



MAGNA PARK Extension

HYBRID APPLICATION:

15/01531/OUT and 15/01531/FUL

11 February 2016

Public Footpaths and Bridleways:
The Application Proposals and User Experience



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1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this document

Introduction

This report explains and illustrates the proposals for public footpaths and bridleways that are put forward by IDI Gazeley's hybrid planning application for the extension of Magna Park onto c 232 ha of land to the north west of Magna Park (application 15/01531/OUT).

This report is in part a response to the matters raised by Leicestershire County Council's Rights of Way Officer (9 December 2015) and is provided both to clarify IDI Gazeley's proposals and to set out the evidence to show that the application proposals are fully capable of mitigation.

The report is also prepared in recognition of the need to make the proposals for footpaths and bridleways more accessible to the general reader.

Thus we have brought together in this report the already submitted evidence and design proposals to show how the application proposals will increase the public's access to the site via an enhanced network of footpaths and bridleways; and how in most instances the users' experience of the site and countryside will be enhanced.

Achieving both of these objectives has been central to the design process from the outset – as this report shows and the submitted Design and Access Statement (DAS) explains.

The application proposals for public footpaths and bridleways need also to be understood in the context of the wider landscape proposals. The development retains 103 ha of the 232 ha site as publicly accessible countryside: a new 42 ha country park is centred on the Scheduled Monument and disbanded rail line; a 28 ha meadow removes from arable use an area of important archaeological value, helping to protect that resource; and a further 30+ ha is given to species-rich structural landscape. The siting, extent and use of these land areas form part of the application details for which planning permission is sought.

While the planting schemes are illustrative at this stage of the planning process (it is an outline planning application), IDI Gazeley undertakes to deliver, and maintain over time, not just the visual screening proposed but a very significant increase in the site's bio-diversity and habitat value.

EIA Regulations 2011: Regulation 22

This report is also the subject of a public notice (11 February 2016) under Regulation 22 of the EIA Regulations 2011 as "further information" to the Environmental Statement. Although this report neither changes nor adds to the material submitted with the planning application on 6 October 2015, it has been notified because of the specific use to which this already published material has been used to produce this report.

The source material for this report

This report draws in particular on the DAS Section 3 (existing footpath and bridleway network) and Section 6 (the landscape design and public access proposals), the submitted landscape drawing MPL410-AL-A01-MP-0-001, and the evidence of the landscape and visual impact of the proposals on the footpaths and bridleways that is set out in the Environmental Statement (ES) at Chapter 9 and Appendix F.1.

As the DAS explains, the layout and design of the proposals were fully informed by the prospective impact of the development on, and user experience of, the public rights of way and the permissive footpaths and bridleways.

Diversion of the Public Rights of Way and reserved matters applications for landscape design

The delivery of the development proposals will require permission for the diversion of the parts of the Public Rights of Way (PROW) – Footpaths W89 and W92 and Bridleway 86 – that the proposals affect. The other affected footpaths and bridleways within the site are "permissive" under the High Level Stewardship Scheme which concludes in 2017.

While the application proposals will impact on users' experience of the countryside, the proposals take full advantage of the opportunities they present to increase its accessibility and enrich the biodiversity and ecology of the site. The proposals:

- i. provide for a layout of footpaths and bridleways that optimises their connectivity both within the site (including creating circular walks) and between the site's network and footpaths and bridleways outwith it (including creating connections where these do not exist); and
- ii. secure in perpetuity the site's permissive footpaths and bridleways through the undertaking in the Heads of Terms (HOTS) of the S106 agreement (see Section 7 of the Planning Statement).

IDI Gazeley will seek the diversion orders once planning permission is granted, but will first agree the diversion routes for the affected PROW with the planning authority and LCC's Rights of Way Officer. The details of the landscape treatment of the site – including that affecting the footpaths and bridleways – will be sought through reserved matters applications.

The public will be consulted on both.

Clarification of points in the LCC submission

We point out the following by way of clarification in respect to statements by the rights of way officer:

- i. The affected footpaths and bridleways are capable of mitigation in the ways the DAS illustrates and the application proposes. A full explanation is provided in this report. While the users' experience will be, in parts of the site, affected by the development proposals in the years before planting schemes are mature, by Year 10 the planting will have matured and the mitigation in place.
- ii. No formal pedestrian crossings of the A5 are proposed for safety reasons (the A5 is now, and will remain, part of the Strategic Road Network in the control of Highways England). The two new roundabouts proposed will, however, help to slow traffic, and the roundabout with Mere Lane will include dropped kerbs and a splitter island.
- iii. Overall, the area of publicly accessible countryside land will be increased by the development.

Structure of the Report

The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 describes the existing network and public rights of way and permissive footpaths and bridleways, explains the proposals for their integration with the development proposals and demonstrates how considerations of visual impact and user experience have been accounted by the proposals; and
- Section 3 sets out, for each of the affected footpaths and bridleways, the detailed assessment of the impact of the proposals and provides the illustrative material to demonstrate the mitigation proposed and achievable.

LEGEND

Application Boundary

1. Warehouse development plots with integrated green infrastructure and landscape / habitat connections to wider wildlife corridors.
2. Logistics Institute of Technology Campus and Estate Office with associated innovation/ incubator space, external sports facilities, events space, visitor parking, recreational uses, and shared educational community facilities.
3. Schedule Ancient Monument setting protected and enhanced with improved bridleway and footpath access and interpretation. Management and maintenance strategies to promote ecological diversity and support narrative based on the agricultural/ heritage landscape setting. Ongoing maintenance to 'Bittesby Wood' along the railway embankment and associated plantations
4. Ecological Riverside Park with emphasis on habitats suited to wetland environment and local biodiversity action plan and maintaining water quality. Interpretation and nature trails, bird hides / wildlife educational centre, and improved bridleways.
5. Land retained as agriculture and pasture with new woodland spinney to enhance improved footpath and bridleway connections and protect the setting of the SAM.
6. Mere Lane lagoon attenuation pond retained and enhanced with new planting and improved bridleway and footpath connections.
7. Retained bridleway and public footpaths with connections to site network of permissible bridleways and walkable routes.
8. Magna Wood with new landscape management to improve habitat biodiversity. Existing footpath network upgraded and made accessible as permissible routes to extend and connect wider public footpath and bridleway network. Visitor parking location at existing estate office.
9. Principle estate road with integrated sustainable drainage swales, wildflower verges, footpaths and avenue or spinney planting.
10. Extensive perimeter tree and spinney planting to protect wider landscape setting and provide visual and habitat continuity with Magna wood.
11. Allotments
12. Orchard
13. Service Farm
14. Proposed Magna Park extension DHL supply chain site
15. Proposed Office Space
16. Strategic SuDS & Wet Meadows
17. Footpath connection along Mere Lane verge to Magna Wood.
18. Road based rail freight shuttle terminal and truck park
19. Proposed roundabout access from A5 & associated road improvement.
20. Wild flower meadow & buffer to White House Farm
21. Off site mitigation planting.
22. Visual mitigation planting and hedgerow enhancements along the A5



Illustrative landscape masterplan (submitted drawing MPL410-AL-A01-MP-0-001)

2.0 Existing Public Rights of Way & Permissive Routes

2.1 Integration of PROW recognised in the submitted documents

We appreciate the Access and Development Officer's provision of the Definitive Map of Public Rights Of Way for Leicestershire overlaid over the submitted landscape masterplan and understand the concern for both the integration and ongoing use of public rights of way into the development.

The ongoing enjoyment of the countryside by users of the bridleways and public footpaths has been an intrinsic element of the landscape led masterplan for the site which seeks to retain and safeguard large areas from development within a valley park, to be enhanced through the landscape and habitat proposals. The proposals also seek to improve connectivity and access to the countryside by future proofing and extending the existing network of permissible bridleways which are set to terminate in October 2017.

The requirement to integrate existing PROW and provide alternative routes/deviations where impeded by the proposed development (as illustrated in the Access and Development Officer's Definitive Map overlay) is set out in the diagram on page 112 of the submitted Design and Access Statement (included on page 13 of this doc). An analysis of existing PROW, open access land and permissible routes is also set out on pages 50-51 of the DAS (included on page 11 of this doc)

Illustrative sections and views contained within the DAS indicate how the PROW will be integrated into the landscape corridors, with due consideration given to the experience and environment of all users.

It is anticipated that the detail of footpath stopping up orders and diversions would be subject to planning conditions and related to individual Reserved Matters Applications affecting the relevant section of PROW.

Whilst we recognise that the development would initially change the landscape and have some adverse impacts on local PROW routes or sections of them, we take this opportunity to respond to some of the comments highlighted by the Access and Development Officer with illustrations and comments on the following pages of this document.

We also note the general conditions imposed on the footpaths and respond as follows:-

- a. *The new footpaths would need to be provided with 2 metre wide all-weather surfaces to a specification to be agreed with the County Council's Safe & Sustainable Travel Team. The paths will be shaded by new buildings, earth bunds and tree planting and the existing natural drainage disturbed significantly. There is therefore a likelihood that the path will become waterlogged and muddy unless a suitable all weather surface is provided.*
- b. *Any new trees or shrubs which are proposed to be planted adjacent to a Public Right of Way should be set back by a minimum of 1 metre from the edge of the route and be of species which do not spread. This will minimise the likelihood of the width of the right of way being encroached upon and reduced by overhanging vegetation in the future.*
- c. *If gates are required they should be of L.C.C. design standard.*
- d. *The land over which the footpath passes will need to be maintained as part of the overall landscape maintenance for the whole site in order to prevent it becoming overgrown, unsightly and prone to anti-*

social behaviour.

- We agree, this is subject to condition and discussions with the LCC safe and sustainable travel team. Footpaths adjacent to highways would ideally be a sealed surface. Bridleways and footpaths across fields and in the wider landscape belts should be hoggin/Breedon gravel over a free draining sub-base should be considered in accordance to British Horse Society guidelines. Where levels have been altered adjacent to development drainage will be fully integrated. It should be noted that beyond the site, the bridleways and footpaths cross open fields without all weather surface provision. Turf paths over well drained soil may therefore be appropriate on less used paths.
- Proposed tree and shrub planting will be set back from the footpaths. As with the existing Magna Park development, IDI Gazeley retain site management and undertake maintenance to a high standard across the entire site both with their own team and framework contractors and partners.

