

WARD: Lockleaze

SITE ADDRESS: Stoke Park Park Road Stapleton Bristol

APPLICATION NO: 20/04821/X Variation/Deletion of a Condition

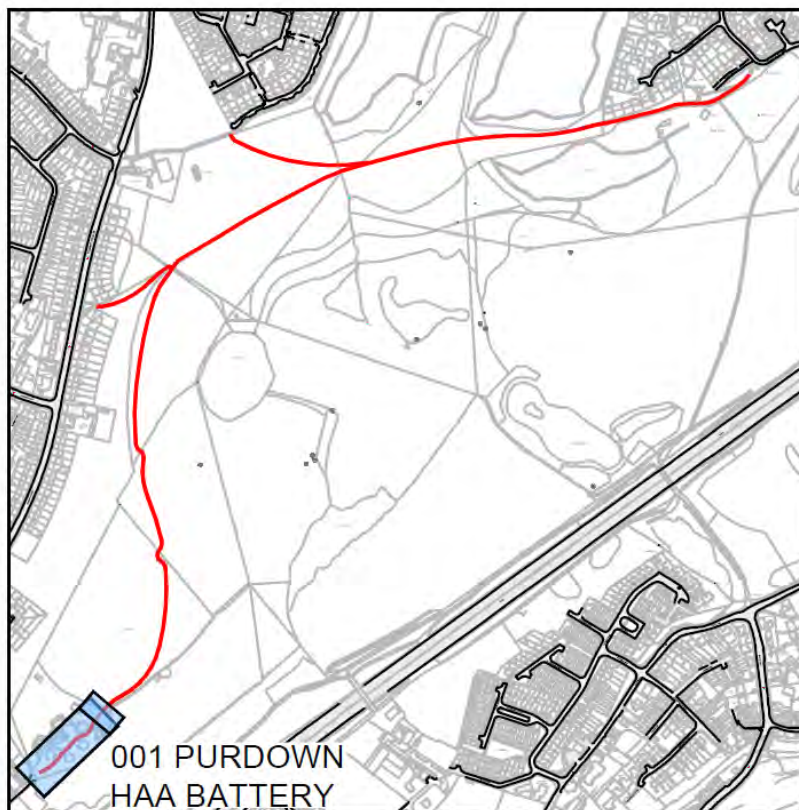
DETERMINATION DEADLINE: 26 February 2021

Application for variation of Condition Nos 8 (Materials) and 17 (list approved plans) following grant of planning permission 19/01213/FB for the proposed development of a formal access route through Stoke Park estate from Sir Johns Lane (Bristol) to Jellicoe Avenue (South Gloucestershire) including access works at Stanfield Close, Romney Avenue and Long Wood Meadows, following historic route and former carriage ride, comprising self-binding gravel surfaced path and associated works.

RECOMMENDATION: Grant subject to Condition(s)

APPLICANT: Mr Jamie Barker
Strategic Transport (Bristol
City Council)
100 Temple Street
Bristol
BS1 6AG

The following plan is for illustrative purposes only, and cannot be guaranteed to be up to date.
LOCATION PLAN:



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SUMMARY

This application seeks permission for minor material amendments to an extant planning permission for a shared use path through Stoke Park Estate, north-east Bristol. The park is a Grade II Listed Registered Historic Park and Garden and is also within the Stapleton and Frome Valley Conservation Area.

Development Control Committee B unanimously voted to give the original application permission in November 2019. This remains live and could be implemented. It is now sought to vary conditions 8 (Materials) and 17 (List of approved plans and drawings) attached to the planning permission.

This amendment is sought to use a different material to construct the path. Previously the path was proposed and given permission to be constructed with compressed, bound gravel. Now permission is sought to construct the path from natural quartzite asphalt. This follows construction issues being encountered with use of bound gravel in the context. This is as a result of the gradients present at sections on the route and the likelihood of gravel to degrade under use in such conditions. This could result in safety issues and would likely become a maintenance liability.

The application is presented for determination by Committee due to a high level of public interest in the case. A total of 89 responses were received in objection to the application and 10 responses were received in support of the application. Most common themes of objection relate to the inappropriateness of use of asphalt within the park, the impact in terms of appearance and change to the nature and character of the park. Many other issues raised are generally repetitions of objections previously cited in relation to the original proposal and overall principle of any path. These issues were dealt with when the original application was considered and are not relevant to the current application which only seeks variation of the surfacing material.

Officers have considered the proposals for revised surfacing material. It has been established that the asphalt material will result in a greater degree of harm to the historic park than the original proposal for gravel surface. The buff coloured natural quartzite product is however the most appropriate alternative to gravel. Given adequate demonstration that use of bound gravel would be unfeasible, Historic England and the Council's Conservation Officer have both offered support for the revised material. Harm resulting to the park through use of asphalt is classified at 'less than substantial' level. In accordance with national policy requirements, public benefits associated with the development have been weighed against the degree of harm posed. It is found that there is sufficient public benefit associated with improved and more equal access to the park as well as health benefits related to active travel that the degree of 'less than substantial' harm is outweighed in this instance.

In relation to other planning issues such as impact to open space, trees, nature conservation, neighbouring amenity, archaeology, highways and flood risk, the revised surface material is not significantly different to warrant an alternative conclusion regarding the acceptability of the development. The conditions attached to the original permission will be reapplied and are deemed sufficient to safeguard impact associated with the varied development also.

In light of these conclusions, subject to the conditions outlined within the report, the development is found to be in accordance with relevant national and local planning policy. There are no material considerations which would warrant the refusal of application. Consequently, it is the recommendation of officers that the application seeking variation is granted subject to conditions.

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SITE DESCRIPTION

The development site is Stoke Park estate which is an open space in north east Bristol. The park has a total area of 108 hectares (267 acres). It is bordered by Lockleaze to the west and the M32 to the east with Stapleton and Broomhill beyond. The park adjoins Purdown open space to the south. The administrative boundary with South Gloucestershire runs across the northern quarter of the park. The landscape layout at Stoke Park relates to the historic country house (Dower House or Stoke Park House, South Gloucestershire - Grade II* Listed) and was arranged between 1748 and 1766 by Thomas Wright (astronomer, mathematician, instrument maker, architect and landscape architect). The park can be entered at multiple points from various orientations however access from the east is restricted by the motorway. The estate comprises undulating topography generating interest and views. It includes three woods, (Barn Wood, Hermitage Wood, and Long Wood) which straddle the ridge to the west of the house. The woods contain a planned footpath system that provides access to woodland gardens and various historic monuments. This links to other serpentine paths which cross the open space. The open space is subject of national Listing at Grade II level for significance as a historic park and garden. The site is also within the Stapleton and Frome Valley Conservation Area. It is also a Regionally Important Geological Site, a Site of Nature Conservation Interest, a Local Historic Park and Garden as well as being designated Important Open Space. Where the park adjoins Purdown to the south at Sir Johns Lane, there is a WW2 anti-aircraft site which is a designated Scheduled Monument. Stoke Park (including land within South Gloucestershire) is owned and managed by Bristol City Council.

PLANNING HISTORY

04/03516/F and 04/03552/LA Restoration of surfacing to private access track referred to as "Carriage Drive" and "The Duchess Gate". Proposed work will be to resurface a previously existing access track
 GRANTED - 15.10.2004

19/01213/FB Proposed development of a formal access route through Stoke Park estate from Sir Johns Lane (Bristol) to Jellicoe Avenue (South Gloucestershire) including access works at Stanfield Close, Romney Avenue and Long Wood Meadows, following historic route and former carriage ride, comprising self-binding gravel surfaced path and associated works. GRANTED - 07.11.2019

APPLICATION

The current application is made under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which legislates for applications to develop land without compliance with conditions previously attached. The application specifically relates to planning permission (reference: 19/01213/FB) granted in November 2019 which permitted construction of a shared use path within Stoke Park Estate, north Bristol.

The development consented was construction of a self-bound gravel path with a total length of approximately 1.75km (1 mile). The route runs broadly north to south with a dog leg to the west. This development includes works to access points at Stanfield Close, 262-270 Romney Avenue and Longwood Meadows as well as minor alterations at Jellicoe Avenue in South Gloucestershire. The path is proposed for shared use by pedestrians and cyclists. It is intended to be multi-purpose both for use by existing park users, to facilitate and enable use by wider sections of the community as well as to provide a new active travel route between neighbourhoods.

This development was consented at Development Control Committee B on 6th November 2019. The vote to grant permission for the development was unanimous with all committee members supporting the development. The permission remains valid and can be implemented until November 2022 (subject to fulfilment of and compliance with conditions).

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The current application however now seeks to vary condition 8 (Further details: Materials) and condition 17 (List of approved plans and drawings) attached to the planning permission. The variations sought relate to the proposed method construction of the path, including the surfacing material. The path was granted permission to be constructed with a bound gravel surface however permission is now sought to construct the path with buff coloured natural quartzite asphalt surface.

This follows detailed design work on the path and subsequent liaison with a number of prospective suppliers and contractors for a bound gravel path. A number of practical issues have been identified relating to use of bound gravel construction at this location. Sections of the path were found to exceed the gradient level recommended (1:20 maximum) for use of a bound gravel surface. Use of bound gravel on sections with gradients exceed this level would likely lead to rapid degradation of the surface in these areas. Issues with pot holes and puddles are likely to emerge. Suppliers were unwilling to guarantee bound gravel for use in this context. The path would therefore become a safety and maintenance liability for the Council. Bound gravel also requires use of vibration to compress, bind and form a smooth surface. The path follows the course of the historic carriage drive which is to be retained beneath the path. Use of vibration for compaction in this context holds potential to damage the archaeological value of the historic route. The requirement for soakaway drainage may also have resulted in the land adjacent to the path becoming waterlogged resulting in further safety and maintenance issues.

As a result of these issues, a number of alternative forms of construction were considered and it was established that buff coloured asphalt represented a more appropriate alternative. This was selected on the basis it addresses all of the issues above whilst also delivering the benefits previously identified which resulted in the path being granted permission. The asphalt surface can be laid on the gradients present within the park and is guaranteed for use within such conditions. This surface will require less maintenance which means the path is safer and will last longer using less resource. It also avoids use of vibration to be laid.

The proposed asphalt surface would be a single colour (buff) for the full course of the path. There would be no differentiation of colour for the access spurs as previously consented. These would remain narrower however, 2.5m for the spurs rather than 3m as on the main course.

