4.19 In order to ensure consistency of the proposals as they emerge with the NPPF and NERC Act, it is therefore recommended that the proposals retain, protect and enhance the areas of woodland within the proposals and aim to maintain, where possible, their connectivity to the wider greenspace. Due to the nature of the intended land use, it is considered unlikely that the proposals will be able to retain, protect and enhance the existing hedgerow resource within the site. It is therefore recommended that the proposals, where hedgerows can't be retained, protected and enhanced, will need to ensure that there is no net loss in hedgerow resource (either in quantity or quality) within the site as a whole and that the provision of any new hedgerows should ensure that they are integrated into and function as part of the greenspace connectivity within the site.
- 4.20 With reference to the NPPF's requirements that proposals should encourage the inclusion of opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around the development, it is recommend that the masterplan and landscaping proposals should include opportunities to deliver opportunities for biodiversity within these proposals through the provision of new habitat; ideally linked to those habitats retained, protected and enhanced by the proposals.
- 4.21 Subject to the recommendations above being taken forward through later stages in the planning process, it is considered that the proposals will be consistent with current national planning policy and relevant legislation, such as the NERC Act.

Species

- 4.22 Based on the findings of the appraisal, the species of pertinence to the proposals and relevant legislation/planning policy considerations with respect to the determination of the application are: great crested newts, bats, breeding birds and badgers. Each species/species-group is discussed in turn below. Recommendations for the species enhancements which the proposals could deliver are already discussed above.

Great Crested Newts

- 4.23 Great Crested Newts are a European Protected Species (EPS); receiving legislative protection in the UK via the Habitat Regulations 2010 which transposes the EU Habitats Directive. The species is also a 'species of principal importance' and subject to action via the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP), however, it is not a species of the Leicestershire BAP.
- 4.24 With reference to the considerations made with respect to this species at **Section 3** of this report, it is recommended that any planning application would need to be informed by a great crested newt survey undertaken with reference to the guidance pertinent at time of survey. The main guidance currently referred to is the *Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines*. With reference to these guidelines, typically surveys can only be completed between mid-March and mid-June. However, there are opportunities to employ other survey techniques (e.g. environmental DNA (eDNA) outside this period depending on the aim of the survey.
- 4.25 In the event that the survey confirms presence, it is not anticipated that this would result in an 'in principle' constraint to the development of the site. However, presence would be a constraint to the design of the proposals and the masterplan as it emerged. At this stage, it is recommended that the proposals retain flexibility to accommodate such a constraint through:
- Retaining ponds (where possible) or (where not possible) allow the provision for new, suitably designed, ponds on a two for one basis;
 - Retaining/creating connectivity to these ponds through suitable terrestrial habitat capable of providing foraging, refuge and hibernating opportunities; and
 - Ensuring that there is an opportunity to connect areas of greenspace at its junction with built structures to ensure connectivity across such built structures (e.g. culverts).
- 4.26 In the absence of confirmed presence/likely absence through survey it is not possible to consider at this stage in the planning policy whether the implementation of any consented development would require to be implemented in accordance with any EPS licensing. However, the recommendations above are consistent with ensuring that, in the event that EPS licensing is required, that provision is made for the species within the emerging proposals until survey findings confirm that they are required or not.
- 4.27 Subject to the above and mindful of the early stage the proposals are at in the planning process, it is considered that the proposals are likely to be consistent with the relevant legislation relating to great crested newts as European Protected Species and Species of Principal Importance.