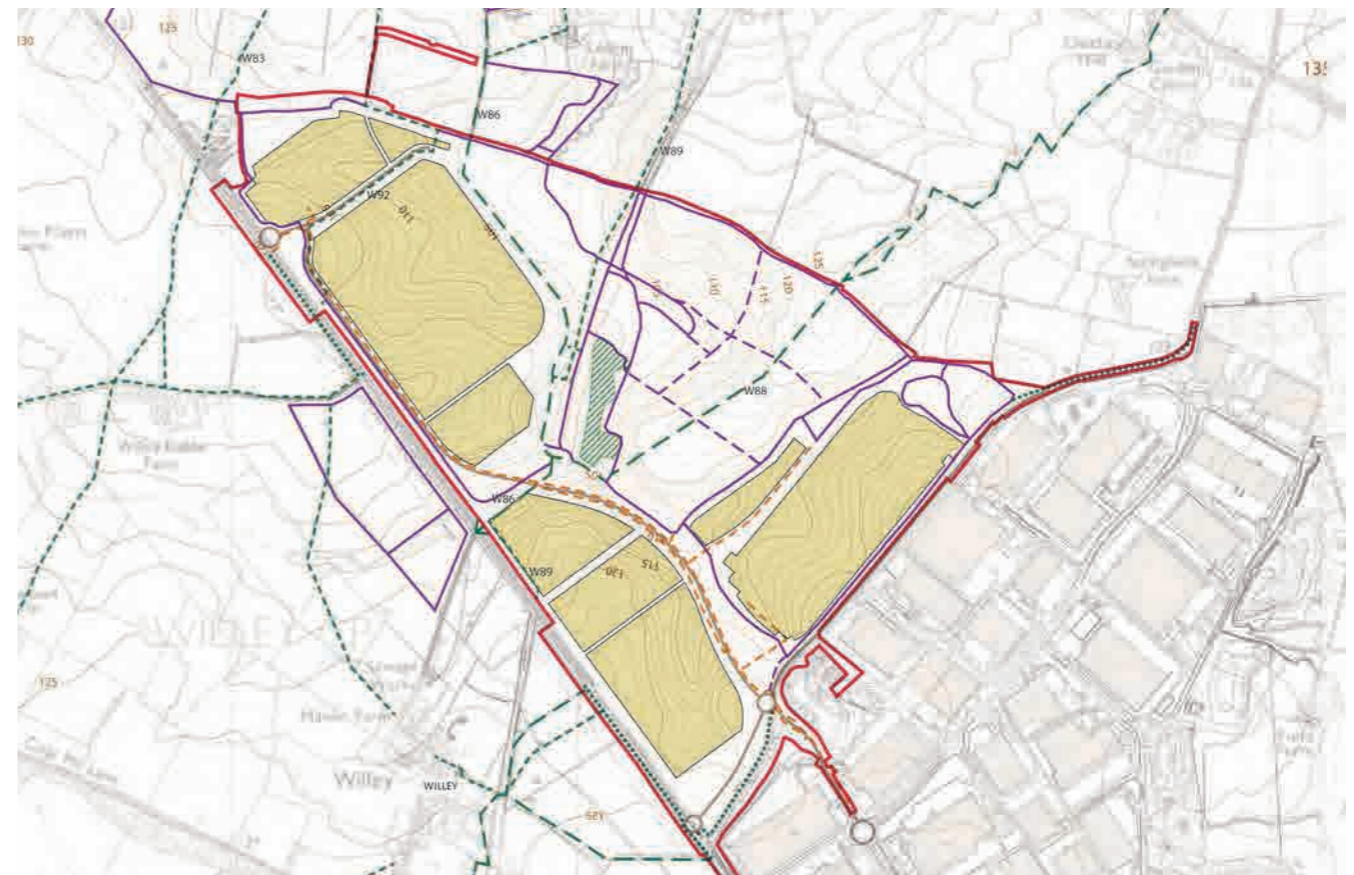
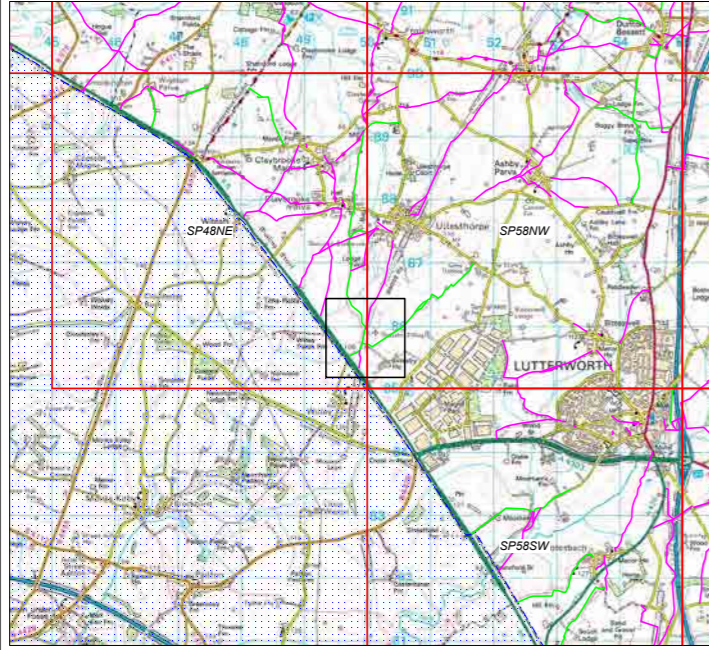


Diagram of proposed footpath and bridleway connectivity

Extract from the Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way for Leicestershire

Location Plan



Key

- Footpaths
- - - - - Bridleways
- - - - - Byways
- - - - - Restricted Byways
- Footpaths obstructed
- - - - - Potential Alternative Fps.
- - - - - Bridleways Obstructed
- - - - - Potential alternative Bws

SCALE 1:10 000

ROADS	
	Trunk Road, Single Track, Path
The representation on this map of a road, track or path is no evidence of the existence of a right of way.	
RAILWAYS	
	Multiple track, Single track, Standard gauge, Siding, tramway or mineral line, Narrow gauge
VEGETATION	
	Marsh, rough grassland, Scrub, Heath, Bracken, rough grassland, Heath, Scrub, Non-coniferous trees, Coniferous trees
GENERAL FEATURES	
	Amenity (one off), Buildings (residential or commercial), Building, important building, Glasshouse, Electricity transmission line, Translocation station, Direction of flow of water, Chalk pit, clay pit or quarry, Gravel pit, Sand pit, Refuse or slag heap, Sand, Shingle, Steeping, masonry, Lake, loch or pond
BOUNDARIES	
	As notified to August 1990: County (England and Wales), Region or Islands Area (Scotland), Diocesan, London Borough, Civil Parish (England), Community (Wales), Conurbation (County, Borough, Burgh or European Assembly), Electoral Division or Ward (shown only on sheets containing areas not included on larger scales), Example of change of meaning (shown only where there is no publication of larger scales): Area Containing a Road, Area Containing a Footpath, Area Containing a Bridleway

Environment & Transport Department,
County Hall, Glenfield,
Leicestershire LE3 8RJ
email footpaths@leics.gov.uk
Director Phil Crossland

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Leicestershire County Council
Issue Date 17 November 2015

Proposed New Bridleway
(See Planning Application 15/01531/OU1)

0.2 Existing Public Rights of Way & Permissive Routes

2.2 Impact on User Experience and Proposals for Mitigating and Enhancing

Response to LCC Rights of Way Officer:

Although it would take time for the new landscape to become established, the proposed landscape framework safeguards many of the key long views and the open settings alongside routes and would introduce positive elements, in terms of the route experience and amenity value.

In particular, we feel that the following have not been given due consideration in the response that has been made:

- many of the positive long views from PROW's within the application site and its local setting have been retained and would be safeguarded by the scheme proposals, including: along the central valley; out toward St Peters Church in Claybrooke Parva; across the Ullesthorpe Moat scheduled monument and down over the Bittesby scheduled monument. Sensitive views (as agreed with the delegated Landscape Officer) have been analysed within the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA). Relevant sections and conclusions within the LVIA are identified in the next section, below;
- whilst the landscape character and visual context of sections of PROW's would change, adverse effects would be moderated by the positive effects of the new landscape, access and recreation framework.. The enjoyment of the local landscape would be maintained as open and undeveloped areas have been safeguarded and are proposed for landscape enhancement alongside retained and realigned sections of the existing routes. In addition the attractiveness of some sections of the existing routes would be improved through the extension of wetlands and through the incorporation of new circular connections; the main significant changes to routes are where the amenity of existing routes are already heavily influenced by their proximity to the A5 or where existing Magna Park buildings already occupy part of the view;
- in terms of use, many of the existing routes terminate at the A5 with no safe ongoing connection. The scheme brings with it new opportunities and physical and qualitative enhancements including permanent circular routes, for the community, achieved through new connections and the proposed diversions. These were indicated in the DAS and have been incorporated in the scheme landscape framework (as illustrated on page 112 of the DAS)

Relevant LVIA Cross references:

The LVIA deals with the anticipated visual effects on walkers and bridle way users on local rights of way. The following parts of the LVIA are most relevant:

- a summary of the anticipated residual effects on these is provided in Chapter 9 Section 9.9. The paragraphs that specifically address effects on public rights of way include 9.9.6 'Construction stage anticipated effects and 9.9.8 'Operation Stage anticipated effects'. There are some residual effects that are identified as being significant at a local level which have been identified for the sections of footpath/bridleway that pass directly through the application site during the construction stage and in the operation stage in the opening year and short term. However, with the exception of one section of W92, the effects are not considered to be significant overall on footpath and bridleways by the mid-term, once the new landscape framework for the site has established;
- the detailed visual assessment findings on specific footpath users and bridleway users, on referenced public rights of way routes, during construction and operation and over time are tabulated in the Landscape Appendix F.5;
- visual amenity mitigation measures incorporated into the scheme during construction are included in paragraph 9.5.4 and during operation in paragraph 9.6.3. Key measures are summarised in paragraphs 9.9.6 for the construction stage and 9.9.8, 9.9.9, 9.9.10 for the operation stage, in the LVIA Summary (section 9.9);
- LVIA summary Section 9.9, paragraph 9.9.23 as this refers to the weight of the issues under consideration and tries to put them into context with respect of the overall planning balance.

Before commenting further on the specific alignments identified for re-routing and the proposed conditions below, it is noteworthy that flexibility exists and has been incorporated in the context of the landscape framework for the scheme to agree precise alignments and details for routes when diversion orders are consulted on, as mentioned in the Officer's response.

Rendered sections and views within the Design and Access statement (and reincorporated in this document) illustrate the integration of bridleways and footpaths in landscape corridors showing the required widths of 2m for footpaths and 3m for bridleways as well as the necessary setbacks from adjacent vegetation and separation from adjacent carriageways

2.0 Existing Public Rights of Way & Permissive Routes

2.3 Description and location

Several Public Rights of Way Bridleways and Public Footpaths cross the site connecting the village of Willey to Ullesthorpe and Claybrooke Parva and the Lutterworth Road. These rights of way intersect and connect with the permissable routes that currently allow a variety of walking and riding itineraries around the site as follows:

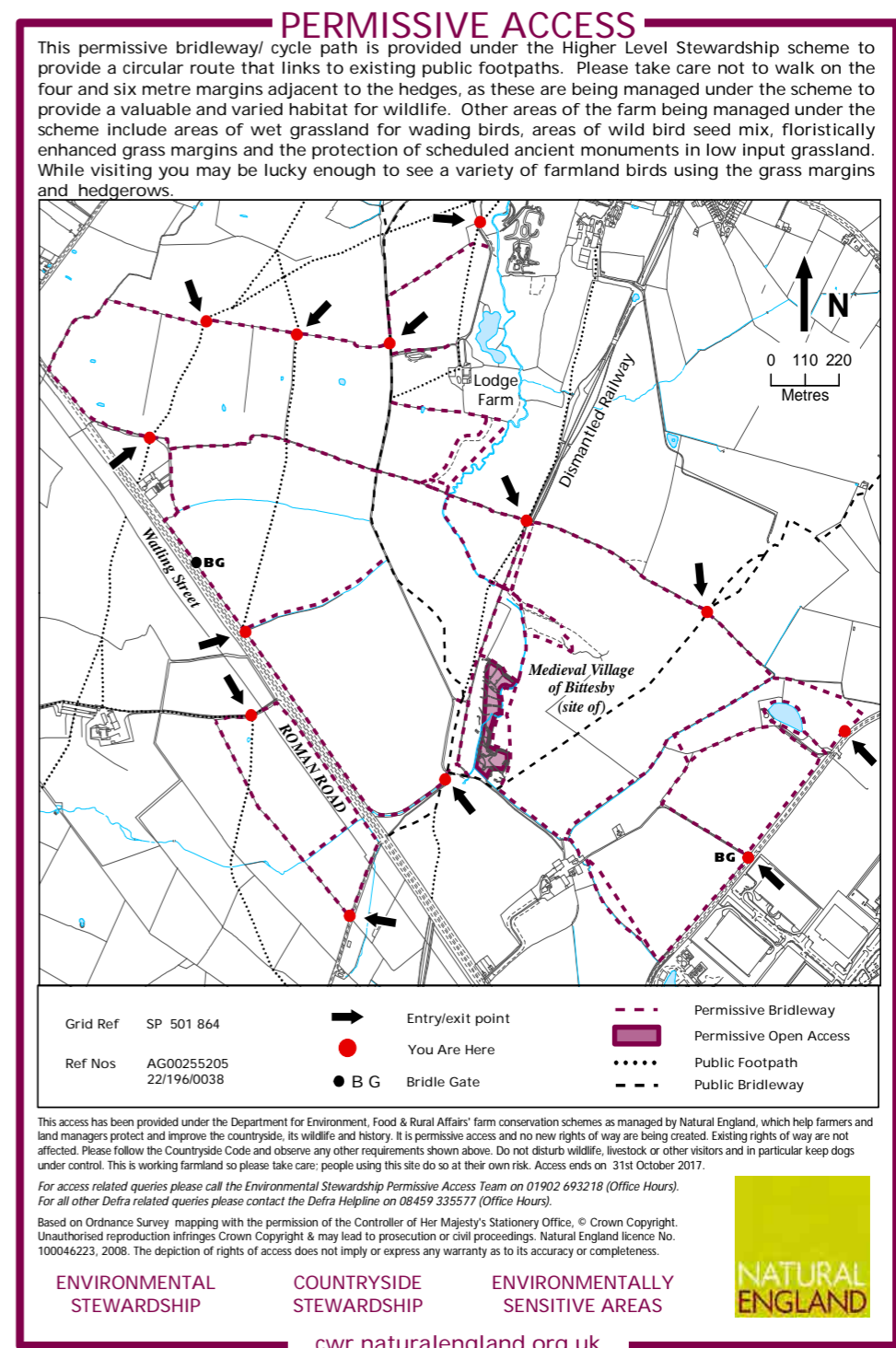
The W89 Footpath follows the embankments of the disused railway line to connect Manor Road, Ullesthorpe to the A5 Watling Street at the junction to Willey Village. The W86 Bridleway follows the Upper Soar Valley from the A5 Trunk Road to Footpath 91 at Claybrooke Parva then to Frolesworth Road, Ullesthorpe. The W88 Bridleway intersects the W86 at the disused railway line at Bittesby village and then runs north-east to meet the Lutterworth Road leading to Ullesthorpe.