The application only seeks to vary the construction method, surfacing material and colour. In all other regards the path and route would remain exactly as previously deemed acceptable and granted planning permission.

It is highlighted that a concurrent application seeking permission for the same variations has been submitted to South Gloucestershire Council relating to development proposed on land within the neighbouring authority. This application was granted permission on 1st December 2020.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The proposed development is classed as 'Minor' development; therefore there is no requirement for the Applicant to demonstrate community engagement prior to submitting the application.

Nevertheless, it is understood that the applicant did undertake their own public consultation prior to submission of the original application. The current proposal is suggested to reflect results of public consultation.

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RESPONSE FROM PUBLICITY AND CONSULTATION

469 neighbouring properties were directly notified of the application for variation via neighbour notification letter. The proposed development was also advertised via site notices and a local press advert.

The original deadline for responses was 13th November 2020.

A total of 89 responses were received in objection to the application and 10 responses were received in support of the application.

A summary of the grounds of objection is as follows:

- o 3000m2 asphalt carving it's way straight across the middle of four amazing meadows and one long section immediately adjacent to ancient woodland
- o Unacceptable in a city that has declared a climate emergency
- o Lack of visual man-made infringement that helps Stoke Park to give back so much to people's wellbeing
- o This proposal especially with the asphalt surfacing will fundamentally harm enjoyment of the characteristics and appearance that make the green space so unique and important to locals
- o It will change the role of the park to one of a partial through-route for commuters, which again fundamentally harms its current value and will lead to conflict between users
- o This path is not the way to reduce travel by car or improve access to the park by families or disabled
- o Asphalt and routing straight through the middle of park are unnecessary
- o The park should not be used as mitigation for house building
- o Use of non-natural material would spoil the look of the fields
- o Asphalt will look so ugly
- o Asphalt on beautiful wild green space will be harmful and ruin wild nature of the area
- o Proposal will rob Bristolians of yet another precious, green wild space, and so adversely affect people's mental health and well-being
- o Detrimental impact on habitat for wild animals
- o Proposed change of pathway materials, away from self-binding gravel, is inappropriate for this area
- o Use of asphalt is clearly being undertaken for economic reasons however it's lifecycle embedded carbon is significantly higher than self-binding gravel
- o Path will interrupt its use as a playing field
- o Asphalt would be modern urban development in place of the original plan to use self-binding gravel as a partially natural alternative
- o Negative affect the wildlife and natural diversity of the area, but also have an adverse effect on the drainage, which must surely be unacceptable at this time of climate emergency
- o Park already has good walking routes
- o Cyclists can use surrounding routes
- o Loss of a historic natural habitat
- o Eyesore as well as destroying natural habitats
- o A path that could accommodate a buggy or wheel chair out of an environmentally friendly material would be preferable
- o It would be very slippery in icy or wet weather and would be dangerous for cyclists and walkers
- o This is totally out of character with the surroundings
- o The idea was to put Stoke Park back to its original design which wouldn't include tarmac paths
- o If the original material is now considered wrong due to technical issues, maybe the route itself and the appropriateness of it at all needs to be reconsidered, rather than forcing something inappropriate on it anyway
- o Would encourage cyclists to dangerously speed through an area which is valued for its peace,

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- o safety, tranquility and opportunity to escape the rush of the city
- o Path would be out of keeping within the beauty of the top meadows between the ancient woodland where the proposed path is planned due to natural wildness and tranquillity, providing a feeling of being in true countryside
- o A cycle route through Stoke Park, of any surface, has little time-saving benefit
- o If the approved surface has proven to be unsuitable to the chosen route why must the planning application be to alter the surface; rather, the solution should be to reconsider the route

A summary of the grounds of support is as follows:

- o The park becomes inaccessible to many due to the water logged and muddy trails and entrances for weeks at a time
- o Many people are missing out on this wonderful asset and are unable to use this greener, more pleasant, less polluted route to travel
- o Agree the proposed changes to the surface material is more suitable, will require less maintenance and so will be more cost effective
- o The revised surface material will make the park more accessible to more people, allowing the benefits to be enjoyed by all
- o Everyone should be able to visit the park, whatever the weather
- o Numerous consultations have identified the need for better access to Purdown and Stoke Park, especially for disabled access and those with limited mobility, buggies etc.
- o Not allowing all sections of society and the community suitable access to Stoke Park is discrimination
- o Self-binding gravel is dirty gets stuck in wheelchair/buggy wheels so a firmer surface is preferred with less rolling resistance and less dirt nuisance
- o Increased access to the park will help people recover from stress, mental fatigue, reduce blood pressure and improve recovery from surgery
- o Stoke Park has been very important for wellbeing during COVID-19 lockdown periods and the park should continue to be available to all
- o Surprised by existing lack of formal paths through park
- o Use of Stoke Park has significantly increased recently and there are concerns the previous gravel surface is not appropriate to withstand this volume of footfall
- o Due to topography, gravel is more likely to wear away too fast so a more robust surface is required
- o A more even surface will provide a more pleasurable visit to the park for those who struggle with mobility
- o The path will link to the existing path running past Dower House providing continuity in route
- o Needs of the many far outweigh the needs of the few
- o There would still be plenty of wilder areas of Stoke Park for people who seek this to enjoy

ELECTED MEMEBERS & AMENITY GROUP RESPONSES

Lockleaze ward **Councillors Gill Kirk and Estella Tincknell** have submitted a joint comment on the application as follows:

"Following a period of public engagement and consultation, planning permission has already been granted for this All Weather accessible path in Stoke Park, with improved disabled entrances.

We have welcomed this decision: Stoke Park has been all but impassable in winter months when the entrances and fields become waterlogged and boggy. It is really important that our local green space is inclusive to all, at all times of year, so disabled access is a serious issue that must be addressed.

Every year in the autumn my co-councillor and I receive comments from local residents by

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email and social media reporting that they are unable to access the green space, and asking us what can be done to improve things. This year in particular during lockdown the importance of access to green space and nature for wellbeing was really highlighted. So many more local people discovered and made use of Stoke park for exercise and recreations during the Covid restrictions in the spring /summer months and now the autumn/ winter is here they are finding it once again hard to access.

We understand the strength of feeling amongst those what would prefer not to have this path in Stoke Park. However this decision was made as a result of a democratic process which invited the public to make statements and speak for and against the proposal and allowed a cross party committee to weigh up these considerations.

We believe the path will improve access to open space for existing residents and new residents when new housing is built in the area. In particular it will make Stoke Park (for the first time) more welcoming and inclusive to those with disabilities, wheelchair users, people with reduced mobility, and parents with children in buggies who at present are excluded from their local green space. It will also create an active travel route for pedestrians and cyclists that will help reduce congestion on the surrounding roads and contribute to improving air quality.

Our comments refer to this specific application for a change of the path surface to be considered, which is a decision that should be made on technical and operational grounds.

We understand the background of the proposals to change the surface from self binding gravel to natural quartzite SMA surfacing due to the technical disadvantages of self binding gravel on slopes and in terms of ongoing maintenance.

We recognise that this proposal to change the surface material has taken place in consultation with Historic England, the Conservation Officer and Bristol and West Archaeology. The SMA surface was the preferred option of 2/3 of respondents in the original consultation and the colour has been selected by Historic England as being most in keeping with the surrounding landscape. It also matches better with the existing all weather path, and the 2 spurs will no longer need to be differentiated by colour. There are advantages to the SMA surface, including its being safer on slopes, more sustainable, with less maintenance needed and it has better drainage properties which will mean less damage to the park environment.

There were technical drawbacks to the self binding gravel surface in terms of potential rutting, pooling and lower friction which would be harder to use for wheelchair users and cyclists. The evidence provided shows that changing to SMA would create a better surface for wheelchairs buggies and cyclists and would not increase the impact on the natural environment. In certain ways it appears that environmental impact would be reduced in terms of ongoing maintenance and drainage issues.

We note that the SMA surface is considered a better way to protect the underground archaeology of the carriage drive and will enable the adoption and preservation of significant parts of this historic carriageway. It appears to be the best option given the technical constraints, to create a sustainable high quality all weather accessible and active travel route, whilst preserving the heritage value of Stoke Park. We support this proposal".

INTERNAL & EXTERNAL CONSULTEES

Historic England:

"We confirm that, following our original consultation response to the planning application (19/01213/FB, response date 18/04/19) we have had further, detailed discussions with Bristol City Council (BCC) in June 2020 regarding their proposed change in surface treatment to the all-weather,

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accessible path.

Historic England had originally accepted a self-binding gravel surface as it reflected the proposals within BCC's Stoke Park Conservation Management Plan (2016). One of the key objectives of the Plan has been to restore and reinstate safe and accessible circuit routes for public use. Wherever possible, these are to be aligned on original historical routes. The all-weather, accessible path is to follow the original carriage drive alignment along Purdown Ridge.

BCC subsequently advised us that the proposal to use self-binding gravel presented a number of practical constraints that were difficult to overcome, and that an alternative material had needed to be sought. Hence, the proposal for natural gravel coloured stone mastic asphalt (SMA).

We requested further detail to justify the change, including a detailed explanation of the constraints the site specifically posed for using self-binding gravel. The constraints primarily related to site topography, drainage, underlying archaeology, and long-term maintenance.

BCC provided a discussion paper setting out their justifications, supported by detailed design drawings and a physical sample of the proposed SMA product. Following review of the additional information, and the discussions held in June, we were able to establish a better understanding of the issues and subsequent changes.

Our preferred option out of the SMA products that had been put forward by BCC was a Natural Gravel SMA, which we considered had the closest appearance to a selfbinding gravel. However, BCC advised that it did not have a durable enough specification, ie, be able to take occasional maintenance vehicle traffic in addition to pedestrians and cycles. Therefore, the Natural Quartzite product was identified as a compromise between a pure natural gravel appearance and the more uniform buff coloured SMA products available.

We subsequently advised BCC that based on the additional information provided we accepted the change from self-binding gravel to the SMA surface, and we would not have an objection to this being submitted as a planning amendment.

Regarding the proposed new spurs to the footpath, in our planning consultation response of 18/04/19 we considered that in addition to their width being differentiated from the carriage drive, their surface treatment should also be different.

However, given the limited suitable colours available in the SMA product line, and to avoid using the more uniform buff colours, we agree to the use of the Natural Quartzite SMA for these as well. As a small detail, in order to delineate the carriage drive at the junctions with the spurs, we would recommend continuing a flush edge through between the two".