Bats

- 4.28 All species of native UK bat are considered to be European Protected Species (EPS); receiving legislative protection in the UK via the Habitat Regulations 2010 which transposes the EU Habitats Directive. Several UK bat species are also listed as '*species of principal importance*' and subject to action via the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP). Bats are also considered collectively by the Leicestershire BAP.
- 4.29 With reference to the considerations made with respect to this species at **Section 3** of this report, it is recommended that any planning application would need to be informed by bat surveys to:
- Assess any tree proposed to be removed, subject to surgery to facilitate development or to be significantly isolated by the proposal for their potential for roosting bats. This survey information would be required to inform a consideration of any planning application with respect to the Habitats Directive; and
 - Characterise the bat activity within the site in terms of foraging and commuting. This information would be necessary to inform the emerging masterplan proposals to ensure that key areas of activity are retained and, ideally, enhanced by the proposals.
- 4.30 The survey work recommended is seasonally constrained and such constraints would need to be considered in relation to the programme for preparing and submitting a planning application.
- 4.31 At this stage and, pre-empting the findings of the survey, it is recommended that the proposals should aim to retain and protect where possible woodland, hedgerows and any standard trees of sufficient maturity and that the landscaping proposals should aim to provide roosting and foraging proposals as part of their design.
- 4.32 Subject to the above and mindful of the early stage the proposals are at in the planning process, it is considered that the proposals are likely to be consistent with the relevant legislation relating to bats as European Protected Species and, where pertinent, Species of Principal Importance.

Birds

- 4.33 All wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This makes it an offence to:
- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird;
 - Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built;
 - Take, damage or destroy the egg of any wild bird; or

- To have in one's possession or control any wild bird (dead or alive) or egg or any part of a wild bird or egg.
- 4.34 As a precaution, all vegetation should be treated as having the potential to support nesting birds including ground vegetation that is capable of supporting ground-nesting birds. Therefore, in order to avoid contravention of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, vegetation clearance should take place outside of the main breeding season (March-September) unless a qualified and experienced ecologist confirms that no breeding birds are present immediately in advance of vegetation clearance. Such a recommendation could be secured through applying a standard condition wording to any planning consent for proposed development.
- 4.35 Given that the findings of the work set out in this report identified the potential for notable species to be present within the site, it is considered prudent that any planning application is informed by the findings of a breeding bird survey. Such a survey is seasonally constrained and such a constraint should be considered in relation to any programme for the preparation and submission of a planning application.
- 4.36 By way of enhancement, it is recommended that the greenspace design should include opportunities for bird species, including nesting and foraging. Such a recommendation could be secured through integrating suitable wording into the relatively standard condition for the preparation and approval of the landscape design.

Badgers

- 4.37 Badgers receive legal protection under The Protection of Badgers Act 1992. The protection is afforded due to animal welfare grounds rather than due to the adverse conservation status of the species; a species which is generally common and widespread in lowland England.
- 4.38 It is not considered that the presence of the species poses any in principle constraint, however, the proposals will need to be informed by their presence to ensure that an appropriate mitigation strategy can be prepared and implemented in accordance with their legal protection. Given that badgers are relatively mobile species, an update survey to inform planning application stage is recommended.

In Conclusion

- 4.39 In conclusion, subject to the recommendations detailed above being secured and implemented, it is considered that there are no in principle constraints to the proposed land use of the site, however there are a small number of constraints that would need to be addressed at the planning application stage together with opportunities to deliver biodiversity enhancement.

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Appendix EDP 1 Phase 1 Habitat Descriptions

- A1.1 The principal habitats within and around the site are described below. The following should be read in conjunction with **Plan EDP 1 – Habitat Features**.

Woodland and Scrub

Semi-natural Broad-leaved Woodland

- A1.2 South of the site is an area of semi-natural broad-leaved woodland. The woodland is typical of Oak-birch woodland and although a National Vegetation Classification survey was not undertaken the woodland had a large affinity with the woodland community W10 oak (*Quercus robur*), bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*), bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) woodland. Canopy species present include dominant oak with occasional silver birch (*Betula pendula*) and holly (*Ilex aquifolia*) recorded as rare. The shrub layer comprises frequent hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and occasional hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and honeysuckle (*Lonicera*). The ground layer comprises dominant bramble with occasional red campion (*Silene dioica*) and broad buckler fern (*Dryopteris dilatata*). Bluebell (*Hyacinthodes non-scripta*) is present towards the edges of the woodland, often forming dominant stands in these areas.