To the south east of the site the R52 bridleway leads from Willey Village centre past St Leonard Church grounds and across the cutting of the disused railway where it meets another bridleway leading to Coal Pit Lane. The bridleway then splits and runs towards the A5 where it terminates. The western branch meets the A5 and terminates opposite Emmanuel and Lodge Cottages, the eastern branch runs towards the junction with Mere Lane. Between these is a short section of footpath also leading across the fields to terminate at the A5.

Permissive bridleways, delivered under the HLS and valid until 31 October 2017, follow the field boundaries around and across the centre of the site. The bridleways form a network of circular routes that connect via the Upper Soar tributary watercourse and the ridgeline boundary with Ullesthorpe Parish to the Open Access land of Bittesby Medieval Village (also managed under the HLS scheme) as well as the W86, W88 and W89 PROW described above.



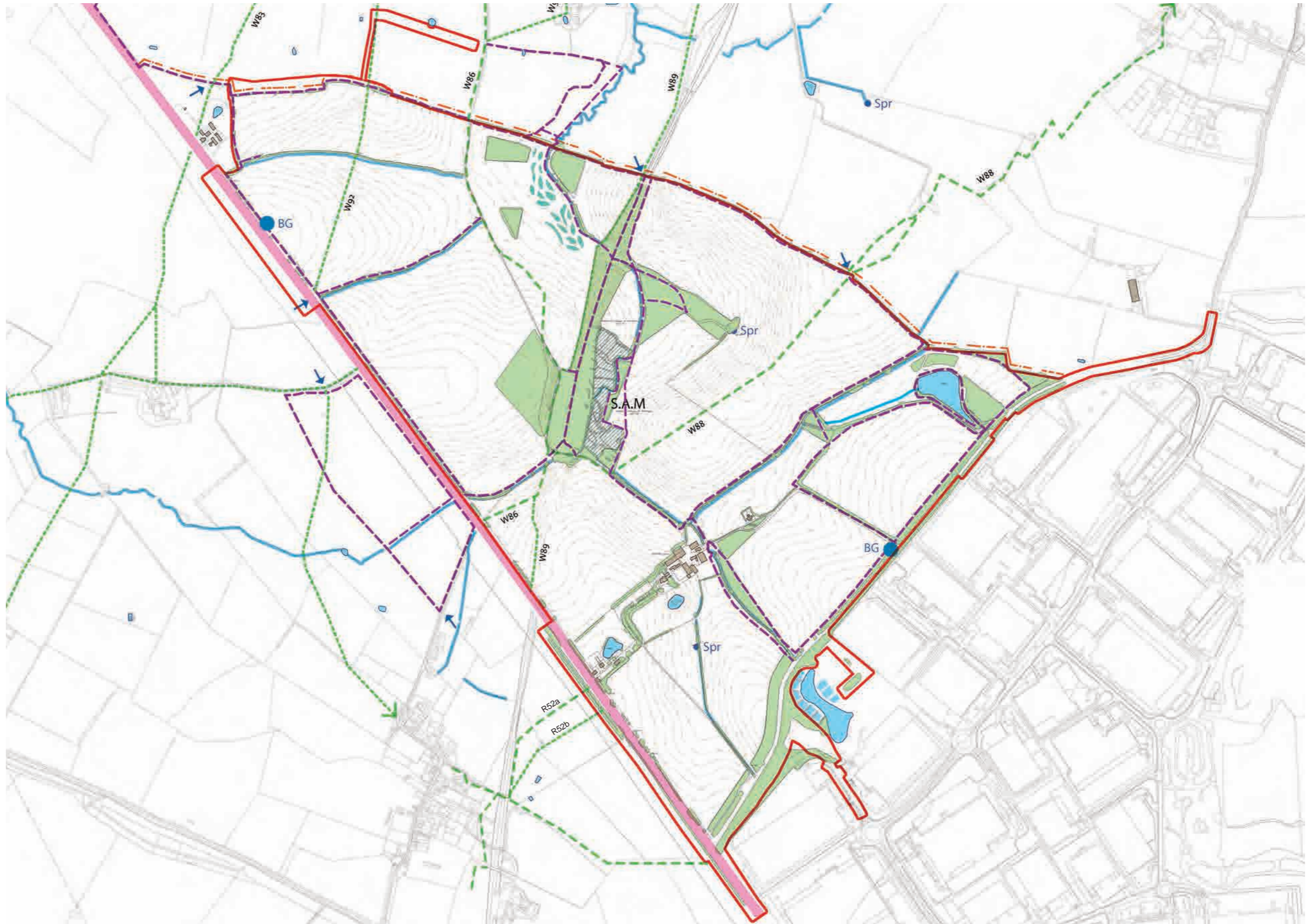
Photographs of the Existing network of footpaths, bridleways and permissive routes across the site



The existing Permissive routes linked to the Higher Level Stewardship Scheme

LEGEND

-  Site boundary
-  Parish Council boundary
-  Existing hedgerows
-  Existing woodland
-  Existing wetland scrapes
-  Pond
-  Spring
-  Manor Farm wind turbine
-  Water course
-  Main road
-  Permissive bridleway and footpath under stewardship scheme
-  Public footpath
-  Public bridleway
-  Bridleway gate under stewardship scheme
-  Entry/ exit point under stewardship scheme
-  Permissive open access under stewardship scheme



Existing Footpath and Bridleway connectivity diagram (submitted in the DAS)

2.0 Proposed Public Rights of Way

2.4 Integrating new connections

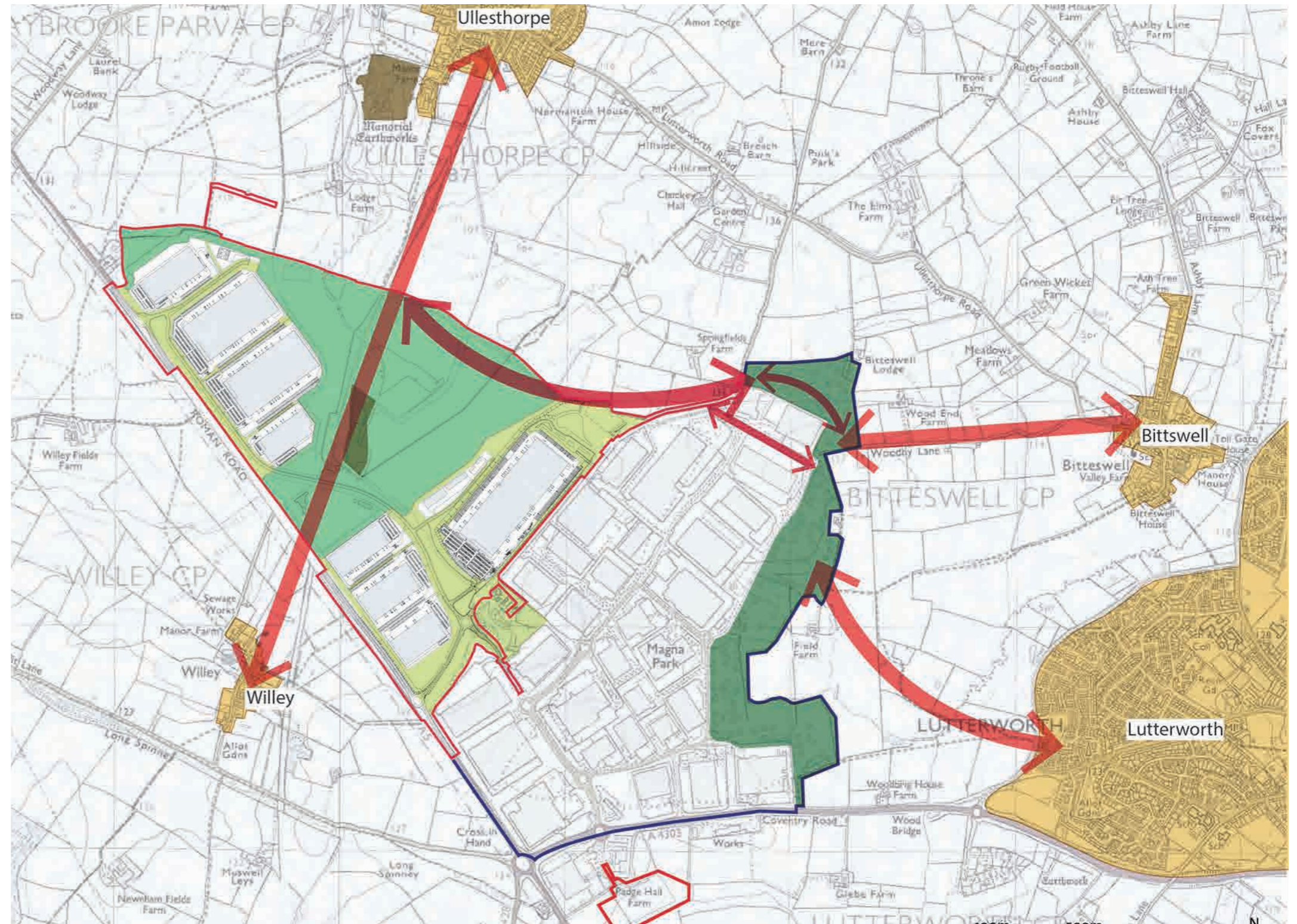
The application area is crossed by several Public Rights of Way which connect to the network of existing permissible routes across the site.

Footpath and bridleway links along the Upper Soar Valley that connect Willey to the South to Ullesthorpe and Claybrooke Parva to the north are particularly well used and give good access to the Permissible routes through Bittesby wood, Bittesby Village and the former railway embankments.

To the East of Magna Park footpaths through the country park between Lutterworth and Magna Wood are also well used. Woodway lane connecting the village of Bitteswell to Magna Wood is also popular for Country Walks and is used by workers commuting by foot or by bicycle to Magna Park.

The proposed Magna Park extension and the associated Bittesby Country Park creates a great opportunity to reinforce and enhance the existing network of footpaths and bridleways.

Connections from Lutterworth, across Magna Park to the proposed application area and the countryside beyond will be created through improved footpath links across Magna Wood and by a new footpath along the verge of Mere Lane.



LEGEND







- Development Boundary
- Extent of existing Magna Park
- Surrounding settlements
- Proposed 'Bittesby Country Park'
- On site green infrastructure
- Magna Wood

Illustrative diagram of strategic footpath connections

Proposed footpath and bridleway networks

Diagram to show public rights of way and permissible routes across the site linking to the wider countryside network of footpaths and bridleways lanes that link to surrounding settlements.

LEGEND

-  Development Boundary
-  Public bridleway
-  Public footpath
-  Proposed footpath
-  Permissive bridleway and footpath
-  Proposed shared cycle and pedestrian routes



Illustrative diagram of the proposed footpath and bridleway network

3.0 The Illustrative Proposals

3.1 W92 Public Footpath and The A5 Ride

Officers Comments: Public Footpath W92 would be obstructed by the development and would need to be diverted. The route A-C might be considered a reasonable alternative with an extra linking footpath A-D for those not wishing to walk south east along the A5.