Recommendation

Historic England has no objection to the application on heritage grounds

Avon Gardens Trust:

"Thank you for consulting The Gardens Trust [GT] in its role as Statutory Consultee with regard to the proposed development affecting a site that falls within the boundary of the designated area of a Registered Historic Park and Garden, which is identified on the national register as Grade II. The Avon Gardens Trust is a member organisation of the GT and works in partnership with it in respect of the protection and conservation of registered sites, and is authorised by the GT to respond on GT's behalf in respect of such consultations.

Avon Gardens Trust have considered the information provided in this application and consider that the proposed line of the cycle route should follow the original C18th. carriage drive. To insert straight lines into a naturalistic Arcadian landscape would visually harm the park laid out by Thomas Wright

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between 1748 and 1766, around a country house. This route is key as a linear feature, boundary drive lost since 1768. Reference to Fig.36 of the Conservation Management Plan produced by Nicholas Pearson Partnership LLP.

Additionally, the intrusion of a 3.0m wide cycle path into Barn Wood, with associated work, [some tree clearance, local grading /verge reinstatement either side of the path and disruption to this small area of woodland] seems unnecessary. We would suggest that it could be omitted altogether.

Regarding the surface material; we would prefer the self - binding gravel solution, as proposed in the CMP, but we recognise that it would require more maintenance than the bound gravel over tarmac sub-base, particularly as the gradients will accelerate wear and tear. Whilst Natural Quartzite SMA is successfully used in many historic locations, it does require a formal edge treatment [precast concrete edging] and can therefore appear alien in a parkland setting - particularly if the route planning does not follow the historic route. Any unnatural routes and unsympathetic materials will immediately jar within the exposed, undulating landscape setting.

With reference to the NPPF policy on conserving and enhancing the historic environment, Avon Gardens Trust have considered the impact of the proposal on the significance of the grade II registered park and garden. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset, from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting, should require clear and convincing justification. Avon Gardens Trust supported the original application, 19/01213/FB, in March 2019, but are unable to support this application which seeks to straighten parts of the original historic carriageway, and to re-surface a very prominent and authentic C18th. driveway with a substance less sympathetic to its surroundings and long distance views. Harm will be done to the registered park and garden, which will outweigh any public benefit.

Therefore, Avon Gardens Trust objects to this current proposal".

Conservation Advisory Panel:

"It is noted that The Gardens Trust has objected to this proposal. The proposed route of the cycleway doesn't follow the original line of the carriageway, which followed the contours of the land. The Panel queried the need to use a resin bound gravel surface as this was not considered to be in keeping with the Historic Park. The originally approved binding gravel would be a more appropriate solution".

Conservation Officer, City Design Group, Bristol City Council:

"I have no objections to the proposed changes. As far as I can tell the proposed path follows the consented route closely, and the changes are in the surface. There would be a degree of impact from the changes proposed, but these appear to be justifiable for any additional visual harm they pose, and there is an acceptable degree of public benefit to offset harm".

OFFICER RESPONSE TO PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The content of all public consultation responses is noted and acknowledged. It is highlighted that a high number of objections submitted followed an identical copied and pasted wording. This statement accounted for 40 of the objections submitted.

Many comments also focus on the principle acceptability of a path within the park at all however it highlighted that this has already been established by the extant planning permission. The current application must be assessed on the basis of the variations for which permission is now sought beyond the existing consent.

The consultation response from Avon Gardens Trust and the Conservation Advisory Panel notably include references to the path following a different route to that previously consented. However, this is

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not the case and it appears these groups have misinterpreted the proposals. The route of the path would be the same as previously consented. The only difference relates to the method of construction, surface material and colour. Assessment of relevant planning issues which result from these differences will continue beneath.

RELEVANT POLICIES

Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990
 National Planning Policy Framework – February 2019
 Bristol Local Plan comprising Core Strategy (Adopted June 2011), Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (Adopted July 2014) and (as appropriate) the Bristol Central Area Plan (Adopted March 2015) and (as appropriate) the Old Market Quarter Neighbourhood Development Plan 2016 and Lawrence Weston Neighbourhood Development Plan 2017 and the Hengrove and Whitchurch Park Neighbourhood Development Plan 2019.
 PAN 2 Conservation Area Enhancement Statements (November 1993).

In determining this application, the Local Planning Authority has had regard to all relevant policies of the Bristol Local Plan and relevant guidance.

ASSESSMENT

The current application seeks variation of conditions attached to the extant planning permission for construction of a shared use path through Stoke Park estate. The application only seeks to vary the construction method, surfacing material and colour. In all other regards the path and route would remain exactly as previously deemed acceptable and granted planning permission. Issues relating to the development of open space, impact to trees and green infrastructure, neighbouring amenity and crime prevention would remain materially no different to previously assessed. The assessment presented within the original committee report submitted to Development Control Committee B - 6th November 2019 remains relevant and should be referred to in relation to these issues. This is available online at the following link. Relevant planning issues relating to the impact of the material changes for which variation is now sought will be discussed in turn beneath.

APPEARANCE, CHARACTER & HERITAGE ASSETS

The Authority is required (under Sections 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990) to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area as well as the setting and significance of Listed buildings or structures. The case of *R (Forge Field Society) v Sevenoaks DC* [2014] EWHC 1895 (Admin) ("*Forge Field*") has made it clear where there is harm to a listed building or a conservation area the decision maker "must give that harm considerable importance and weight".

Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places) of the NPPF outlines that "The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities". Planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and

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landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

Section 12 of the NPPF also states that "Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents".

Section 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) of the NPPF outlines that heritage assets "are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

Paragraph 189 of the NPPF states that "In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary".

Paragraph 195 of the NPPF states that "Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

Paragraph 196 of the NPPF states that "Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use".

Policy BCS21 (Quality Urban Design) of the Core Strategy advocates that new development should deliver high quality urban design that contributes positively to an area's character and identity, whilst

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safeguarding the amenity of existing development.

Policy BCS22 (Conservation and the Historic Environment) of the Core Strategy states that new development will safeguard or enhance heritage assets and the character and setting of areas of acknowledged importance including:

- o Scheduled ancient monuments;
- o Historic buildings both nationally and locally listed;
- o Historic parks and gardens both nationally and locally listed;
- o Conservation areas;
- o Archaeological remains

Policy DM26 (Local Character & Distinctiveness) of the Site Allocations & Development Management Policies (SADMP) Local Plan outlines that all development is expected to contribute positively to an area's character and identity. The policy builds on policy BCS21 (above) by stipulating the characteristics which development should seek to respond to. General principles include:

- i. Responding appropriately to and incorporating existing land forms, green infrastructure assets and historic assets and features; and
- ii. Respecting, building upon or restoring the local pattern and grain of development, including the historical development of the area; and
- iii. Responding appropriately to local patterns of movement and the scale, character and function of streets and public spaces; and
- iv. Retaining, enhancing and creating important views into, out of and through the site; and
- v. Making appropriate use of landmarks and focal features, and preserving or enhancing the setting of existing landmarks and focal features; and
- vi. Responding appropriately to the height, scale, massing, shape, form and proportion of existing buildings, building lines and set-backs from the street, skylines and roofscapes; and
- vii. Reflecting locally characteristic architectural styles, rhythms, patterns, features and themes taking account of their scale and proportion; and
- viii. Reflecting the predominant materials, colours, textures, landscape treatments and boundary treatments in the area.

The policy states that "development will not be permitted where it would be harmful to local character and distinctiveness or where it would fail to take the opportunities available to improve the character and quality of the area and the way it functions."

Policy DM27 (Layout and Form) of the SADMP outlines that the layout, form, pattern and arrangement of streets, open spaces, development blocks, buildings and landscapes should contribute to the creation of quality urban design and healthy, safe and sustainable places. It should make efficient use of land, provide inclusive access and take account of local climatic conditions.

Policy DM28 (Public Realm) of the SADMP outlines that development should create or contribute to a safe, attractive, high quality, inclusive and legible public realm that contributes positively to local character and identity and encourages appropriate levels of activity and social interaction.

Policy DM31 (Heritage Assets) of the SADMP outlines that where development has an impact upon a heritage asset, it will be expected to conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the asset or its

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setting.

With regards to Registered Historic Parks and Gardens, Policy DM31 states:

"Development will be expected to have no adverse impact on the design, character, appearance or settings of registered historic parks and gardens and to safeguard those features which form an integral part of their character and appearance".

In this case, Stoke Park is listed by Historic England on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England (List Entry Number: 1000129) at Grade II level and therefore the park is of national importance. This designation covers the whole park area, except the southern end of Purdown, either side of Sir John's Lane. The parts of the park located in Bristol (including Purdown) also falls within the Stapleton & Frome Valley Conservation Area however this status ends at the boundary with South Gloucestershire. Both the park landscape itself and the wider conservation area represent designated heritage assets.

The listing entry which describes the historic significance of the park reads as follows:

"Stoke Park occupies a wedge of open land extending from 2km to 5km north-east of the centre of Bristol. The 140ha park occupies the scarped and indented eastern flank of Purdown, a ridge of lias limestone rising to c 90m above sea level and commanding wide views over Kingswood, Bristol and the valley of the River Frome. The park retains its open character but is now surrounded on all sides by housing and other development and is divided by the M32 motorway. The park is bounded to the north by fences and a stone wall from a cycle track which marks the southern boundary of the grounds of the University of the West of England. The west boundary is formed by the back gardens of houses on Romney Avenue, the south-west boundary by public open space and the boundary wall of Heath House, and the south-east boundary by the M32 motorway and Frenchay Park Road. The southern end of the east boundary is formed by Stoke Lane which becomes Coldharbour Lane to the north. The former hospital site to the north-east which has been developed for housing is excluded from the site here registered. Although missing some key landscape features and compromised by its poor condition and the intrusion of the motorway, Stoke Park is of considerable interest as the best documented and most complete surviving landscape design by Thomas Wright."

"Two serpentine drives were laid out between 1725 and 1768, approaching from Bristol to the south-west and from Stapleton to the south. The first is an extension of a public footpath, formerly a drive, called Sir John's Lane which runs along the top of the Purdown Ridge, entering Stoke Park c 25m west of Purdown Camp (scheduled ancient monument) which was used as an anti-aircraft gun site (1940). The drive provides a variety of extensive views over the park and the surrounding countryside to the east and glimpsed views of the House to the north-east. It passes through the remains of Purdown Camp and, after c 400m, curves to the north, west of Pale Plantation, and follows a mid C20 fence line to a mid C20 gateway where it turns north-east through parkland on the top of the ridge, then east between Hermitage Wood to the north and Barn Wood to the south, before turning south to meet the north drive c 100m north of the House."