Broad-leaved Plantation Woodland

- A1.3 North west of the site is a block of broad-leaved plantation woodland, although only the south eastern corner of this block is present within the site. This woodland comprises dominant mature to semi-mature silver birch of a uniform age class. The understorey is species poor with common nettle (*Urtica dioica*) being dominant.

Scattered Trees

- A1.4 Scattered trees are present within discrete areas of site, particular around Pond 1 (further details of the ponds on site presented below), where alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) and ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) are present.

Grassland

Semi-improved Neutral Grassland

- A1.5 Although outside of the site boundary, the road verges adjacent to the main access road into the TNT warehouse are relatively species-rich which may be as a result of a species-rich grassland mix being sown as part of the landscape design for the access road. Forb species recorded within this verge include abundant cowslip (*Primula veris*) with

frequent ox-eye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*) and common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*).



Poor Semi-improved Grassland



- A1.6 The arable fields within the site contain field margins approximately 1-2m in width. These field margins support poor semi-improved grassland with false-oat grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*) dominant. Other species recorded include frequent cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*) and creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*).


Standing Water

- A1.7 Three ponds, ponds 1- 3 are present within the site with a further two ponds, Ponds 4-5 present immediately adjacent to the eastern site boundary. A summary of these pond, along with photographs are provided below in **Table EDP A1.1** overleaf.

Table EDP A1.1: Summary of Ponds present within and adjacent to the site

Pond number	Description	Photograph
Pond 1	<p>Pond 1 is a relatively large pond approximately 30m x 10m located within the centre of the site. The pond is surrounded on its western and eastern sides by scattered trees including alder and ash with the centre of the pond being relatively open. Within the central section of the pond, reed mace (<i>Typha latifolia</i>) is dominant, with floating sweet-grass (<i>glyceria fluitans</i>) and soft rush (<i>Juncus effuses</i>) recorded as frequent.</p>	
Pond 2	<p>Relatively small, circular pond approximately 5m x 5m, located with the area of woodland south of the site. No submerged aquatic or marginal/emergent vegetation is present suggesting the pond may dry up in most years.</p>	

Pond number	Description	Photograph
Pond 3	<p>Pond 3 is located 3-4m south of Pond 2. This pond contains abundant hard rush (<i>Juncus inflexus</i>) and was relatively shallow, suggesting that this a seasonally flooded wet depression rather than a pond and is likely to dry out in most years.</p>	
Pond 4	<p>Pond 4 is located adjacent to the north eastern boundary of the site and is surrounded by semi-natural woodland predominantly comprised of silver birch. The pond is more accurately described as a lake and may have formed as a consequence of the historical mining works in the area. The water contained a large amount of suspended sediment, with 'Private fishing' signs, fishing platforms and a cormorant were recorded during the visit suggesting the pond contains fish and may potentially be stocked with coarse fish such as carp.</p>	

Pond number	Description	Photograph
Pond 5	<p>Pond 5 is an attenuation pond located south of Pond 4. At the time of the survey the pond was dry. The pond is lined with a large drainage gate present at the bottom of the pond suggesting that this attenuation only hold water during heavy rain/storm events.</p>	

Arable

- A1.8 The vast majority of the site is currently under arable production, with stubble being present in the two fields north and west and improved grassland/silage crop present in the central field.

Hedgerows

- A1.9 The fields within the site are bordered by intact species poor hedgerows which support co-dominant blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and hawthorn with elder (*Sambucus nigra*) frequent to occasional. None of hedgerows are considered to be 'important' under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 ecology criteria.

Plans

Plan EDP 1

Habitat Features
(EDP2412/01 24 April 2015 JTF/JG)

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Technical Note

Project:	TNT Express Logistics Depot	Job No:	60343545
Subject:	Highways and Access Representations		
Prepared by:	Matthew Squires (Graduate Consultant)	Date:	22/04/2015
Checked by:	Chris Carter	Date:	24/04/2015
Approved by:	Jeremy Douch	Date:	27/04/2015

1. Introduction

AECOM has been commissioned by White Young Green on behalf of TNT Logistics to provide transport planning advice regarding the potential development of land at the site of TNT Express Logistics for employment uses. The site is located east of the A42 near Lount in North West Leicestershire. The purpose of this Technical Note is to seek to demonstrate that there are no significant highways and access issues that would prevent the site from being developed for B1 (Business), B2 (General Industrial) or B8 (Storage or Distribution) uses in order to support the allocation of this land for future employment use through the North West Leicestershire Local Development Framework (LDF) process. This will build on the current employment allocation to accommodate the anticipated growth of the facility.