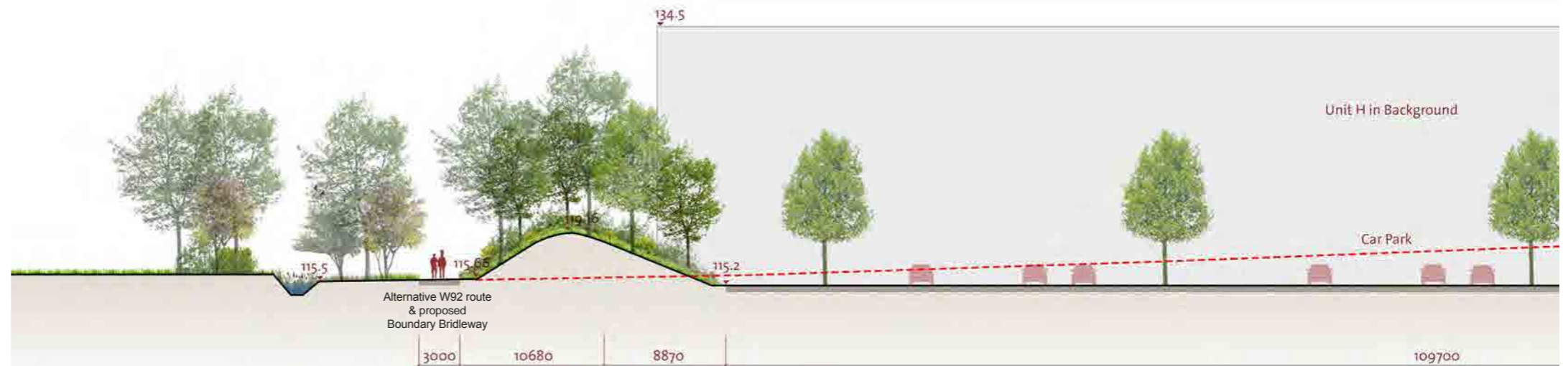
Response: This is agreed and addressed in the submitted framework on page 112 of the DAS. The route proposed by the Officer is included in the strategy as a permanently accessible permissible bridleway and could equally be given Public Footpath status.

The proposed deviation for the footpath is nearer to its existing route and is diverted along a landscape green corridor flanking a tree-lined access drive that includes a planted wetland SuDS swale and woodland belt planting. As a pavement path will also be provided in parallel adjacent to the carriage way, it is proposed that the footpath could be upgraded to a Bridleway. The 3m wide Hoggin surface would be appropriate for this use. Illustrations and sections of the footpath integrated into its surroundings are provided on the following pages.

The new route is also integrated in to the proposed A5 ride which incorporates bridleway, footpath and vehicular movement within a landscape band comprising native shelterbelt planting, species rich swales and wildflower verges.

W92 - Footpath	Existing Footpath	Proposed Footpath
Function	Existing footpath crossing open fields	Footpath linking proposed A5 ride with existing network across the site and towards The Claybrookes and
Approx Length across site	600m	880m
Width	Undefined	3m
Surface quality	Soft: Across open field	Sealed surface and self bind Hoggin
Typical Gradient	1:20 Although enters and exits the site at the same 116.00 datum	Overall gradient unchanged. Level change at edge of development plot will be DDA compliant
Connectivity	The footpath terminates on the A5 and does not connect to other footpaths at this point. This probably dates back to the time that the A5 was a quiet road pre-modern day traffic.	This will be enhanced by connectivity to the proposed A5 Ride and boundary bridleways allowing connectivity to footpaths and bridleways towards Ullesthorpe, Willey and the other areas of Magna Park
Intensity of use	Very low. Due to poor connectivity and lack of destination point.	Intensity of use is likely to increase due to better connectivity and greater concentration of people working in the vicinity
Habitat value	Low habitat value. The footpath crosses existing arable fields	Habitat value will be increased by routing the bridleway alongside woodland belts and planted SuDS
Footpath experience:		
i. Views	Some wide long views, including those to Magna Park and views of the A5 (ES AppF.1 Viewpoint 16A). Some more open near views toward over farmland, including toward White House Farm (ES AppF.1 Viewpoint 4bii)	Long views out from realigned sections of the route, within the application site, would be maintained to the east along a tree lined greenway. Positive views from the northern section of the route toward White House Farm and off-site, over the surrounding scene would be conserved. Views toward the A5 would be
ii. Nature of	Route passes through arable fields with gappy hedgerows	The section of the route within the application site would be defined by tree, verge and hedge lined
iii. Surrounding context	The part of the route which passes through the application site is in the immediate context of the A5 and the existing Magna Park is notable in the scene. As the route progresses off site to the north east toward Claybrooke Parva and beyond a local ridge, the context is more rural and tranquil.	The context to the footpath beyond the application site and local ridge to the north would be conserved and protected by planting on and off site along the parish boundary and a local ridge. Within the application site, the context to the footpath would change to greenways, with defined views out, with some enhanced screening of the A5 corridor
Wider network	The effected section of W92 has continues off site to the north but ends abruptly at the A5 to the south Continuation of the route is currently achieved through additional connections provided by permissive routes, which are publicised come to an end in Oct 2017.	The W92 route is retained outside the application site to the north away from the A5. Within the Site the section of the route is diverted and improved permanent linkages /connections are incorporated within greenways

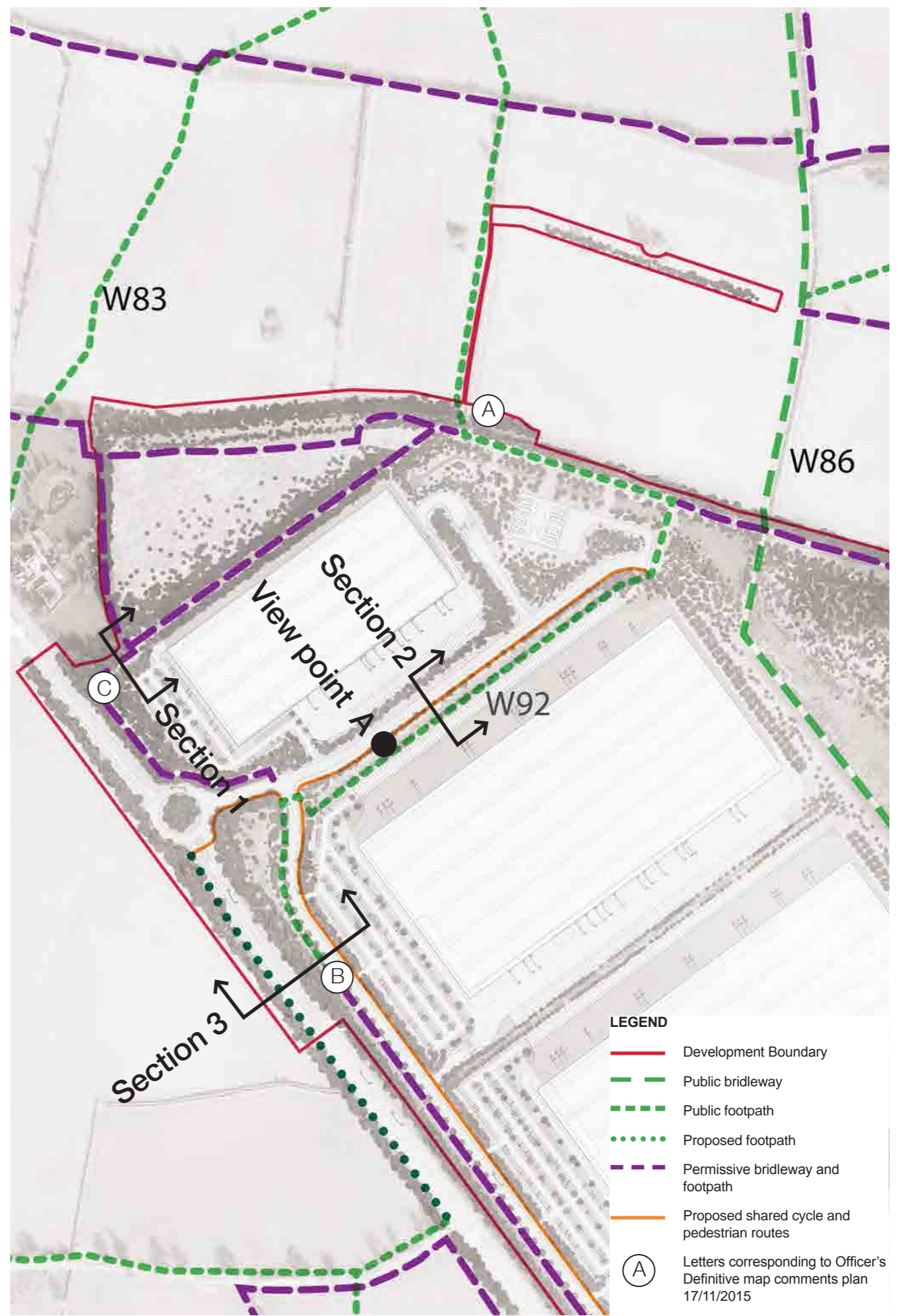
W92 Footpath: existing and proposed comparison



Section 1: Permissible bridleway around the Northern boundary of the site (submitted on drawing MPL410-AL-A01-GE-2-003)



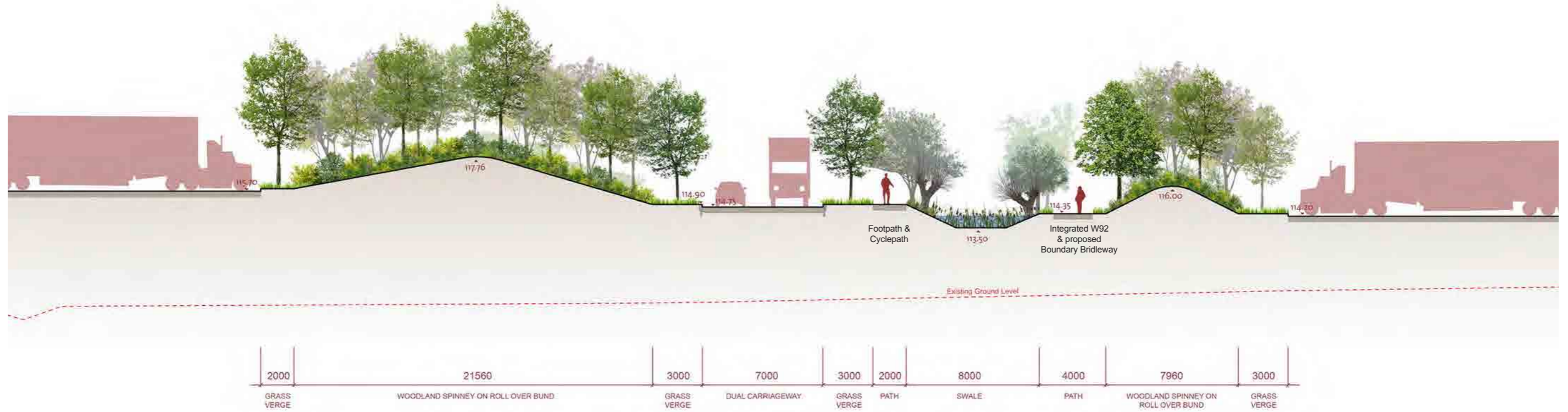
EXISTING W92



PROPOSED W92

3.0 The Illustrative Proposals

3.1 W92 Public Footpath & the A5 Ride



Illustrative section 2 of the integrated footpath and bridleway in the green finger of the new access drive



Illustrative section 3 of Parcel K, the A5 ride and access drive (Drawing submitted on page 142 of the DAS and drawing MPL410-AL-A01-GE-2-003)