The Stapleton & Frome Valley Conservation Area Enhancement Statement states in relation to Stoke Park:

"The plateau providing the historic site of Stapleton Village ends at the M32 motorway where the land rises steeply again to form the estate of Stoke Park, a Grade II site (in the register of Gardens and Grounds of Special Historic Interest) , which provides setting for the Dower House, (a Grade II* Listed Building)".

The significance and consequent inclusion within the conservation area largely relates to the landscape quality and the same characteristics which warranted listing as a Historic Park and Garden.

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In terms of Enhancement Objectives for the conservation area, the Enhancement Statement outlines the following:

"An environmental traffic management scheme, including provision for cyclists needs to be considered for Stapleton Village in conjunction with the Highway Authority. This should address the issues of through traffic, parking and the needs of the residents and shoppers within the area".

"That part of the Conservation Area presently comprising the Stoke Park, and Purdown Hospital Estates and adjoining Bristol City Council owned recreation grounds and playing fields, and Bridge Farm represents an open landscape and is essential to the character of the Conservation Area and provides a green gateway into the city. Development altering this character will not normally be permitted".

"The sub division of large garden plots is a particular problem in the area and will not normally be permitted".

"'Stoke Park, Purdown Enhancement and Preservation Policy 1990', will apply to development and land in the Conservation Area north of Frenchay Park Road, the Stoke Park and Purdown Hospital Estates, and the recreation grounds and playing fields adjacent to Lockleaze; including Bridge Farm".

It is highlighted that 'Stoke Park, Purdown Enhancement and Preservation Policy 1990' has now been superseded by national and local planning policy which is included at the beginning of this section.

The route, size and layout of the proposed path would all remain as previously granted permission in November 2019. This is designed to follow the course of the historic carriage drive through the estate reflecting Thomas Wright's original 18th Century layout. A route following this course is evidenced on historic city plans (earliest being the 1840 Tithe plan) as well as on the ground today. This justification was supported by Historic England, Avon Gardens Trust, Conservation Advisory Panel and officers when originally granting permission for the path in November 2019.

It is now proposed to revise the method of construction, surfacing material and colour of the path. The impact of this variation would predominantly relate to the visual change in surface material. This would be the difference between a bound gravel surfaced path and an asphalt surfaced path.

The applicant has provided detailed information at Appendix 2 of the Heritage, Design and Access Addendum prepared in support of the application offering background as to why bound gravel could not be used on each section of the route. They also outline the likely implications if gravel was used. It is accepted that in accessibility and maintenance terms, these issues eliminate many of the benefits associated with the proposal. Whilst it is unfortunate these issues only came to light following permission being granted for the original design, it is accepted that sufficient justification has been provided for seeking an alternative material. The application is assessed predominantly on the basis of the difference in terms of impact between bound gravel and asphalt as surfacing materials.

The proposed use of a hard bound stone surface such as asphalt will recognisably be less in keeping with the historic and natural character of the parkland setting. Asphalt has a greater manmade presence in comparison to bound gravel. Although the proposed asphalt surface will include quartzite which is a natural stone, its processing achieves a more solid surface finish. This will appear more defined and substantive in comparison to a bound gravel surface. It is these exact characteristics for which asphalt has been selected but conversely the material will appear more urban and moderately more out of keeping within the setting.

However it is noted that there are currently asphalt surfaced routes within the park. The route running from Frenchay Park Road to Jellicoe Avenue past Dower House is surfaced with a similar material. Sir Johns Lane at the southern end of the open space also includes a hard surfaced access which runs into the historic park. The proposed path would effectively connect these two existing hard surfaced

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routes. There are many asphalt or tarmac routes within the overall conservation area. The use of asphalt is not without precedent within the registered park or the conservation area. In comparison to other registered parks within the city, Stoke Park estate includes significantly less hard surfaced area. Oldbury Court Estate, Ashton Court, Blaise Castle and Arnos Vale all include a number of hard surfaced paths and routes. The later three are registered parks listed at a higher Grade II* level.

The proposed asphalt will be a light coloured product including natural quartzite. Within a range of formal hard surfacing materials, the proposed natural quartzite product is at the more sensitive end. It will appear significantly different both in colour and texture to traditional tarmac or concrete. The buff colour will include similarities to limestone. The texture provided by stone will offer a more natural appearance. The appearance will not be that of a typical tarmacked road.

It is noted that Historic England has been consulted on the application for variation. Subject to use of the natural quartzite product the body were willing to support this amendment. This followed provision of sufficient justification confirming the change is necessary. There is also no objection raised to use of a single colour for the access spurs. This is due to the limited suitable colours available in this product.

The Council's own Conservation Officer has also reviewed the proposals. Whilst recognising an increased degree of impact from the changes proposed, it was noted that this was justified. It was confirmed that there is an acceptable degree of public benefit resulting from the path to offset the additional visual harm.

It is noted that Avon Gardens Trust and the Conservation Advisory Panel raised objections to the application for variation. This appears to have been based on the understanding that the course of the path was also being varied however this is not the case. The consultees appear to have misinterpreted the extent of variations sought. It is noted that both supported the original application.

Paragraph 196 of the NPPF states that "Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use".

There are two major relevant heritage assets in this instance. These are the Stoke Park Estate as a Grade II Registered Park and Garden and also the Stapleton and Frome Valley Conservation Area. Whilst Stoke Park is an important component, the conservation area relates to a wide geographic area and in this case the proposed development by virtue of its scale and position would have a very low degree of impact to the conservation area on the whole. The impact of the difference between the surfacing material to the significance of the overall conservation area would be very low. The Local Planning Authority finds that the degree of harm posed to the conservation area as a heritage asset is negligible.

With regards to impact to the park a grade II listed Registered Park and Garden, it is recognised that the proposed hard surfaced asphalt path will cause a greater level of harm to the park than the previous gravel version. This is on the basis of the more formal nature of the hard surface which is recognisably more substantive and less natural in appearance than gravel. It is noted that the previous proposals for gravel path were found to result in 'less than substantial' harm to the Registered Park and Garden. The revised hard surfaced path will also rank as 'less than substantial' harm to the Registered Park and Garden, albeit at a higher degree than the original proposals. The public benefits associated with the development must therefore be weighed against the harm posed in accordance with paragraph 196 of the NPPF.

It is generally accepted by the Local Planning Authority that the path will represent an enhancement to usability and functionality of the park as a destination for outdoor leisure and recreation. The public as a whole will benefit from enhanced access and particularly greater equality regarding the range of

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people and times of year when users can access the park. Whilst difficult to measure, there will be public health benefits which can be associated with a greater range of people being able to access the park more frequently. Similarly, if the route is used as a quieter alternative commuter route which encourages active travel, this holds further public health benefit, may reduce congestion and reduce carbon emissions. There is also a low degree of public benefit associated with the enhanced appearance and drainage which the path will offer over current conditions. The proposals also include additional works such as revised access control at the site entrances and new park furniture which will represent an enhancement on existing conditions.

On weighing the degree of harm which will result to the open space as a heritage asset against the aforementioned public benefits, it is found that there is sufficient public benefit resulting from development in this instance to warrant the proposals acceptable in policy terms. As such, the degree of public benefit resulting from the proposed development is sufficient to offset a moderate degree of harm caused to the open space as a heritage asset. The development therefore passes the test as set out at paragraph 196 of the NPPF.

To conclude, whilst the variation would result in a greater level of harm than the original proposals, there is sufficient public benefit associated with the development to outweigh this harm. The proposals are found in accordance with the intentions of national and local planning policy in this regard and are consequently acceptable.

NATURE CONSERVATION

Paragraph 175 of the NPPF states: "When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- a) if significant harm to biodiversity 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;
- b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
- d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.

Paragraph 177 of the NPPF states: "The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site".

Policy BCS9 of the Core Strategy states: "The integrity and connectivity of the strategic green infrastructure network will be maintained, protected and enhanced. Opportunities to extend the coverage and connectivity of the existing strategic green infrastructure network should be taken.

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Individual green assets should be retained wherever possible and integrated into new development. Loss of green infrastructure will only be acceptable where it is allowed for as part of an adopted Development Plan Document or is necessary, on balance, to achieve the policy aims of the Core Strategy. Appropriate mitigation of the lost green infrastructure assets will be required.

Development should incorporate new and/or enhanced green infrastructure of an appropriate type, standard and size. Where on-site provision of green infrastructure is not possible, contributions will be sought to make appropriate provision for green infrastructure off site".

In relation to Biological Conservation the policy states: "Internationally important nature conservation sites are subject to statutory protection.

National and local sites of biological and geological conservation importance will be protected having regard to the hierarchy of designations and the potential for appropriate mitigation. The extent to which a development would contribute to the achievement of wider objectives of the Core Strategy will be carefully considered when assessing their impact on biological and geological conservation.

Where development would have an impact on the Bristol Wildlife Network it should ensure that the integrity of the network is maintained or strengthened".

Policy DM19 of the SADMP states: "Development which would be likely to have any impact upon habitat, species or features, which contribute to nature conservation in Bristol will be expected to:

- i. Be informed by an appropriate survey and assessment of impacts; and
- ii. Be designed and sited, in so far as practicably and viably possible, to avoid any harm to identified habitats, species and features of importance; and
- iii. Take opportunities to connect any identified on-site habitats, species or features to nearby corridors in the Wildlife Network.

Where loss of nature conservation value would arise development will be expected to provide mitigation on-site and where this is not possible provide mitigation off-site.

Development on or adjacent to sites of nature conservation value will be expected to enhance the site's nature conservation value through the design and placement of any green infrastructure provided".

In relation to Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI), the policy states: "Development which would have a harmful impact on the nature conservation value of a Site of Nature Conservation Interest will not be permitted".

Stoke Park Estate is a designated Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) and is also locally designated as a wildlife corridor forming part of the wider Bristol Wildlife Network. The primary impact of development to wildlife, ecology and biodiversity will be through loss of a low degree of habitat including grass and trees. Given that the scale of the path will remain as previously consented, there will be no further loss of habitat. Replacement tree planting remains as per the original consent. Therefore the impact to ecology will be directly comparable to the previous proposals. The inclusion of an asphalt surface would not result in any further detriment to nature or ecology than the previous proposals which were found acceptable in this regard. Given the absence of lighting and limited width of the path, impacts on the Wildlife Corridor site will be limited. As such, there will be no significant impact to the capacity and function of the park as a Wildlife Corridor.