2. Existing / Proposed Use

The site currently includes a specialised facility that provides a modern, purpose built 24hr parcels logistics operation, with a dedicated access and secure location.

The site is approximately 13.3 ha, with circa 4 ha forming the existing logistics facility, and is identified as having the potential to accommodate a mixed use industrial estate which would comprise offices, commercial warehousing, and parcel distribution centre; with associated facilities and hardstanding in addition to the existing TNT building. An indicative masterplan is appended to this Technical Note.

It is understood that the route of High Speed 2 (HS2) is currently planned to pass through the TNT landholding. This in itself will result in the need for revised site access arrangements as HS2 will bisect the existing access road. Although the route is subject to change, the safeguarded route has been used to inform the site boundary, with the route forming a natural western boundary to the site.

3. Accessibility

The site is well located in relation to the strategic road network, with the A42 running to the west of the premises. The A42 provides a direct route to Junction 23A of the M1 to the north east and joins the M42 to the south west.

The site is accessible via a private access road which joins Melbourne Road at a priority controlled T-junction to the south of the location. Melbourne Road is subject to a 50mph speed limit as it passes the existing access and location of the proposed access. Melbourne Road joins the B587 Nottingham Road at a T-junction approximately 180m to the west of the site access. The B587 can be used to access the A42 and the A511 to the south of the site.

There are Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) restrictions in place prohibiting vehicles in excess of 7.5 tonnes using Melbourne Road directly to the south of the premises. This means that all HGV movements associated with the site will access via the B587 Nottingham Road to the north, as they currently do.

This limits the potential impact of increased HGV movements resulting from increased industrial development by restricting it to higher specification roads, avoiding narrower roads and villages.

It is understood that HS2 will pass under Melbourne Road. The HS2 proposals identify that a bridge on Melbourne Road will be provided to achieve this. Melbourne Road currently includes a bridge over lower level woodland. Site observations have indicated that the crest of the existing bridge forms a constraint on visibility to the north from both the proposed access junction location, and the third party industrial access to the south. The implementation of HS2 will result in the need for a new access point to the TNT Depot, regardless of future development proposals for the site, as it will bisect the existing access road.

The TNT Depot employment site is situated in a rural location close to the strategic road network, which is important due to the distribution nature of the land use. As would be expected in such a setting, the level of population within walking distance of the site is relatively low and public transport availability is limited. There is no footway provision or cycle facilities on Melbourne Road. There is however potential to encourage mode shift away from single occupancy car travel through future development proposals. This could be achieved through the implementation of a Travel Plan, which would focus on measures to facilitate car sharing and longer distance cycling.

4. Potential Access Solutions

The HS2 project will require the existing site access to be replaced by a new access road from Melbourne Road to the south as HS2 will bisect the existing access road. This access has been designed to accommodate traffic from both existing and future development of the site. The "6Cs Design Guide", which covers highways design in Leicestershire, and adjoining Local Highway Authorities (LHA), states that *"On roads with a speed limit of 40mph or higher... we will encourage a development to be served by a road with an adoptable layout and access designed in line with the appropriate section of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB)."* The site access has therefore been designed in accordance with DMRB TD 42/95, the Geometric Design of Major/Minor Priority Junctions.

The access junction has been designed without the benefit of a topographical survey, traffic surveys or discussion with the Local Highways Authority as this level of detail would not be appropriate at this stage in the planning process. A preliminary design of the site access is presented in Figure 1. The access takes the form of a priority controlled T-junction with Melbourne Road and is broadly similar to the existing access junction which currently accommodates large HGV movements. A splitter island is incorporated to provide protection for vehicles waiting to exit the junction from HGVs entering the site.