Illustrative view at view point A

3.0 The Illustrative Proposals

3.2 Bridleway W86 & The Ecology wetland

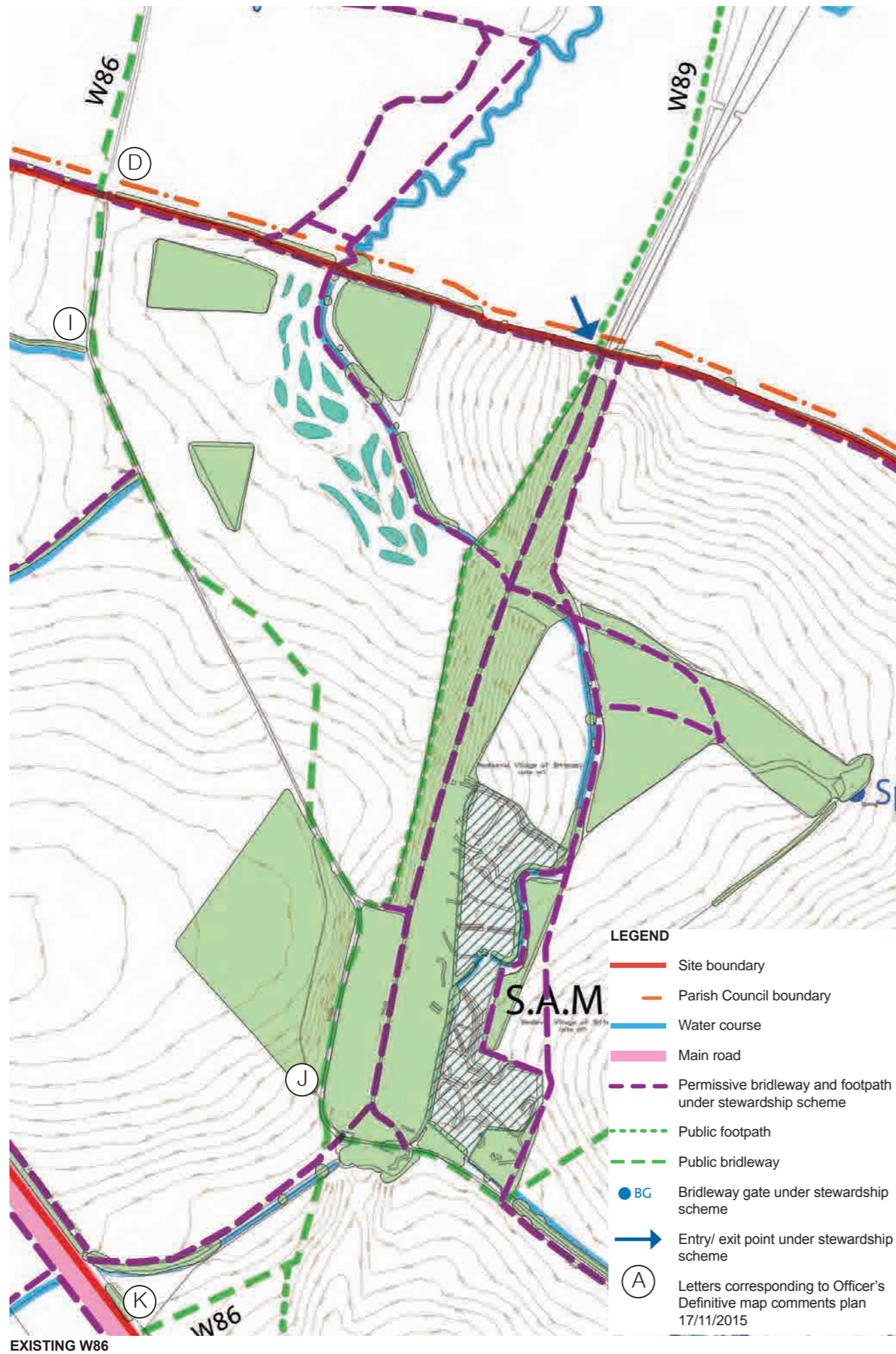
Officer's comments: Public Bridleway W86 would be obstructed by the development and would need to be diverted. The route D-I-J-K might be considered a reasonable alternative.

Response:

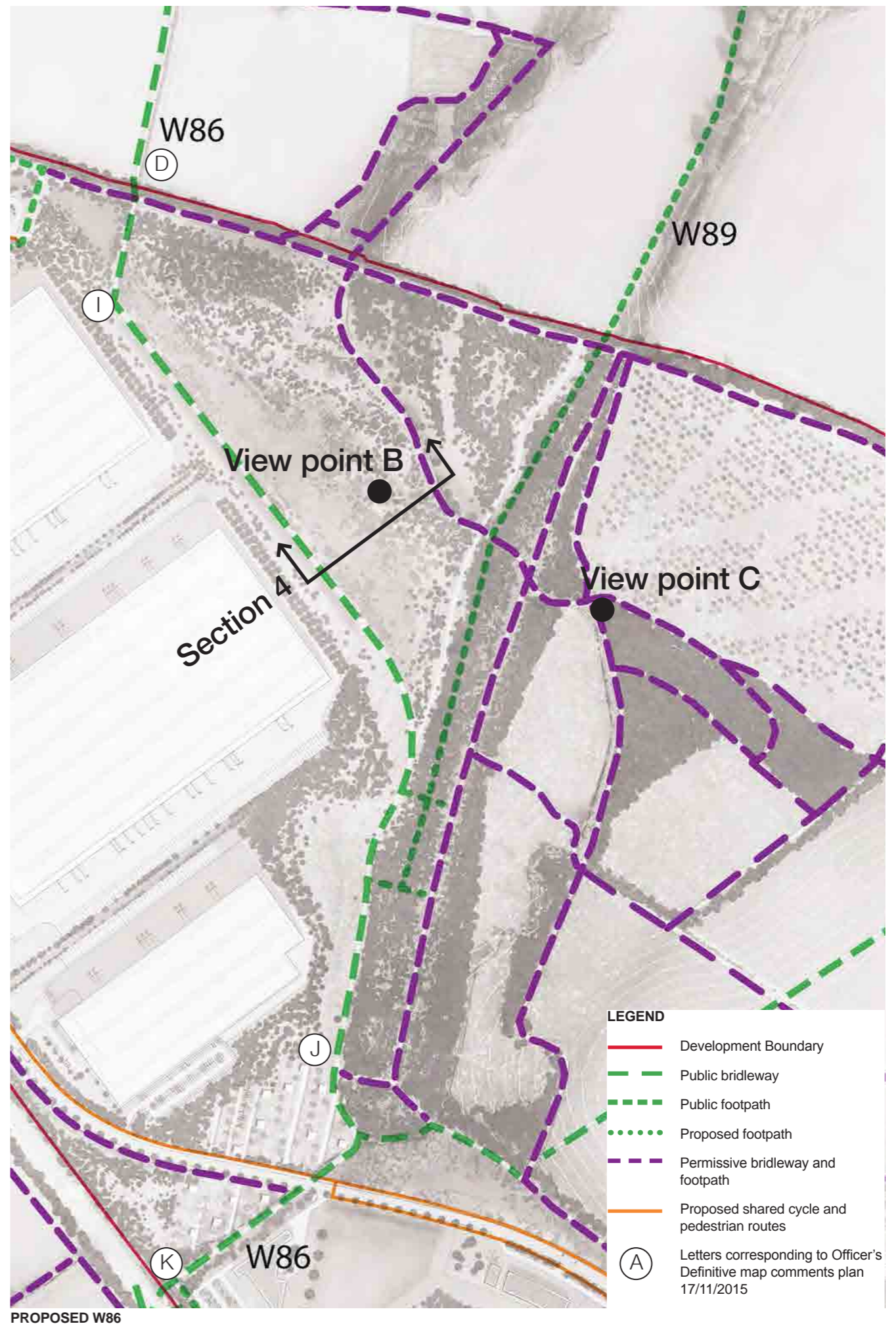
This is agreed and previously illustrated in the landscape framework on page 112 of the DAS. As illustrated on the opposite and following pages, the proposal is to route the bridleway around the development to take advantage of the setting proposed wetland habitat area.

W86 - Bridleway	Existing Bridleway	Proposed Bridleway
Function	Bridleway from the Junction of Willey High Street Lane leading to Ullesthorpe and Claybrooke Parva	Existing function retained and enhanced by connections to proposed network of footpaths and bridleways around the site
Aprox Length on site	1300m	1300m
Width	2 and four to track	3m
Surface quality	Open field & rough hard core stone on farm track unsuitable for horse riding	Hoggin type path in open field situation with sealed surface near to proposed Academy
Gradient	4 m level difference from entry to exit. Relatively flat along valley bottom.	Unchanged
Connectivity	Good connectivity with existing bridleways beyond the site and the existing PROW and permissive routes on the site.	As existing with enhanced connectivity to proposed network of bridleways and paths
Intensity of use	Well used due to connectivity between existing villages	
Habitat value	Limited. The path mainly crosses arable fields, but does run alongside the Soar watercourse and through woodland plantations.	
Footpath experience:		
i. Views	There are localised views from the section of this route within the application site over arable farmland, grassland and toward the disused railway embankment (ES App F.1 Viewpoint 4CIV). There are also some longer views toward Claybrooke Parva. At the western end of the route the A5 and the Manor Farm wind turbine are notable components in the partial view experienced along the valley, views are otherwise localised and restricted by the local horizon (ES App F.1 Viewpoints 4cv and 4cvi).	On the northern section of the route within the site, changes in the existing view would be compensated for by a new focal point wetland area. Longer views toward Claybrooke Parva church would be maintained from the wetland area and where the church is increasingly more evident as a focal point in the scene, on the off-site section of the route, further north, and views would be unaffected. On the western section of the route, near views along the riverine corridor and longer partial views along the valley would be conserved.
ii. Nature of planting	In the vicinity of the route, as it progresses north, there are fragmented sections of field hedgerows scattered areas of wet woodland, woodland on the disused railway embankment and establishing on adjacent areas of former now regraded, arable land. There is some riverine vegetation along the adjacent watercourse by the western end of the route.	New areas of wet woodland and planting on banks would be introduced to the west, wetland planting associated with a new waterbody alongside the realigned route to the east. The western section of the route would be set within a greenway defined by retained existing riverine vegetation and new hedge with standard tree planting, to the south.
iii. Surrounding context	The existing context to the route within the application site includes the A5, the planted disused railway embankment, wind turbine, a water course and predominantly arable farmland.	The context to the west of the main section of the route within the Site would change to a wet woodland strip and beyond this, some new logistics buildings. The context to the east of the slightly realigned northern part of the route within the application a site route would be enhanced through the introduction of an area of wetland. These buildings will shield disturbing effects from the A5 and activity in any yards. The stretch of bridleway to the west would continue to be alongside the river within the valley bottom but would retained within a greenway from where some additional built form would evident in the place of arable fields and this part of the route would remain in the context of the A5 corridor.

W86 Footpath: existing and proposed comparison



EXISTING W86



PROPOSED W86

3.0 The Illustrative Proposals

3.3 Bridleway W86 & The Ecology wetland

The illustrative masterplan indicates the Ecology Wetland situated to the west of the Woodland Armature and north of the development parcels. The landscape character is inspired by a more open character aligned to existing adjacent river corridor and flood plains. The intent is that the landscape design of the wetlands will capture the unique qualities of an open water and meadow character; swathes of wildflowers, broad shelterbelts and lush footpaths and boardwalks, slow moving brooks, solitaire waterside trees and sense of openness. The wetland ecology park provides an excellent opportunity to promote locally important species and habitats and so provide interpretation and education values alongside general amenity and relaxation.

Tree planting is to be selective, with large landmark tree species planted at key points across the wetland. To filter views and enhance the micro climate other trees groups and shelterbelts such as willow copse will typically be associated with linear water bodies, brooks or meadow to filter views on to the development parcels.

The wetland habitat will be sustained via a sustainable urban drainage strategy that captures, stores, filters and cleans water runoff from the development parcels. Marginal and aquatic planting will be based native species of high wildlife value and their inherent ability to improve water quality. The ecological wetland zone will provide opportunities for interpretation trails and education.



Illustrative view of the view point C (submitted on page 130 of DAS)



Illustrative cross section 4 of the proposed wetland (submitted on page 128 of the DAS and on drawing MPL410-AL-A01-GE-2-003)



Illustrative view of the proposed wetland area at view point B

3.0 The Illustrative Proposals

3.4 Public Footpath W89 & The woodland armature

Officer's comments: If the existing legal line of Public Footpath W92 is proposed to be obstructed by enhanced tree planting as part of the landscape development then it will need to be diverted. In addition it would require diverting to connect with the diverted route of Bridleway W86.

Response:

- There is no need to obstruct with proposed structure planting. The footpath is integrated at the edge of the existing tree planting along the former railway embankments.
- The suggested connection to Bridleway W86 forms part of the proposals. The bridleway will benefit from views over the proposed wetlands. An illustrative section of this is shown on pages 128 and 129 of the submitted DAS.
- The indicated potential alternative footpath (on the Definitive map overlay) along the centre line of the former railway track is also integrated into the proposals as a proposed permanent permissible route. An illustrative view shows this intent on page 124 of the submitted DAS.