The same conditions relating to nature conservation as attached to the original permission would be applied to the varied permission. These would be sufficient to safeguard nature and ecology with

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regard to the Site of Nature Conservation Importance. Submission of a 'Precautionary Method of Working' (PMW) with respect to vegetation and site clearance and the potential presence of nesting birds and any other legally protected and priority species to include badgers and hedgehogs will be required prior to commencement of any development. The PMW shall include measures to protect badgers during construction to prevent them from becoming trapped in excavations or open pipework. This document will need to be agreed by the Local Planning Authority and adhered to throughout construction. Bird and bat boxes will also be required to be installed at various locations along the course of the path to provide further habitat for wildlife.

Subject to these measures, the varied development would avoid harmfully impacting upon habitat, species or features, which contribute to nature conservation in Bristol. The development is therefore found to accord with the objectives of national and local planning policy and resultantly the development is acceptable in this regard.

ARCHAEOLOGY

Policy DM31 (Heritage Assets) of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Local Plan states that: "Development that has an impact upon a heritage asset will be expected to conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the asset or its setting".

In relation to archaeology, the policy states: "Scheduled monuments and other non-designated archaeological sites of equivalent importance should be preserved in situ. In those cases where this is not justifiable or feasible, provision should be made for excavation and record with an appropriate assessment and evaluation. The appropriate publication/curation of findings will be expected".

The wartime battery structures on Purdown have been scheduled under the monument name: Second World War heavy anti-aircraft battery 590m north east of Highwood House, Pur Down, Bristol (List Entry Number: 1004531). As a scheduled monument, the structures have been identified as a nationally important archaeological site and are legally protected against damage or destruction. Any works to or around the ruined structures require scheduled monument consent from Historic England. The applicant will be advised to determine whether such consent is required and seek this as necessary from Historic England. This process is however separate to the planning process but will ensure the scheduled monument is preserved.

Bristol City Council Archaeological Officer has been consulted on the application seeking variation. They have confirmed that the remains of the former carriage drive will be effectively preserved beneath the resurfaced path. The asphalt surface will offer greater protection to the historic carriage drive than the previously proposed gravel surface. The construction is also less intensive to the remains of the carriage drive as no use of major vibration or compression is required.

The submitted statement suggests that an intermittent watching brief will be required to ensure that harm to the asset is kept to a minimum and recording can take place where required. This watching brief will be secured through relevant conditions similar to those attached to the original consent. Subject to these measures, the development would accord with the requirements of policy in relation to archaeology and no detriment shall result.

TRANSPORT, HIGHWAYS & ACCESS

Section 9 (Promoting Sustainable Transport) of the NPPF outlines that significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.

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In relation to sustainable transport, the NPPF states that development should:

- a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second - so far as possible - to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;
- b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;
- c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive - which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;
- d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and
- e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.

Policy BCS10 (Transport & Access Improvements) of the Core Strategy states that development proposals should be located where sustainable travel patterns can be achieved, with more intensive, higher density mixed use development at accessible centres and along or close to main public transport routes. Proposals should minimise the need to travel, especially by private car, and maximise opportunities for the use of walking, cycling and public transport.

Developments should be designed and located to ensure the provision of safe streets and reduce as far as possible the negative impacts of vehicles such as excessive volumes, fumes and noise. Proposals should create places and streets where traffic and other activities are integrated and where buildings, spaces and the needs of people shape the area.

The following hierarchy for transport user priorities is set out:

- a) The pedestrian;
- b) The cyclist;
- c) Public transport;
- d) Access for commercial vehicles;
- e) Short stay visitors by car;
- f) The private car.

Policy DM23 (Transport Development Management) of the SADMP outlines that new development should not give rise to unacceptable traffic conditions and will be expected to provide safe access to the highway network. The policy also outlines that new development should be accessible by sustainable transport methods such as walking, cycling and public transport.

The path is proposed primarily as a transport and connectivity improvement project which also holds benefits in terms of park access enhancement. The path will provide a more direct route between the neighbourhoods of Lockleaze, Stapleton and Fishponds as well as the university campuses at Frenchay and Glenside. It is also noted that the path provides a longer route away from roads and segregated from motor vehicles, extending significantly further south than existing segregated foot and cycle paths. As such, it offers safety and user experience improvements over existing routes which may encourage more people to opt to walk or cycle. As a shared use foot and cycle path, the proposal fundamentally complies with the intentions of both national and local planning policy which strongly support development which encourages walking and cycling as active and low carbon transport modes.

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The benefits cited above were accepted and supported in granting permission for the original proposal. These benefits will be retained and enhanced through use of a more efficient and effective surfacing material which will be more resilient and require less maintenance. The use of a hard surface which will avoid easily degrading offers highway safety benefits in comparison to the original proposals.

The revised asphalt surface may feasibly allow cyclists to achieve higher speeds on the path in comparison to bound gravel due to slightly lower rolling resistance and improved traction. The route will remain predominantly through open parkland where there is very good visibility. Users will have a good view of oncoming traffic and be able to pass safely. If there was a scenario where there was a sudden, unexpected last minute movement by either a pedestrian, dog or cyclist, it is noted that the side of the path will be level and entirely open. This will allow for an area of run off or refuge should there be a need to avoid a collision. This would be unusual under normal conditions however. The 3m wide path will provide sufficient area for multiple pedestrians and cyclists to pass without issue. There will be warning signs at the beginning of the route alerting users to the fact the path are shared use. These will be conditioned as they were within the original permission. Users will need to follow Highway Code and utilise a degree of common courtesy but this is the responsibility of respective users and the refusal of planning permission is not warranted on this basis.

In transport and highways terms, the proposed revision to the surface will lead to a more accessible proposal and eliminate maintenance liabilities. These ensure that benefits associated with the development are delivered. The proposed use of hard surface will not cause any highways or movement issues. The variation is therefore found to accord with the requirements of local and national planning policy. All highways conditions which were associated with the original permission remain relevant and will be applied again.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY

Some new developments granted planning permission will be liable to pay Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to Bristol City Council.

CIL is payable where development comprises 100m² or more of new build floorspace or results in the creation of one or more dwellings.

The proposed development does not qualify to pay CIL.

CONCLUSION

The proposed variation involving revision of the bound gravel path with natural quartzite asphalt is not found to cause any additional significant conflict with planning policy. The revised material will result in a moderate increase to the level of harm which the path causes to the registered park. There is found to be sufficient public benefit associated with the development to outweigh the harm posed to the park as a heritage asset. The use of an appropriate and hardwearing surface will ensure all benefits attributed to the proposal are achieved. Subject to safeguarding conditions as applied to the original consent, the proposed development would avoid detrimental impact to ecology, biodiversity, trees, green infrastructure, neighbouring amenity and living conditions, public safety and flood risk. The revised development would therefore still accord with relevant national and local planning policy. There are no material considerations which would warrant the refusal of the application seeking variation. It is therefore the recommendation of officers that the application is granted subject to conditions beneath.

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EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT

During the determination of this application due regard has been given to the impact of this scheme in relation to the Equalities Act 2010 in terms of its impact upon key equalities protected characteristics. These characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation with relevant groups) that different groups have or would have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation this particular proposed development. Overall, it is considered that this application would not have any significant adverse impact upon different groups or implications for the Equalities Act 2010.

RECOMMENDED GRANT subject to condition(s)

Time limit for commencement of development

1. Time Limit

The development hereby subject of variation of conditions shall begin before the expiration of three years from the date of the original permission (7th November 2019).

Reason: As required by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Pre commencement condition(s)

2. Approval of Highway Works Necessary

Prior to the commencement of development, general arrangement plan(s) indicating the following works to the public highway shall be submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:

- o Upgrading of footpaths between 270 and 262 Romney Avenue

These works shall be completed prior to first use of the path hereby approved and to the satisfaction of the Local Highway Authority.

Reason: In the interests of public safety and to ensure that all road works associated with the proposed development are planned and approved in good time to include any statutory processes, are undertaken to a standard approved by the Local Planning Authority and are completed before occupation.

3. Construction Management Plan

No development shall take place including any works of demolition (with the exception of erection of the single storey environmental classroom and enabling works) until a construction management plan or construction method statement has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved plan/statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The statement shall provide for:

- o Parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors
- o Routes for construction traffic
- o Method of preventing mud being carried onto the highway
- o Pedestrian and cyclist protection
- o Proposed temporary traffic arrangements including hoardings and/or footway closures

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- o Arrangements for turning vehicles
- o Arrangements to receive abnormal loads or unusually large vehicles
- o How the delivery of construction materials and the collection of waste will be managed
- o Where construction materials and waste will be stored
- o Methods of communicating the Construction Management Plan to staff, visitors and neighbouring residents and businesses

Reason: In the interests of safe operation of the highway in the lead into development both during the demolition and construction phase of the development.

4. Vegetation Clearance

No clearance of vegetation or structures suitable for nesting birds, shall take place between 1st March and 30th September inclusive in any year without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority. If clearance is proposed to take place within this period, the Local Planning Authority will require evidence provided by a suitably qualified ecologist that no breeding birds would be adversely affected including by disturbance, before giving its prior written approval. Where checks for nesting birds by a qualified ecological consultant are required they shall be undertaken no more than 48 hours prior to the removal of vegetation or the demolition of, or works to buildings. Any clearance agreed by the Local Planning Authority must then be undertaken in accordance with the recommendations of the project ecologist.

Reason: To ensure that wild birds, building or using their nests are protected.

5. Precautionary Method of Working

Prior to the commencement of development hereby approved, including all site clearance and vegetation removal, a method statement for a Precautionary Method of Working (PMW) with respect to vegetation and site clearance and the potential presence of nesting birds and any other legally protected and priority species including badgers and hedgehogs shall be prepared by a suitably qualified ecological consultant and submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The PMW shall include measures to protect badgers during construction to prevent them from becoming trapped in excavations or open pipework. Open pipework larger than 150 mm outside diameter shall be blanked off at the end of each working day. The development shall be carried out in full accordance with the approved method statement unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the protection of legally protected and priority (Section 41) species which are a material planning consideration.

6. To ensure implementation of a programme of archaeological works

No development shall take place within the area indicated on plan number P1104 REV A and P1102 REV D; until the applicant/developer has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work, in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been submitted by the developer and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The scheme of investigation shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and:

1. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording
2. The programme for post investigation assessment
3. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording
4. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation

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5. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation
6. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation.