Sufficient detail is presented to demonstrate that such an access is deliverable to support the proposed increase to the employment land use in the site allocation. It is not appropriate at this stage in the planning process to undertake detailed junction capacity analysis based on traffic surveys. Such analysis would be presented within a Transport Assessment which would be submitted as part of a planning application for the site.

DMRB TD 42/95 guidance on the visibility from minor roads states that for a design speed of 50mph (80kph) on the major road, Y distance visibility from the minor road should be 160m. It would be appropriate to undertake a speed survey at the time of a planning application for the site to determine 85th percentile main road speeds in order to identify exact visibility standards. The site access visibility has been demonstrated at a standard X distance of 4.5m.

Figure 1 shows visibility splays of 4.5m x 160m. Site observations have indicated that the crest of the existing road bridge constrains visibility to the north from the location of the proposed site access. It is understood that the currently proposed route of HS2 will require alterations to this bridge, or the construction of a new bridge, in order to accommodate the passage of HS2 underneath Melbourne Road. It is likely to be possible to deliver a regraded vertical alignment of Melbourne Road through the HS2 project to provide clear visibility to the north. The re-siting of the access junction is a requirement

led by HS2 rather than by an increase in employment land served by the access, meaning that this clear visibility to the north should be a design parameter of the HS2 bridge design process.

The new access junction has been designed to accommodate HGV movements associated with existing and future land uses. Swept Path Analysis (SPA) of a 16.5m articulated lorry has been conducted to inform the design process. This is shown in Figure 2. Whilst HGVs are not currently permitted to travel to/from the south, it is considered prudent for the geometric design to accommodate HGVs making these movements in case of driver error and to future proof the design against changes to HGV restrictions. Appropriate signage would be provided at the site access to prevent these movements occurring.

5. Proposed Development Trip Generation

AECOM has undertaken analysis to determine the potential increase in vehicle trips due to the proposed increase in employment land uses. This exercise is based on the floor areas and development mix shown in the indicative masterplan appended to this Technical Note.

Trip generation for the proposed development has been derived using the TRICS database version 7.1.2. This includes traffic generated by the existing logistics facility. TRICS is a national database of trip rate information compiled by County Councils and private sources which provides a wide range of survey information for different land uses. AECOM's approach to TRICS analysis involves selecting site specific information based on the location, scale and public transport accessibility of the surveyed sites. TRICS has been used to calculate the vehicle trip rates for the proposed development based on use classes B1, B2 and B8. In addition to the specific employment use types, general trip rates have been derived for industrial estates. This has been done as a sensitivity test and to provide confidence in the trip generation results should the proportions of each land use alter during the planning process.

The vehicle trip rates during the AM and PM peak hour periods for each use are summarised in Table 1. The AM and PM peak hour periods were taken to be 08:00 – 09:00 hours and 17:00 – 18:00 hours respectively, based on the calculated trip rates for an Industrial Estate.

Table 1: TRICS Vehicle Trip Rates by Use

Land Use	GFA (sq m)	AM			PM		
		In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Office	6936	1.53	0.147	1.677	0.083	1.251	1.334
Warehousing (Commercial)	26013	0.082	0.045	0.127	0.033	0.087	0.12
Parcel Distribution Centre	16216	0.246	0.561	0.807	0.491	0.491	0.982
Industrial Estate	49165	0.474	0.173	0.647	0.1	0.51	0.61

Based on the trip rates in Table 1 and the GFAs of each land use in the proposed development, the number of vehicle trips that could be generated is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: TRICS Vehicle Trip Generations by Use

Land Use	GFA (sq m)	AM			PM		
		In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Existing Land Use							
Parcel Distribution Centre	6416	16	36	52	32	32	63
Proposed Additional Employment							
Office	6936	106	10	116	6	87	93
Warehousing (Commercial)	26013	21	12	33	9	23	31
Parcel Distribution Centre	9800	24	55	79	48	48	96
Net Additional Trips	42749	151	77	228	63	158	220
Gross Site Trips	49165	167	113	280	95	190	283
Sensitivity Test							
Industrial Estate	49165	233	85	318	49	251	300
Difference	0	66	28	38	46	61	17

As an employment site, traffic flows associated with the development will follow a tidal pattern with approximately two thirds of trips being inbound in the AM peak and outbound in the PM peak. Table 2 shows that the proposed development will generate an additional approximate 150 inbound trips in the AM peak and 160 outbound trips in the PM peak. This equates to less than three trips per minute.