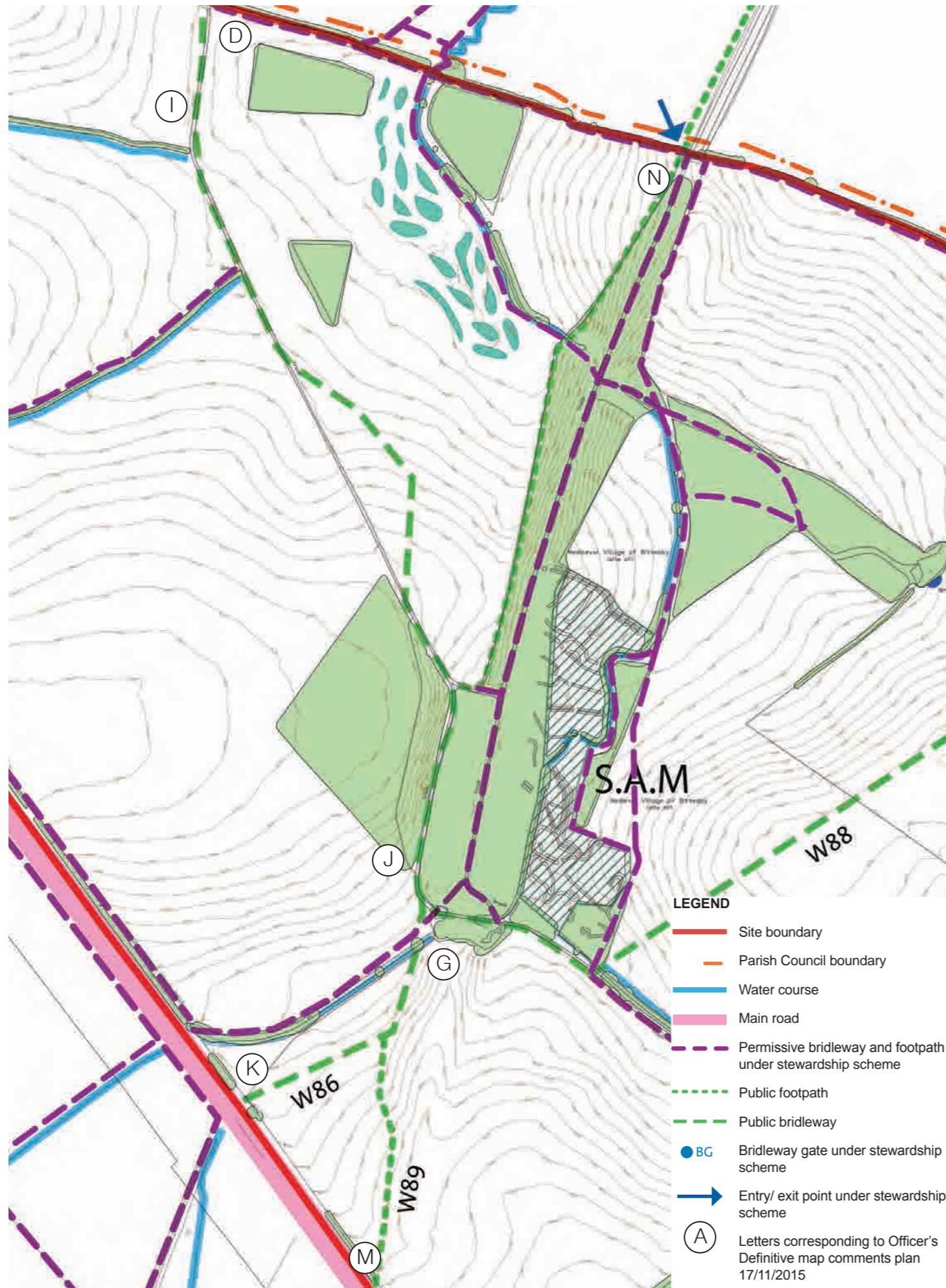
Public Footpath W89 (G-M on the Plan)
Public footpath W89 would be obstructed by landscaping and a football pitch if the development were to proceed. It will therefore require diversion. The attached plan only shows the path to be closed as far as point M. If the developers wished to close the whole of the route this would be acceptable if a suitable alternative was provided. A suitable alternative route would be K-M.... This should be a new bridleway to link in with the diverted route of Bridleway W86 at K.

- Agreed. This is illustrated in the landscape framework on page 112 of the DAS and opposite
- It could be a bridleway, but it currently isn't and doesn't connect to another bridleway where it meets the A5. It would double up with the W86 which is the preferred route for many.

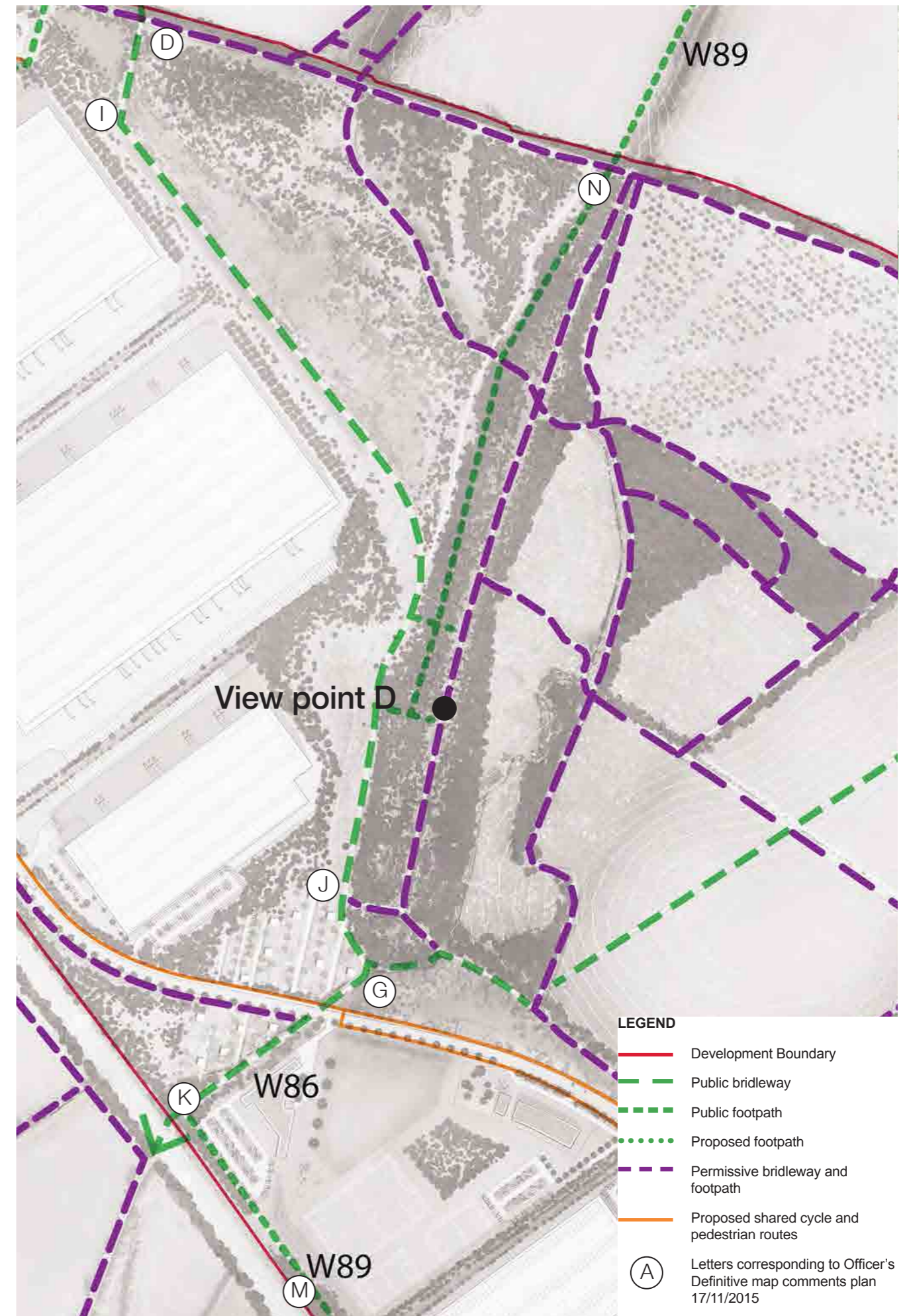
W89 - Footpath	Existing Footpath	Proposed -
Function	Existing footpath alongside railway embankment	Retained. This can be complemented by the proposed bridleway and cycletracks on the railway embankment
Approx length on site	1150	1135
Width	1-2m undefined across open fields	2-3m
Surface quality	Open field, muddy following ploughing	Hoggin across open fields with sealed surface nearer to Academy
Gradient	Relatively flat along the valley bottom. Enters the site at 114 and exits at 116 AOD.	Enters the site at 114 and exits at 116 AOD. The alternative railway route provides a level promenade.
Connectivity	Terminates on A5 and connects to Manor Farm Ullesthorpe	Improved by connectivity to proposed bridleways and footpaths. Footpath diverted around the proposed Academy site.
Intensity of use	Good alongside railway embankment due connectivity between bridleway and permissive routes. <i>Poor in section adjoining A5 as the W86 tends to be used to connect to Willey</i>	Retained
Habitat value	Good alongside railway embankment due to wildflower beaches and woodland	Retained and enhanced
Footpath experience:		
i. Views	Existing views from this footpath within and approaching the application site are across arable farmland, the River Soar tributary and at the western end extend include the A5 and some longer views to the north (ES App F.1 Viewpoints 6ai, 6aii, 6aiii, 6aiv and 16d).	Views to the north and north west toward Ullesthorpe and across the Soar tributary valley would be conserved. Views to the east would continue to be restricted by the existing railway embankment and associated planting. Views to the south and west will be changed with a valley park and wetland occupying the foreground and focal point in the view. New buildings, with facades tapered to an off white colour at higher levels would be a notable feature beyond, with wet woodland on banks, in the foreground, filtering views to the lower parts of buildings and providing the edge to the new wetland area.
ii. Nature of planting	Planting alongside and in the vicinity of the route includes woodland planting on the disused railway embankment and some plantation woodland and away from the route existing riverine vegetation.	There would be new wet woodland blocks and spinney planting on the edges of the wetland area and on rising land beyond as the route progresses west. The far southern end of the route would be diverted within a hedge and standard tree defined greenway .
iii. Surrounding context	The surrounding context includes farmland and the tributary of the Soar to the west, the railway embankment to the east and the A5 to the south.	The surrounding context would notably change at the western end of the route as it progresses toward the logistics park with the change including the introduction of buildings mitigated compensated for by a new wetland, new planting and building and yard configuration and facade colouring .
Wider network	Route W89 currently terminates at the A5 with no going southern connections beyond the A5. There are connections to bridleways W86 and W88 where routes intersect at a tunnel passing under the disused railway. There are also some connections to permissive routes due to come to an end in Oct 2017	The effects on the W89 network are limited to the far southern and western ends of the route where connections will be maintained but there would be some route realignment. There would also be some permissive route connections which would be made permanent.



Viewpoint D: Illustrative view of cycletrack/footpath on the railway embankments (submitted on page 124 of the DAS)



Existing W89



Proposed W89

3.0 The Illustrative Proposals

3.5 W88 & the Northern Ridgeway Walk

Officer's comments: The routes shown on the development plan between points S-Q and T-R on the attached plan do not accord with the legal line as recorded on the Definitive Map. If this landscape plan is to be adopted then the bridleway will require diverting. In addition the route P-F will require diverting. Suitable alternative routes would be S-R-YQ, T-U and P-O-J.

Response:

- No change to the alignment is proposed. There are some minor discrepancies between the definitive map, OS map and the actual route of the bridleways on the aerial photo base shown on the plan as the route is retraced every year following ploughing.
- The Tunnel and over bank routes P-O-J will still be in existence.

Officer's comments: It would appear that the area of land over which this bridleway runs is to be built up into a noticeable ridge as indicated by the closeness of the contours on the plan (Area 5). There are no discernible height number on the contours. I will need to know if my interpretation is correct and if so what is the proposed gradient bearing in mind that this is a public bridleway.