Reason: To ensure that archaeological remains and features are recorded prior to their destruction.

7. Protection of Retained Trees During the Construction Period

No work of any kind shall take place on the site until the protective fence(s) has (have) been erected around the retained trees; in the position and to the specification shown on Drawing Nos. TPP-1 (B), TPP-2 (B), TPP-3 (B), TPP-4 (B), TPP-5 (B), TPP-6 (B), TPP-7 (B) and TPP-8 (B);. The Local Planning Authority shall be given not less than two weeks prior written notice by the developer of the commencement of works on the site in order that the Local Planning Authority may verify in writing that the approved tree protection measures are in place when the work commences. The approved fence(s) shall be in place before any equipment, machinery or materials are brought on to the site for the purposes of the development and shall be maintained until all equipment, machinery and surplus materials have been removed from the site. Within the fenced area(s) there shall be no scaffolding, no stockpiling of any materials or soil, no machinery or other equipment parked or operated, no traffic over the root system, no changes to the soil level, no excavation of trenches, no site huts, no fires lit, no dumping of toxic chemicals and no retained trees shall be used for winching purposes. If any retained tree is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies, another tree shall be planted at the same place and that tree shall be of such size and species, and shall be planted at such time, as may be specified in writing by the council.

Reason: To protect the retained trees from damage during construction, including all ground works and works that may be required by other conditions, and in recognition of the contribution which the retained tree(s) give(s) and will continue to give to the amenity of the area.

Pre occupation condition(s)

8. Further details: Materials

A detailed manufacturer's or product specification and sample of the proposed natural quartzite buff ulticolour treatment stone mastic asphalt (SMA) surface(s) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the relevant parts of the work are commenced or items installed.

The development shall be completed in accordance with the approved details prior to first use of the path, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order that the appearance of the path is of a high quality and would be appropriate to the setting within conservation area and registered historic park and garden.

9. Further details: Signage

Prior to installation of signage hereby permitted, full details of all proposed signage demonstrating scale, materials and appearance shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The agreed signage shall then be installed prior to first use of the path unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Installation of any

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future signage on the route of the path shall not be undertaken without the prior agreement in writing of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To safeguard the appearance, character and historic significance of the park and surrounding conservation area.

10. Bird and Bat Boxes

Prior to first use of the path hereby approved details provided by a qualified ecological consultant shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority providing the specification, orientation, height and location for bird nesting and bat roosting opportunities and shown on a site plan with compass directions marked on it. This shall include eight bird and eight bat boxes.

Bird boxes shall be installed to face between north and east to avoid direct sunlight and heavy rain. Bird boxes shall be erected out of the reach of predators and at least 3.5 metres high on publicly accessible sites. Bat boxes shall face south, between south-east and south-west. Bat boxes shall be erected at a height of at least four metres, close to hedges, shrubs or tree-lines and avoid well-lit locations. Development shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved details prior to first use of the path hereby consented unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To help conserve legally protected bats and birds which include priority species.

11. Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS)

The drainage proposals as outlined within the supplied application documents shall be installed and fully operation prior to first use of the path unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To minimise the impact of the path in terms of flood risk and ensure sustainable drainage techniques are employed.

12. Full details: Management Plan

Prior to first use of the path hereby approved, a final copy of a Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This shall include a section outlining how members of the public can report any issues or nuisance resulting from use or misuse of the path hereby consented and the protocol which shall be followed once reports are received. The path shall then be managed in accordance with the contents of the approved Management Plan for the lifetime of the development unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure ongoing management of the development following completion and to safeguard the quality of the public realm.

13. To secure the conduct of a watching brief during development groundworks

The applicant/developer shall ensure that all groundworks, including geotechnical works, are monitored and recorded by an archaeologist or an archaeological organisation to be approved by the council and in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation approved under condition 6;.

Reason: To record remains of archaeological interest before destruction.

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14. Completion of Pedestrians/Cyclists Access - Shown on approved plans

Use of the development hereby permitted shall not commence until the means of access for pedestrians and/or cyclists have been constructed in accordance with the approved plans and shall thereafter be retained for access purposes only unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

Post occupation management

15. Tree planting works - shown

The tree planting proposals hereby approved comprising x15 Tilia cordata, 10-14cm minimum girth planting stock (as indicated on drawing titled: Proposed Replacement Tree Planting, numbered: BCC.177.SK01) shall be carried out no later than during the first planting season following the date when the development hereby permitted is first open for public use or in accordance with a programme agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. All planted materials must be maintained for a minimum of five years and any trees or plants removed, dying, being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased within 5 years of planting shall be replaced with others of similar size and species to those originally required to be planted unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the appearance of the development is satisfactory and the development makes acceptable contributions to replacement of green infrastructure.

16. K-Frame Barriers

All K-Frame entry barriers hereby permitted at entrances shall be set by default to the maximum calibration of 750mm width. If a reduction in accessibility is deemed necessary at any point, this must first be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. If repaired or replaced, this must be with a solution which offers equivalent accessibility, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the barriers do not hinder access to the park by all future users including those with pushchairs, mobility aids, wheelchair users, cyclists etc.

List of approved plans

17. Updated list of approved plans and drawings

The development shall conform in all aspects with the plans and details shown in the application as listed below, unless variations are agreed by the Local Planning Authority in order to discharge other conditions attached to this decision.

P1104 REV A Site location plan (S. Glos), received 16 September 2019
 P1102 REV D Site location plan (Bristol), received 16 September 2019
 EAB 12 03 13 KB7 Showing Range of Plates & Widths, received 16 September 2019
 BCC.177.SK01 Proposed replacement tree planting, received 16 September 2019
 P1131 REV A Park access details - sheet 1, received 11 March 2019
 P1132 REV A Park access details - sheet 2, received 11 March 2019
 P1133 REV A Park access details - sheet 3, received 11 March 2019
 TCP-OVERVIEW Tree constraints plan overview, received 11 March 2019

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TCP-1 Tree constraints plan, received 11 March 2019
 TCP-2 Tree constraints plan, received 11 March 2019
 TCP-3 Tree constraints plan, received 11 March 2019
 TCP-4 Tree constraints plan, received 11 March 2019
 TCP-5 Tree constraints plan, received 11 March 2019
 TCP-6 Tree constraints plan, received 11 March 2019
 TCP-7 Tree constraints plan, received 11 March 2019
 P1103 REV A Temporary site compound, received 11 March 2019
 E18013-02-C02-0105 Carriage Drive North sheet 1, received 13 October 2020
 E18013-02-C02-0106 Carriage Drive North sheet 2, received 13 October 2020
 E18013-02-C02-0107 Carriage Drive North sheet 3, received 13 October 2020
 E18013-02-C02-0108 Barnwood, received 13 October 2020
 E18013-02-C02-0109 Romney Avenue Link, received 13 October 2020
 E18013-02-C02-0110 Cheswick Village Link, received 13 October 2020
 E18013-02-C02-0501 Drainage, received 13 October 2020
 E18013-02-C02-0701 Typical cross section, received 13 October 2020
 E18013-02-C02-0702 Detailed cross section, received 13 October 2020
 E18013-02-C02-0703 Detailed cross section, received 13 October 2020
 E18013-02-C02-0704 Detailed cross section, received 13 October 2020
 E18013-02-C02-0705 Detailed cross section, received 13 October 2020
 E18013-02-C02-0706 Detailed cross section, received 13 October 2020
 E18013-02-C02-0707 Detailed cross section, received 13 October 2020
 E18013-02-C02-0708 Detailed cross section, received 13 October 2020
 E18013-02-C02-0709 Detailed cross section, received 13 October 2020
 E18013-02-C02-0101 Purdown HAA Battery GA, received 13 October 2020
 E18013-02-C02-0102 Carriage Drive South sheet 1, received 13 October 2020
 E18013-02-C02-0103 Carriage Drive sheet 2, received 13 October 2020
 E18013-02-C02-0104 Carriage Drive South sheet 3, received 13 October 2020
 Arboricultural impact assessment and tree protection plan, received 16 September 2019
 Arboricultural method statement, received 16 September 2019
 Archaeology survey evaluation report - final, received 11 March 2019
 Bat survey report final issue, received 11 March 2019
 Conservation management plan figures 3-5, received 11 March 2019
 Drainage strategy V1 issue, received 11 March 2019
 Ecology report 1D section V1 issue, received 11 March 2019
 Ecology report main V1 issue, received 11 March 2019
 Management statement V3 draft, received 11 March 2019
 Public consultation response summary report, received 11 March 2019
 Public consultation results, received 11 March 2019
 Archaeological desk based report, received 13 October 2020
 Heritage, Design and Access Addendum, received 13 October 2020
 Planning Statement, received 13 October 2020

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt.

Advices

1 Scheduled Monument Consent

The wartime battery structures on Purdown are scheduled under the monument name:
 Second World War heavy anti-aircraft battery 590m north east of Highwood House, Pur Down,
 Bristol (List Entry Number: 1004531). As a scheduled monument, the structures have been
 identified as a nationally important archaeological site and are legally protected against
 damage or destruction. Any works to or around the ruined structures require scheduled
 monument consent from Historic England. It is the responsibility of the applicant and the

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applicant is advised by the Local Planning Authority to contact Historic England to confirm whether scheduled monument consent is required for the works proposed and if so to ensure this is obtained prior to works commencing on this aspect of development.

- 2 Construction site noise: Due to the proximity of existing noise sensitive development and the potential for disturbance arising from contractors' operations, the developers' attention is drawn to Section 60 and 61 of the Control of Pollution Act 1974, to BS 5528: Parts 1 and 2: 2009 Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites code of practice for basic information and procedures for noise and vibration control" and the code of practice adopted by Bristol City Council with regard to "Construction Noise Control". Information in this respect can be obtained from Pollution Control, City Hall, Bristol City Council, PO Box 3176, Bristol BS3 9FS.
- 3 BS Standard - tree work: Any works should be completed in accordance with British Standard 3998: Recommendations for tree work, you are advised that the work should be undertaken by a competent and suitably qualified tree contractor.
- 4 Tree Protection: You are advised to refer to BS5837 : 2012 Trees in relation to construction for detailed information on types of tree protection, protection zones and other relevant matters.
- 5 Nesting birds: Anyone who takes, damages or destroys the nest of any wild bird whilst that nest is in use or being built is guilty of an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and prior to commencing work you should ensure that no nesting birds will be affected.
- 6 Bats and bat roosts: Anyone who kills, injures or disturbs bats, obstructs access to bat roosts or damages or disturbs bat roosts, even when unoccupied by bats, is guilty of an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations Act. Prior to commencing work you should ensure that no bats or bat roosts would be affected. If it is suspected that a bat or bat roost is likely to be affected by the proposed works, you should consult English Nature (Taunton office 01823 283211).
- 7 Traffic Regulation Order (TRO)

You are advised that a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) is required. You must submit a plan to a scale of 1:1000 of an indicative scheme for a TRO, along with timescales for commencement and completion of the development. Please be aware that the statutory TRO process is not straightforward; involving the public advertisement of the proposal(s) and the resolution of any objections.