The development as a whole will generate around 170 inbound trips in the AM peak and 190 outbound trips in the PM peak. It is anticipated that the proposed site access junction will be able to accommodate this level of traffic with a significant level of spare capacity. This is based on engineering judgement and experience and knowledge of the character of Melbourne Road, although it is not appropriate at this stage to undertake baseline traffic surveys to inform a more detailed capacity assessment. Furthermore, the majority of inbound trips will be from the north meaning that there will be relatively few trips turning right into the site from the south, limiting potential delay for existing traffic on Melbourne Road.

The sensitivity test highlights the change in trip generation that could result from the alteration of land use proportions during the planning process by analysing trip generation using the more generic "industrial estate" classification, rather than individual land use categories. Under this scenario the site could potentially generate four trips per minute inbound in the AM peak and outbound in the PM peak. It is anticipated that the proposed site access junction will be able to accommodate this level of traffic with a significant level of spare capacity.

6. Conclusions

This Technical Note has sought to demonstrate the suitability of the existing TNT Express Logistics site in highways terms for expanding the employment land allocation, in order to provide for the anticipated growth of the facility.

The site currently forms the Euro hub of a major logistics operation, and as such is well located in relation to the strategic road network. The site lies to the east of the A42, which provides access to the

M1 to the north east and the M42 to the south west. The proposed alignment of High Speed 2 through the landholding will require the existing site access to be replaced with a new access off Melbourne Road to the south. The junction has been designed in line with local design guidance and the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB). The geometry of the junction will be able to accommodate the required HGV movements to / from the site.