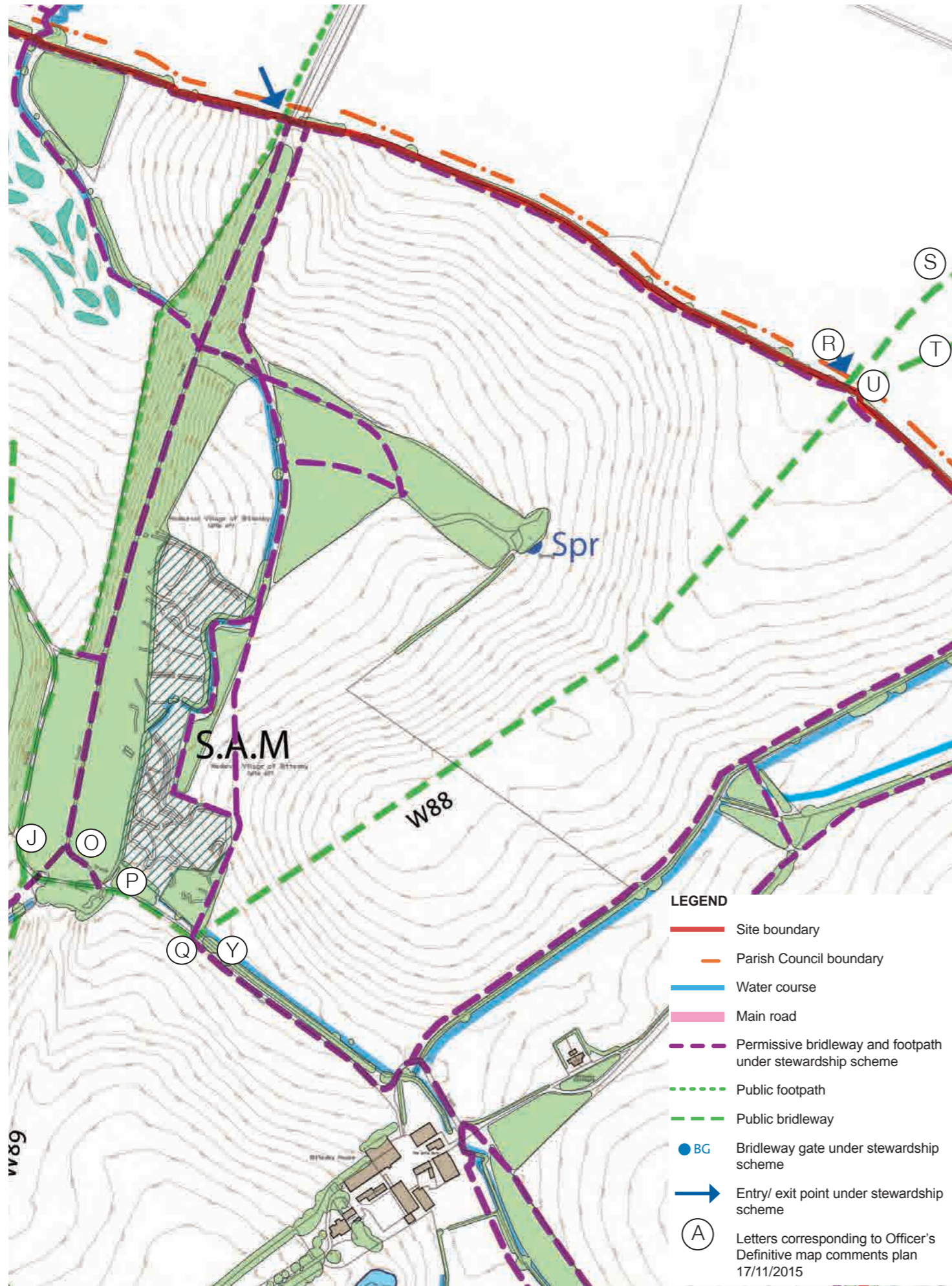
- This is incorrect, the contours are existing contours indicating the existing ridgeline feature. It is possible that some topsoil would be deposited in this area, however this would evenly spread with gradients to match the existing.

The proposed permissible routes increase the connectivity of this Bridleway improving itineraries towards the ancient monument. A permanent ridgeline walk bridleway is proposed along the northern boundary of the site towards. This will benefit from the shelter and increased habitat diversity of the proposed ridgeline Spinney and increase connectivity between W86, W89, W89 and Magna Wood beyond.

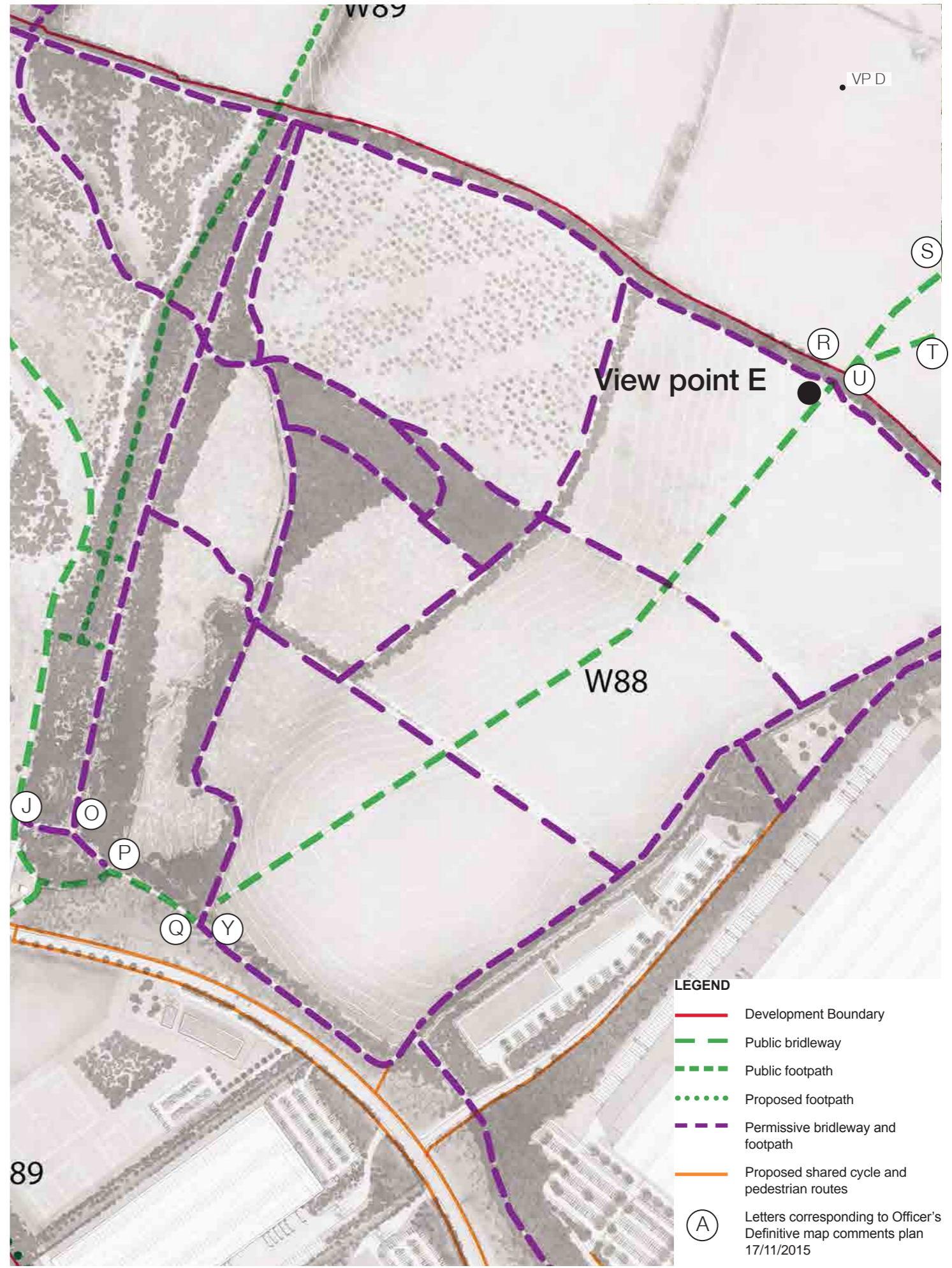
W88 - Bridleway	Existing Bridleway	Proposed Bridleway
Function	Bridleway across open arable fields	Bridleway across open meadow and pasture
Approx Length across site	1365m	Unchanged
Width	Undefined	3m
Surface quality	Soft surface	Soft surface with free draining sub-base. Hoggin where appropriate
Gradient	1:10 and 1:15 at steepest parts	Unchanged
Connectivity	Connects A5 Willey High Street lane junction with the Lutterworth Road	Connects A5 Willey High Street lane junction with the Lutterworth Road & with proposed network of footpaths and bridleways
Intensity of use	Well used due to connectivity and links to wider routes	Well used due to connectivity and links to wider routes. Intensity to increase with proximity of Academy and employment
Habitat value	Low: Predominantly Arable fields	Enhanced by wildflower meadow and grazing pasture along with ridgeline mixed native woodland planting
Footpath experience:		
i. Views	Long views out west toward Long Spinney, and over the Bittesby deserted medieval village (DMV) and disused railway. Shorter views toward existing Magna Park buildings to the east <i>ES App F.1 Viewpoints 9a, 9bi, 6aiii, 6aiv and 16d</i> .	Long views west toward Long Spinney are retained as would be shorter views out toward the Bittesby Deserted Medieval Village from the central section of the route. Views to the south and east would noticeably change but the changes would be in the context of existing buildings in this part of the view and would only affect particular angles of view, from the route. From other parts of the route change in views would be minimal apart from a short section at the southern end, on the approach to the railway tunnel where a new wetland and new roadway alongside the existing road to the tunnel would be introduced.
ii. Nature of planting	Within the application site this route is surrounded by an open arable context with hedgerows, copses and spinneys in the vicinity, to the north and west	New planting on the edges of proposed development plots together with the graduated off white colours of facades at higher levels would assist the visual assimilation of buildings in the parts of the scene they occupy. The further development of existing planting would also contribute to reduce visual effects by the mid-term
iii. Surrounding context	The existing context is arable farmland with Magna Park a notable element in the existing context to the east.	The immediate context to the route will remain open and would become permanent pasture land. Views toward the Bittesby DMV would also be conserved. Longer views out to Long Spinney to the west and to the north would be conserved. The main changes to the context of the path would occur to the east where existing Magna Park buildings already occupy the scene and to the south and west where the tops of some new buildings would be evident where there is currently Bittesby House and views toward the A5 over the disused railway. In time, new planting and the establishment of existing planting will mitigate these middle distance views from the sections of the middle section of the route where they would be perceived.
Wider network	The route extends off-site to the north and connects with W86 and W89 via an existing tunnel under the disused railway to the west. There are also some connections to permissive routes due to come to an end in Oct 2017.	The existing route would be maintained on the same alignment with some previously permissive routes converted to permanent circular routes.



Viewpoint E: The existing W88, and the proposed Ridgeline Walk (Submitted on page 140 of the DAS)



Existing W88



Proposed W88

3.0 The Illustrative Proposals

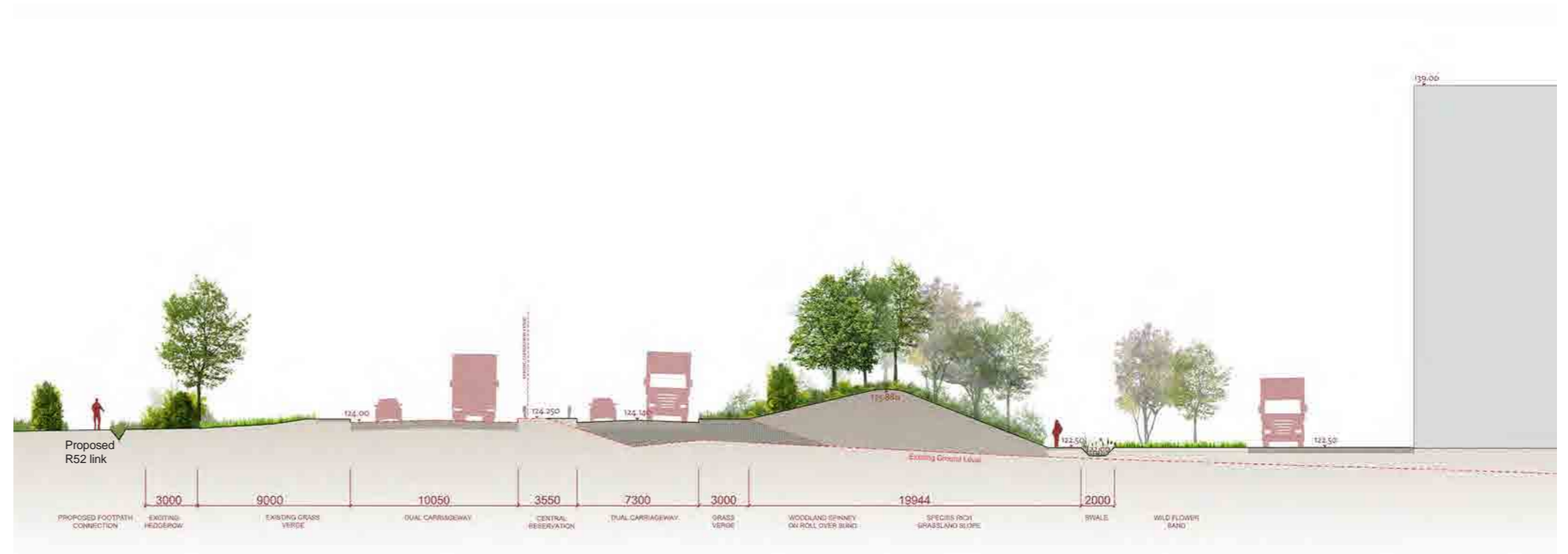
3.6 Footpath R52 Link

Note: This has been approved as a footpath connection under the Magna Park Extension DHL Supply Chain Application ref:15/00919/FUL

Officer's comments: Provision of New Public Footpath Alongside the A5 (V-W, X-M and K-BC). In Planning Application 15/01531/OUT the developers proposed to create a new bridleway alongside the A5 to link to Footpaths R52b and Bridleway R52a. The diversions of Footpaths W92 and W89 and Bridleway W86 will leave the network disjointed, alter crossing points and cause potential danger for path users trying to negotiate the A5 corridor. In addition the extra traffic generated by the proposed development would make the A5 more hazardous.