You should expect a minimum of six months to elapse between the Highway Authority's TRO Team confirming that it has all the information necessary to enable it to proceed and the TRO being advertised. You will not be permitted to implement the TRO measures until the TRO has been sealed, and we cannot always guarantee the outcome of the process.

We cannot begin the TRO process until the appropriate fee has been received. To arrange for a TRO to be processed contact the Highway Authority's Transport Development Management Team at transportdm@bristol.gov.uk

N.B. The cost of implementing any lining, signing or resurfacing required by the TRO is separate to the TRO fees, which solely cover the administration required to prepare, consult, amend and seal the TRO.

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8 Public Right of Way

The property boundary of the development hereby approved abuts a Public Right of Way PROW (No.) (BCC/144/10, BCC/81/10, BCC/80/20 and BCC/80/10). You are advised that before undertaking any work you must contact the Highway Authority's Public Rights Of Way Team at rightsofway@bristol.gov.uk Whilst it may be unlikely that the Public Right Of Way will be affected by the proposed development (PROW) (No.) (BCC/144/10, BCC/81/10, BCC/80/20 and BCC/80/10):

- o Should remain open, unobstructed and safe for public use at all times;
- o No materials are to be stored or spilled on the surface of the PROW;
- o There must be no encroachment onto the width of the PROW;
- o No vehicles are to use the PROW without lawful authority of the landowner(s), unless a private right of way is shown on property deeds. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the appropriate private right exists or has been acquired from the landowner.
- o Any scaffolding and/or skips placed over or adjacent to the PROW must not obstruct public access or inconvenience the public in their use of the way and must be properly licensed. Licences are available at www.bristol.gov.uk/highwaylicences
- o Any interference of the PROW either whilst demolition/construction is in progress or on completion, may well constitute a criminal offence.

If construction works are likely to temporarily affect the right of way, a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) may be required to close or divert the PROW for the duration of the works on the grounds of safety of the public. To discuss and/or apply for a TTRO contact the Highway Authority's Network Management Team at traffic@bristol.gov.uk

N.B. Any damage caused to the surface of the PROW during development works must be made good to the satisfaction of the Local Highway Authority.

9 You are advised that the planting season is normally November to February.

Supporting Documents

2. Stoke Park, Park Road

1. Site photos
2. Revised Heritage, Design & Access Statement





















Heritage, Design and Access Addendum

Original proposal

The original proposal, as laid out in the Heritage, Design and Access statement for Planning Application 19/01213/FB, was:

- The widening and surfacing of sections of existing paths, including the majority of Stoke Park's historic carriage drive
- The delivery of the path to match as closely as possible with the Stoke Park Conservation Management Plan
- The width of the path to be 3 metres, except as detailed below
- The path route (detailed in Appendix 1) to include a 'main' route through the park, with two 'spurs' differentiated by narrowing the width to 2.5 metres AND by a different coloured surface
- The surface of the path to be self-binding gravel, after discussions with key stakeholders such as Historic England

Changes to the proposal

The changes to the proposal are:

- The surfacing of the path to be stone mastic asphalt (SMA), specifically SMA with a Natural Quartzite ULTICOLOUR treatment (similar to that used at Stonehenge)
- The two 'spurs' to be differentiated by narrowing the width to 2.5m as before, as well as with a flush edging but NOT with a different colour; the two spurs will also be Natural Quartzite SMA

The proposal remains otherwise the same.

Background to the original proposal

- As outlined in the Heritage, Design and Access Statement the proposal was guided by the Stoke Park Conservation Management Plan in many ways, including the recommended surfacing option
- As part of our original pre-application discussions, we engaged in further discussions with Historic England. This was both in their statutory role in relation to Historic Landscapes and in their role as sponsor and funder of the Stoke Park Conservation Management Plan
- A public consultation was undertaken that asked specific questions about elements of the proposal. In relation to surfacing, two thirds of respondents preferred a "tarmac-like" surfacing and one third a gravel surface
- Our original proposal used a self-binding gravel surface to ensure maximum compliance with the Conservation Management Plan
- The Heritage, Design and Access statement outlined the advantages and disadvantages of each surfacing option in a table. This table is reproduced below for ease:

No	Path Surfacing Option	Advantages	Disadvantages
1	'Self-binding' Gravel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low installation costs - More 'natural' looking and in keeping with the rural environment - May discourage high speed cycling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requires a rigid yearly maintenance regime to top up the stone and fill puddles - Grass like to grow in from the verges - In winter, it will be muddy and likely to rut - In summer, it will be dusty and prone to cracking. - Material is prone to erosion from cattle/horse traffic, rainwater and general use - Given the cross falls on some sections, stone is likely to wash out - Some cross fall sections will require provision of a French drain, at additional cost - Needs a robust path edging - Whole life costs are likely to be greater than for comparable sealed surfaces (Sustrans report) - Ride quality is poor and not comfortable for use by wheel chair users and those with limited mobility - Not suitable for regular tracking by motorised vehicles - Takes longer to lay, so installation costs not same ratio as material costs - Not considered suitable for gradients steeper than 1:20 (some sections of the path exceed this)
2	Stone to Dust Surface	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Very low cost - Less likely to wash out than gravel due to gradient of the cross fall (but still prone) - More frost and vehicular resistance due to proximity of DoT type 1 in the surface - The historic material as identified in trial pits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All the above
3	Asphalt Surface (black colour)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High quality machine laid surface suitable for cycling, those in wheel chairs or with limited mobility - 15 to 20 year life span - Low annual maintenance requirement - Will take low levels of traffic from small motorised vehicles - Easy to repair small patches - Easy to surface dress - Lower visual impact in shady situations - Some asphalt along Sir Johns Lane 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visually obtrusive and not suited to main historic landscape - Lower visual impact in shady situations - Some asphalt along Sir Johns Lane
4	Buff Surface Treatment (similar to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Life span of 10 years if laid well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requires specialist contractors and can only be successfully laid in dry warm conditions

	existing all-weather path)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possible to patch small areas with repair kits - Machine laid binder course suitable for cycling, those in wheel chairs or with limited mobility - Low annual maintenance requirement - Will take low levels of traffic from small motorised vehicles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can delaminate if laid in less than optimum conditions - Susceptible to fire damage - Silts up and may stain with leaf fall - Robust path edging essential - Oil-based resin/binder - Limited scope for end of life recycling
5	Buff Coloured SMA Surface Course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Buff natural colour to suited historic landscape - High quality machine laid surface suitable for cycling, those in wheel chairs or with limited mobility. 15 to 20 year life span. - Low annual maintenance requirement - Will take low levels of traffic from small motorised vehicles - Can now get patching kits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requires specialist approved contractors to install - May stain with leaf fall (although less noticeable on a buff colour) - Repairs do not colour match for several years - Robust path edging essential - Unknown scope for end of life recycling
<p>Options Appraisal Conclusion:</p> <p>Gravel would be the most historically appropriate surface for the parkland setting but will be more susceptible to wet conditions and require regular annual maintenance. A buff coloured SMA would provide a similar visual solution but is more expensive.</p> <p>It is proposed to proceed with self-binding gravel as the path surfacing option, although “stone to dust” gravel might be considered as an alternative.</p>			

- As shown above, the decision was taken to proceed with self-binding gravel, with the caveat that other options might be considered
- In addition, as part of our discussions with Historic England, in order to clearly delineate which sections were compliant with the Conservation Management Plan and which were additional, we agreed with narrow the width of the ‘spurs’ to 2.5m and to surface them with a different colour of self-binding gravel

Rationale behind the proposed changes

- Subsequent to achieving Planning permission, we undertook further detailed design alongside soft market testing with prospective suppliers and contractors
- Several issues were identified with a self-binding gravel surfacing:
 - Long-fall slopes in some areas of the proposed path exceeded the maximum gradient for a successful use of self-binding gravel. Use of self-binding gravel on gradients beyond 1 in 20

results in rapid degradation of the surface, resulting in reduced path quality and impacting on the accessibility improvements of the path

- *Cross-fall from slopes adjacent to some areas of the path also exceeds 1 in 20 in places, exacerbating the issue*
- *Concerns were expressed about the possibility of a permeable surface (such as self-binding gravel) resulting in less protection of the historic carriage drive archaeology below compared to an impermeable surface (such as SMA)*
- *Drainage requirements for a self-binding gravel surface would require a soakaway adjacent to the path, resulting in 'locally marshy conditions'*
- *Archaeological advice regarding the historic carriage drive discouraged the use of heavy rollers or vibration to avoid damage to the archaeology. Self-binding gravel can only be successfully laid using vibration.*
- *Suppliers expressed strong views that the gravel surfacing was not appropriate for slopes or where vibration is not permitted*
- ***For more detail on issues identified, please review "Appendix 2: Self-binding gravel design issues" prepared by the project's Principal Designer***
- *After a review of the Stoke Park Conservation Management Plan in light of the issues above, it became apparent that the technical challenges identified above had not been identified when the document had been prepared*
- *It was appropriate therefore for us to further consult with Historic England as the sponsor of the Conservation Management Plan to establish the best course of action*
- *It was mutually agreed with Historic England that the best option given the technical constraints and the heritage value of the site was the usage of a Natural Quartzite SMA surfacing*
- *It was additionally agreed, given the desire to minimise the visual impact, that the path 'spurs' should no longer be differentiated by colour*
- *This new surfacing was proposed for the following reasons:*
 - *It can be laid on slopes and without vibration, mitigating the issues found with self-binding gravel*
 - *It is a much lower-maintenance solution, so that the path will remain a high-quality accessible active travel route for much longer than would be the case with self-binding gravel*
 - *The colour of the surfacing was selected by Historic England as the most appropriate for the historic site*
 - *The type of surfacing proposed is more in keeping with the results of the public consultation, where a sizable majority asked for an 'all-weather surface like the existing Stoke Park Path'*
 - *There would be no requirement for a French drain arrangement, reducing the impact on the park environment*