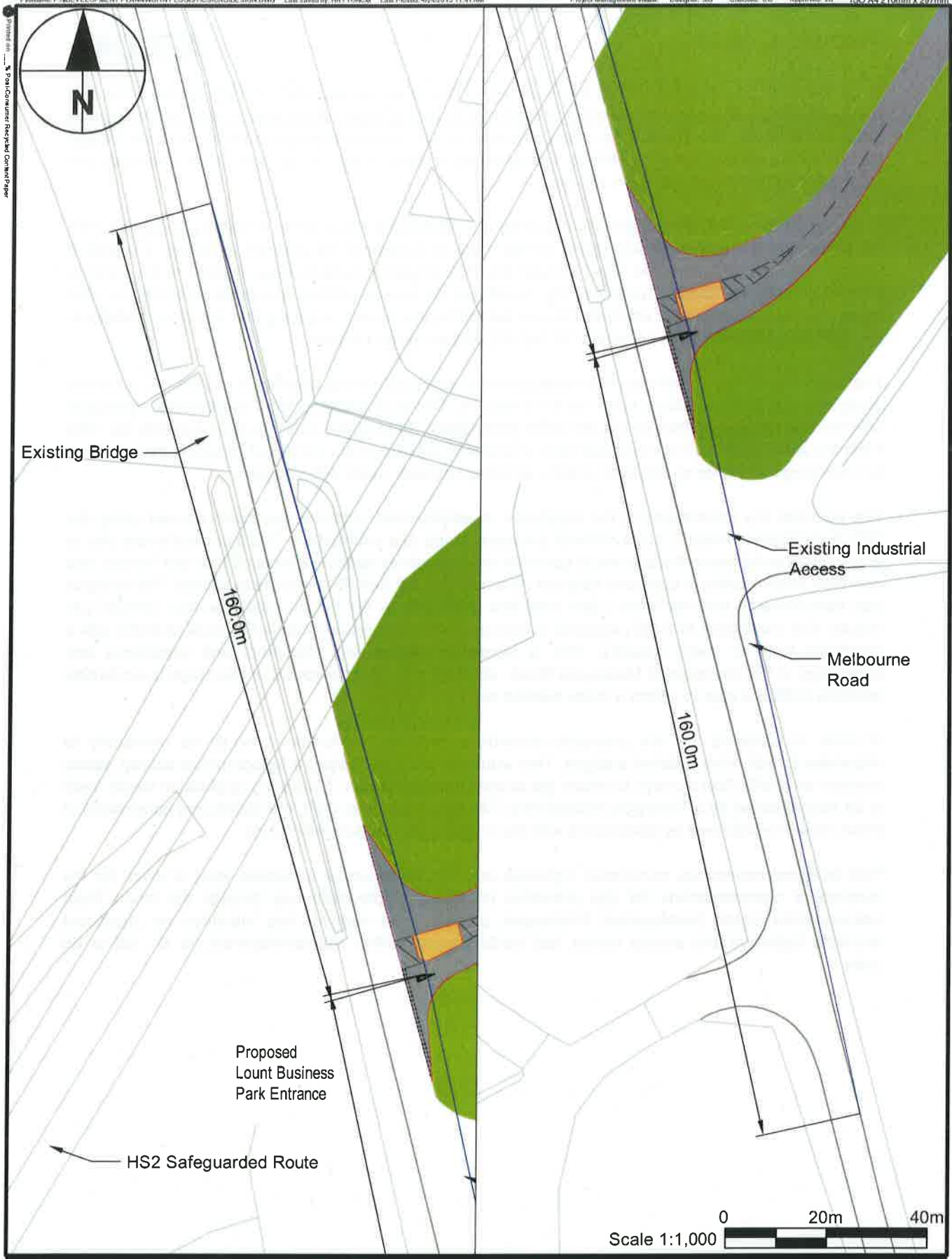
In its current form, the crest of the existing bridge on Melbourne Road forms a visibility constraint from the location of the proposed site access to the north. It is likely to be possible to deliver a regraded vertical alignment of Melbourne Road through the HS2 project to provide clear visibility to the north in order to comply with DMRB Guidance. The re-siting of the access junction is a requirement led by HS2 rather than by an increase in employment land served by the access, meaning that this clear visibility to the north should be a design parameter of the HS2 bridge design process.

There are Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) restrictions in place prohibiting vehicles in excess of 7.5 tonnes using Melbourne Road directly to the south of the site. This means that all HGV movements associated with the site will access the site via the B587 Nottingham Road to the north, as they currently do. This limits the potential impact of increased HGV movements resulting from increased industrial development by restricting it to higher specification roads, avoiding narrower roads and villages.

The potential trip generation for the expansion of employment activities has been derived using the TRICS database version 7.1.2, a national database of trip rate information. The proposed expansion of employment activities on the site would generate less than three additional inbound trips per minute, and less than three additional outbound trips per minute in the AM and PM peaks respectively. The analysis also demonstrates that the "worst case" tidal flow generated by the full site would be four vehicles per minute. It is anticipated that the proposed access junction could accommodate this level of traffic with a significant level of spare capacity. This is based on engineering judgement and experience and knowledge of the character of Melbourne Road, although it is not appropriate at this stage to undertake baseline traffic surveys to inform a more detailed capacity assessment.