Response

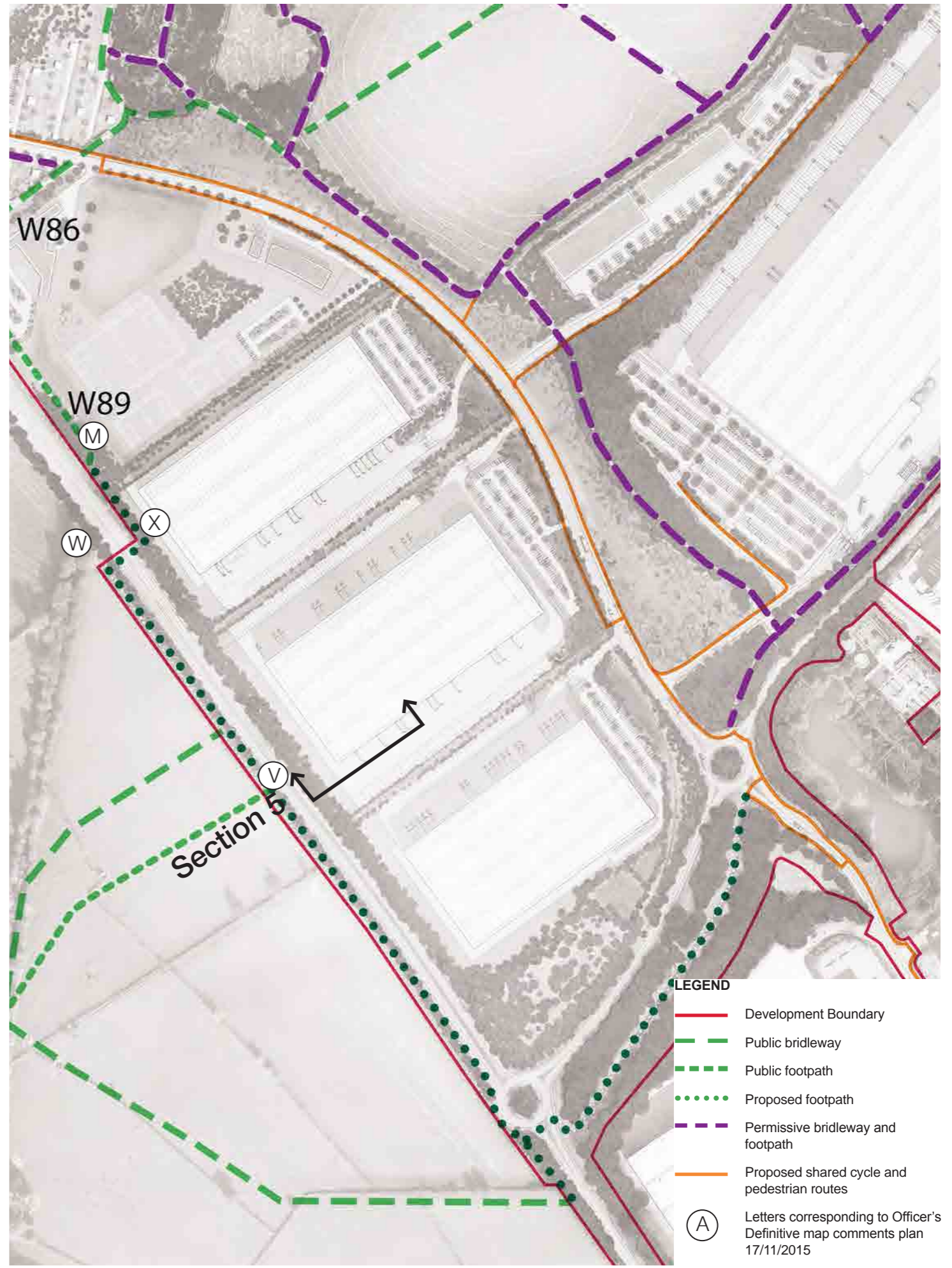
- We do not understand this comment as the existing routes terminate on the A5 with no formalised crossings, or ongoing continuity. This means that walkers or horseriders would either need to walk along the carriageway or verge.
- We are improving safety by providing a connection for R52a and R52b sheltered from the existing carriageway by a retained hedgerow as illustrated on drawing MPL410-AL-A00-GE-2-004 of the planning DHL supply Chain application and opposite. It should be noted that this is proposed as a footpath, although useable by horseriders, site constraints of existing vegetation and topography will mean that a 3m wide path is difficult to achieve in all areas.
- No formal pedestrian crossings of the A5 are proposed for safety reasons (the A5 is now, and will remain, part of the Strategic Road Network in the control of Highways England). The two new roundabouts proposed will, however, help to slow traffic, and the roundabout with Mere Lane will include dropped Kerbs. A Pegasus type signalised crossing was considered but Highways England does not normally approve this on dual carriageway trunk roads.



Integration of the proposed R52a and R52b link (submitted on page 156 of the DAS and drawing MPL410-AL-A01-GE-2-004)



Existing R52a and R2b footpaths



Proposed R52a and R2b footpath links

3.0 The Illustrative Proposals

3.7 Country Walks and connections

Mere Lane

The wider landscape strategy proposes a footpath connection along Mere Lane to Magna Wood to promote better pedestrian connectivity via Wood Lane and local footpaths to Bitteswell and Lutterworth beyond. The path would be an informal crushed gravel path set back from the road edge on the existing verge.

As illustrated on this page, Magna Wood offers many opportunities for a publically accessible network of paths. As part of the strategy for improving access to the countryside, a visitor's car park adjacent to Mere Lane Lagoon is proposed and was approved under the Magna Park Extension DHL Supply Chain Application ref:15/00919/FUL

The section 7 on the following page shows the creation of a woodland ride parallel to Mere Lane which has been approved under this application.

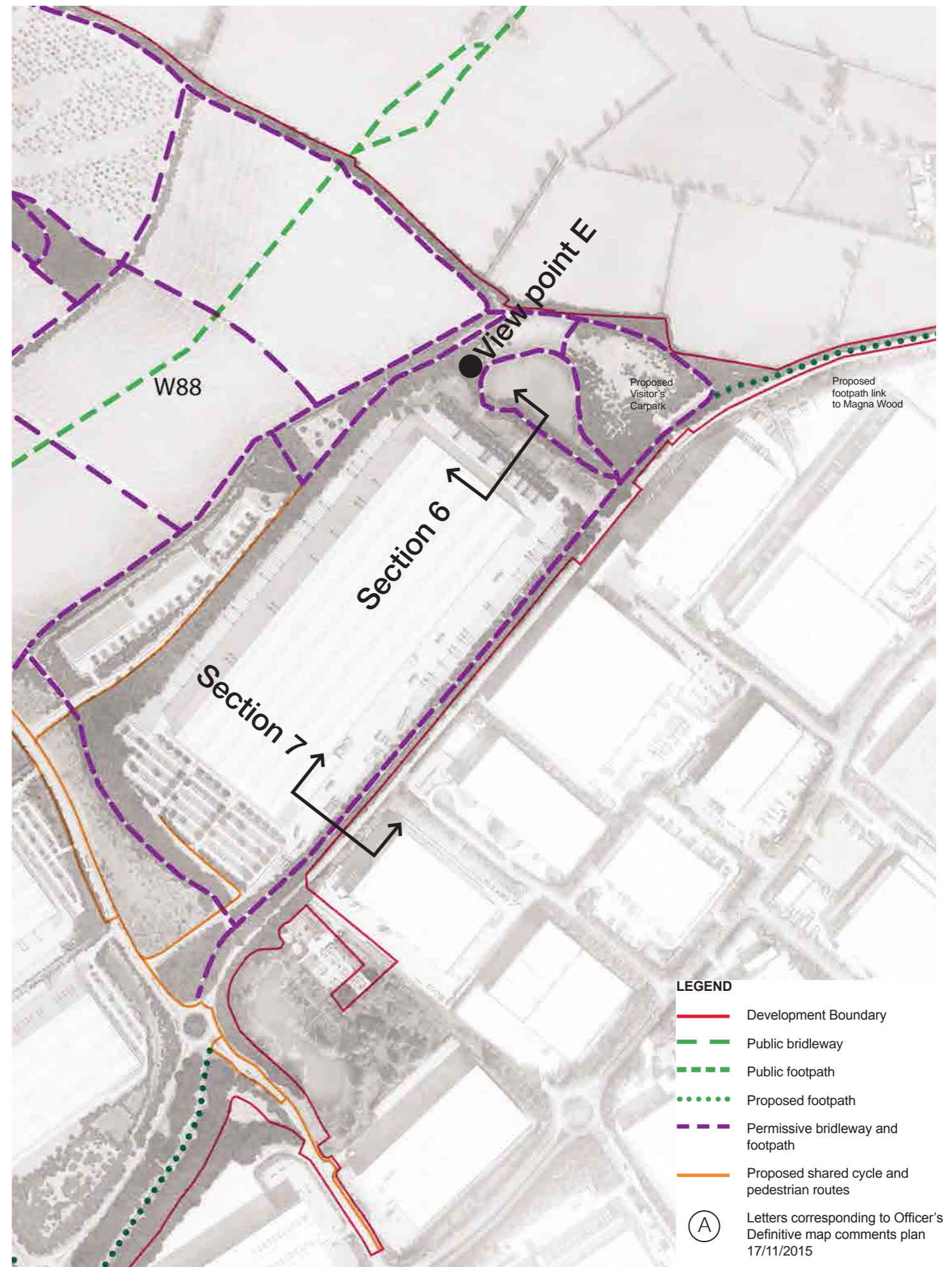
Elsewhere the truncated section of Mere Lane resulting from the new road alignment and roundabouts will be retained as a walkable route facilitating access to existing footpaths and bridleway leading from the village of Willey towards the A5. Existing vegetation and shelter belts are retained and any gaps in the existing planting will be gapped up using native species planting to achieve a continuous walkable green lane character.



Illustration of enhanced footpath links in Magna Wood beyond the site (submitted on page 144 of the DAS)



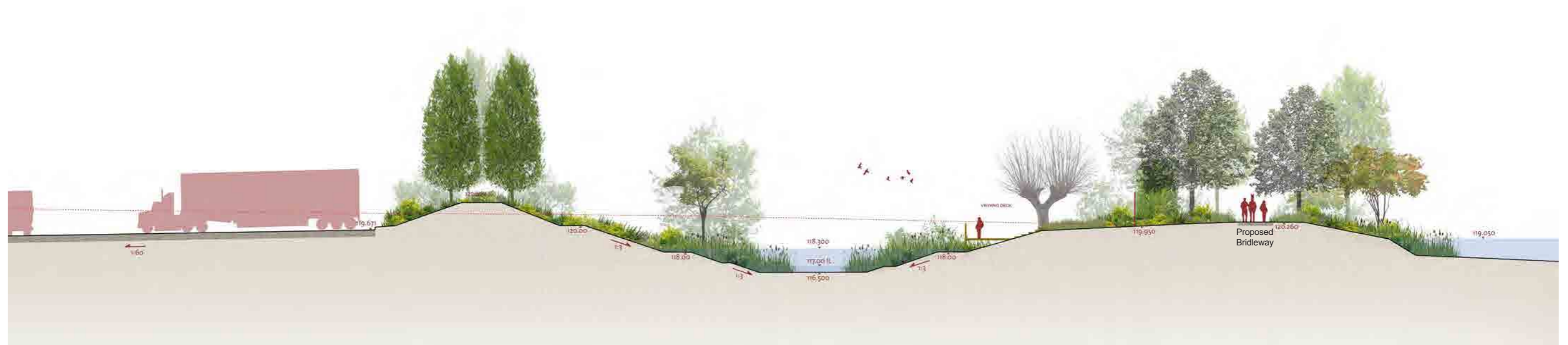
Existing Permissable routes



Proposed permanent routes

3.0 The Illustrative Proposals

3.7 Country Walks and connections



Illustrative cross section 6 (submitted on page 154 of the DAS)



Illustrative cross section 7 (submitted on page 156 of the DAS)



Illustrative View of the View Point F (submitted on page 152 of the DAS)

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