SMA surfacing choice: interface with Planning policy

- *The HD&A statement identified several areas of Planning policy relevant to the application.*
- *The change to an SMA surface will have an impact on the project's adherence with Planning policy, so each area is detailed below with a short explanation*
- ***National Planning Policy Framework 2012***
 - ***Paragraph 56***
 - *This proposed change to the path will deliver a better design that closely adhere to the statement in this paragraph*

- Section 12 in the NPPF 2019 also emphasises this and particularly mentions that designs should **“function well...not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development”**. This proposed change in surfacing will increase the usable lifespan of the proposed path
 - **Paragraph 61**
 - The proposed change to the surfacing will make the path more attractive and usable for a wide range of individuals, including disabled users and those pushing buggies – whereas self-binding gravel is prone to rutting or ponding, the SMA surface is much smoother and easier to use with wheelchairs, buggies and bicycles
 - Similarly, Section 12 in the NPPF 2019 emphasises the need for inclusivity.
 - **Paragraph 73**
 - Improving access to open spaces is the core goal of the proposal, not just for existing residents but for prospective new residents in developments nearby. In addition, there are several identified complementary projects (such as the visitor’s centre mentioned in the Conservation Management Plan) that the delivery of the path would enable
 - Section 8, paragraph 96 of the NPPF 2019 also emphasises this facet. Particularly notable is paragraph 98 which emphasises the need to “enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities to users”.
 - **Chapter 11: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment**
 - Throughout the project process we have worked with Historic England, the Conservation Officer and Bristol & West Archaeology to ensure that the path delivers on this objective. The change in surfacing, given the technical challenges, is the appropriate way to deliver a high-quality path while conserving Stoke Park’s natural value.
 - Chapter 15 of the NPPF 2019 strongly reinforces this tenet. The change in surfacing will not increase the impact on the natural environment, and the reduced need for drainage will reduce the amount of construction work required.
 - **Chapter 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment**
 - We have undertaken significant work to understand, conserve and enhance the historic environment in this area. The change to surfacing will provide an impermeable surface that represents an opportunity to better preserve historic value in situ, limiting the risk of damage from water ingress.
- **Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy**
 - **Policy BCS9: Green infrastructure**
 - There is no change to the relevance of Stoke Park to Policy BCS9. The existing route in Stoke Park is identified as a ‘link to M32 corridor’; our additional route will support and enhance this infrastructure
 - **Policy BCS10: Transport and Access Improvements**
 - The change in surfacing improves the relevance of the path to this Policy, further enhancing transport infrastructure.
 - The change in surfacing further supports the transport user priorities emphasised here and in the Joint Local Transport Plan; pedestrians and cyclists will have a high-quality year-round path, while disabled users will be better supported with a smooth, lower-friction surface without risk of ponding, rutting or other issues that may arise with a self-binding gravel surface.
 - **Policy BCS22: Conservation and the Historic Environment**

- *There is no change to the assertion that this route adopts and restores a significant part of the historic carriage drive, a key aspiration of the Stoke Park Conservation Management Plan prepared by Historic England*
- *It is notable that the new surfacing does not match the surfacing suggested in the Conservation Management Plan. In light of this, extensive discussions with Historic England have been undertaken to identify and explain the technical challenges facing the use of self-binding gravel, and to ensure that any proposed new surface is appropriate to the location.*
- *The proposed surface will better safeguard underground archaeology with an impermeable surface, with a similar visual impact to self-binding gravel*
- **Site Allocations and Development Management Local Plan**
 - **Policy DM19**
 - *There is no change to the approach laid out in the original HD&A statement*
 - *However, it is notable that the appropriate survey and assessment of impacts will also have a positive impact on future improvements to Stoke Park, as the information is shared with key stakeholders to better inform potential works such as improved paths in Stoke Park's woodlands*
- **Relevant South Gloucestershire Council Policies**
 - *There is no change to the relevant policies as laid out in the original statement.*

Conclusion

We accept and appreciate that the proposed change of surfacing represents an important discussion point in the delivery of a path in Stoke Park Estate.

Consequently we have discussed the proposal with key stakeholders prior to application, and have taken into account the strong support at public consultation stage for our proposed change.

The change represents a careful compromise between the standards required of a strategic transport link, the requirements of all users whether able-bodied or otherwise, and the heritage and historic importance of the site.

Appendix 1: Path Route



Appendix 2

Self-Binding Gravel

2. Self-binding gravel (SBG) is a gravel material graded to 30mm with large quantities of fines which act to bind the material together. It comes in a variety of colours and is usually sourced from local quarries. The material is laid over a sub-base of well compacted Type 1 stone of minimum thickness of 100mm. The material is laid when damp and compacted with a mechanical vibrating roller and 'sets' when dry. Path edgings are required to retain the material.

3. Although considered an open surface it can become impermeable in well trafficked sections. It requires sufficient drainage to ensure storm water can drain away freely. At locations where adjacent sloping ground will shed water on to the path, French drains must be provided along-side the path edges. Geotextile membranes should not be used between construction layers as this reduces the binding of the material with the sub-base.

4. Although a path edging will be provided to retain the material, small stones and fines will migrate beyond the edging of the path leading to the appearance of the path widening over time. As water runs off the surface it can wash out fines and gravel leaving rivulets which eventually form ruts that lead to ponding. This can be fixed relatively easily by breaking the surface with a pick, adding more material and re-compacting but this will be an ongoing maintenance activity, probably needing to be done annually. The surface will also need regular weeding as seeds that settle on the surface will grow into it and establish themselves. After weeding the material will need to be re-levelled and compacted.

Path Section Details

5. Drawing E18013-02-SK06 shows the different sections of the path and has been marked up with indicative cross fall and the extents of the drainage infrastructure required to protect the SBG surface from excess surface water run-off. Detailed description of the sections shown on the plan follows:

001 Purdown HAA Battery

6. In order to protect the historic monument this section will be constructed using 'no-dig' containment system, shown in typical cross-section DD on drawing 'E18013-02-C01-0701',

7. The no-dig system uses a single sized stone in the sub-base which is not compacted but relies on the angular interlock of the stone to provide strength. The sub-base material is porous which means that fines and smaller stones from the SBG surface may migrate into the sub-base unless a geotextile membrane is provide between layers. However the SBG laying instructions advise that membranes should not be used between construction layers.

8. The long fall of the path in this section is acceptable gradient for SBG.

002 Carriage Drive South

9. The route of this section is based on the route of the carriage drive identified in the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) although subsequent archaeological investigation has not found evidence of the carriage drive on this alignment.

10. This section of the path will be constructed using standard footpath construction as shown in typical cross-section CC on drawing 'E18013-02-C01-0701'

11. As the gradients on drawing E18013-02-SK06 show, lengths of the path have gradient steeper than 1:20 as well as having adjacent slope falling towards the path at Gradients steeper than 1:18.

12. These area will be subject to scouring of the SBG surface leading to rutting of the path and will require open French drains cut alongside the path to reduce the impact of surface water run-off.

003 Carriage Drive North

13. The route of this section is based on the route of the historic carriage drive identified in the (CMP). Archaeological investigations have found evidence of the carriage drive formation along the whole length of this section.

14. The construction of this section for the path has been designed to incorporate and protect the historic formation as can be seen in typical cross-section BB on drawing E18013-02-C01-0701.

15. The western section of this section has steep adjacent slopes of around 1:8. An open French drain will be required to intercept surface water runoff along this length of the path (see drawing E18013-02-C01-0501 for details of the drainage system). As there is no existing surface drains nearby collected surface water will be piped to a system of concrete soak-away rings which will be constructed in the park land towards the middle of this section. The sub-soil in this area is clay-loam with poor permeability. As a result the soakaway can only act as storage and will eventually fill up and overflow into the surrounding parkland. This will create locally marshy conditions and possibly in the most severe storms creating surface pond as highlighted on drawing E18013-02-SK06.

16. Archaeological advice that we have received stated that vibrating compacting rollers should be avoided when laying new surface materials over the historic carriage drive formation to avoid damage to the historic structure. SBG can only be successfully laid using vibrating compaction.

004 Barn Wood

17. This follows the line of the historic carriage drive down to Jellicoe Avenue through the historic woodland.

18. In order to protect tree roots the no-dig containment system will be to be used to construct the sub-base, as shown in typical cross-section D-D on drawing E18013-02-C01-0701. Vibrating compaction must not be used to avoided damage to tree roots.

19. Steepness of the path between 1:21 to 1:11 and will channel water along its length to the bottom of the hill. The close proximity of the historic woodland and steep side slopes provide no space for a drainage along its length but a soak away system is proposed at the bottom of the hill to prevent what is already a waterlogged section becoming worse.

20. Due the above factors SBG surface is unsuitable for use along this section.

005 Romney Avenue Link

21. This is a new foot path link to connect the carriageway drive to the pedestrian access at Romney Avenue. It will be standard footway construction with additional capping material at its base which will act as the site compound haul road during construction as shown in typical cross-section A-A on drawing E18013-02-C01-0701.

22. Adjacent slopes are steeper than 1:20 so this section will have a French drain that connects to the drainage system in section 003.

006 Cheswick Village Link

23. This is a new foot path link connecting the carriage drive route with the existing cycle path and eventually on to the Cheswick Village housing development. It will be standard footpath construction as shown in typical cross-section C-C on drawing E18013-02-C01-0701.

24. The path gradient is between 1:22 and 1:14 with steep adjacent slopes of between 1:16 and 1:9. A French drain is provided to reduce the surface run-off from the adjacent slopes reaching the path. Due to the overall steepness of the path and cross falls SBG is not a suitable material at this location.

Buff SMA

25. Buff SMA is a through coloured asphalt surface which uses the coloured aggregate and clear binder to achieve the surface finish.

26. There is a range of 3 buff colours available which are more natural looking than the buff surface treatment on the existing path in front of the Dower House.

27. The open French drainage system would not be required as the bound stone will not wash out under intense rainfall. In all other respects the cross-sectional profiles will remain the same.

28. The material can be expected to last 15 to 20 years before any serious maintenance is required and require virtually no annual maintenance. Should the surface be damaged, small areas can be replaced using 20kg patching kits available in the same gravel colours.