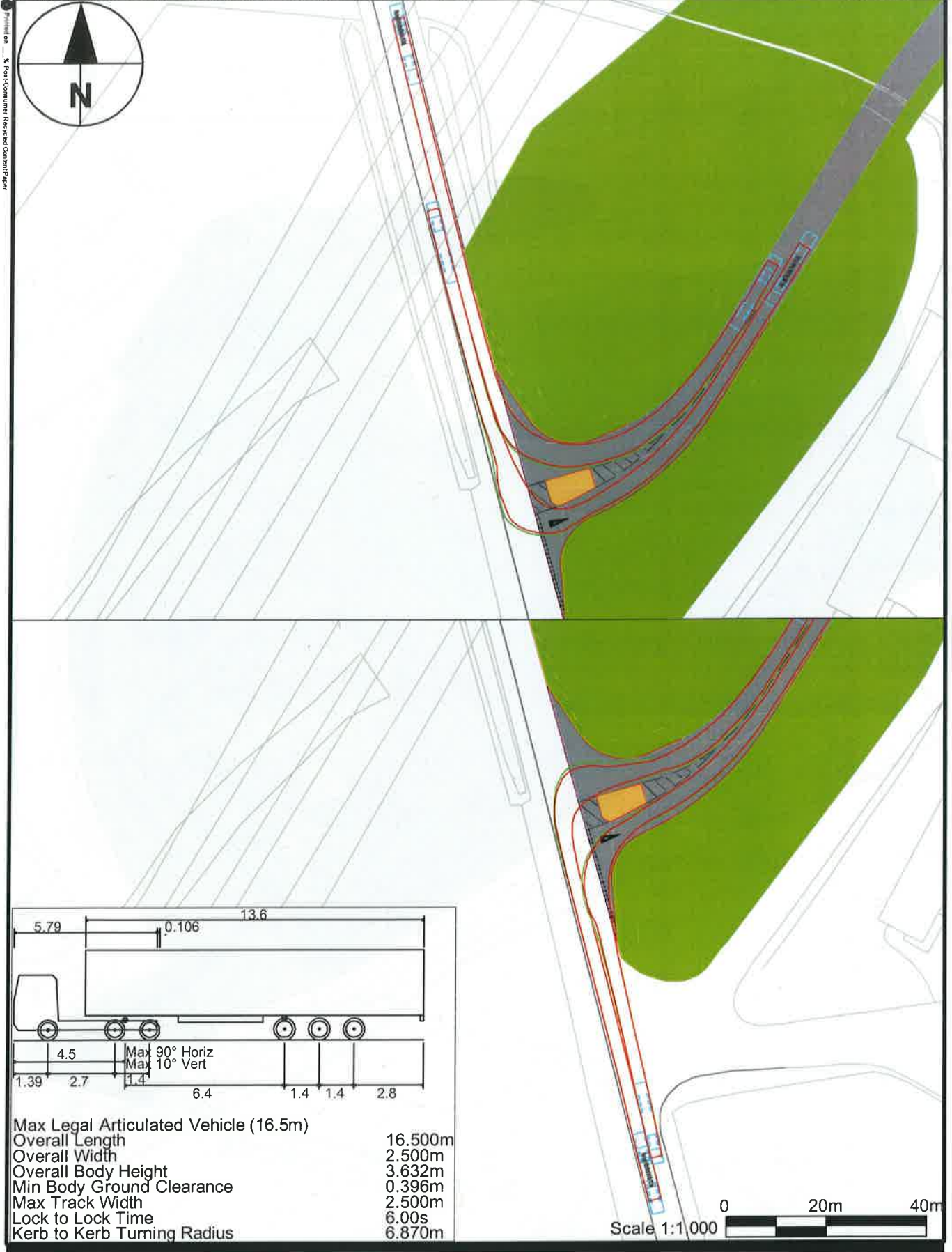
In order to progress the site proposals towards a planning application it would be necessary to undertake further more detailed analysis. This would include undertaking a topographical survey, speed surveys and traffic flow surveys to inform the access junction design. A planning application would need to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment (TA) and Travel Plan (TP), the details and parameters of which would be informed by discussions with the Local Highways Authority (LHA).

This technical review has considered highways and access issues at a suitable level of detail for the purpose of representations for site allocation for future employment use through the North West Leicestershire Local Development Framework process. The analysis has identified no significant technical highways and access issues that would prevent further site development for B1, B2 or B8 uses.



TNT Logistics
Figure 1 Proposed Site Access





TNT Logistics

Figure 2 Proposed Site Access
Vehicle Tracking



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NO. 23A

Logistics