

Heather Godsmark

Swallowfield, Eastergate Lane, Eastergate, Chichester, West Sussex

15.12.2020

## OBJECTION

### COMMENTS.

#### 1.0 PLANNING DILIGENCE

a) It is my understanding that Local Authority planning responsibilities are to manage, control and regulate development, balancing public and private development needs with the protection of amenity, and the environment in the wider public interest. In respect of this application, I am hoping that the WSCC planning officers will be objective and robust when considering all aspects of this development scheme, acting fairly in the interests of all stakeholders.

b) As submitted, this Application is full of flaws, inconsistencies, missing or misleading information and fails to meet policies of protection of countryside, landscape character and community issues at all planning levels. I only point out a few of greater significance.

Government TCP guidance requires:

***Where an application has been amended it is up to the local planning authority to decide whether further publicity and consultation is necessary in the interests of fairness. In deciding what further steps may be required local planning authorities should consider whether, without re-consultation, any of those who were entitled to be consulted on the application would be deprived of the opportunity to make any representations that they may have wanted to make on the application as amended.***

c) I believe that the flaws, inconsistencies, missing and misleading information, together with significant failures to follow sound scoping opinions from WSCC and ARUN planners, in respect of Cumulative Impacts, to meet the Good Practice guidance claimed to have been followed, are so profound and substantial that this Road Scheme application, needs:

- to be withdrawn and Cumulative Impacts thoroughly reconsidered over the whole of the BEW Phase 1 Land Package, as guidance from WSCC and ARUN planners required.

- to be redesigned and provide supporting documents to give consistent and clear information before any resubmission and invitation for further public consultation.

WSCC planners must act robustly in scrutinising this application, given that their own and Arun DC's sound scoping guidance advice has been largely disregarded and require this currently flawed application to be withdrawn and reconsidered. For WSCC planners to act otherwise would be unacceptably unfair to the local communities and countryside, most impacted by this scheme and left confused and misled by flawed application information.

I attach the schemes flaws, inconsistencies and missing/misleading information, which I have noticed but no doubt there is much more in the few sections I have not had time to look at.

I request that this statement be lodged as an object on the WSCC Planning Application Website against application WSCC/052/20.

## 2.0 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS:

WSCC Planners scoping opinion dated 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2019.

*'The scheme would come forward alongside large mixed-use developments in the area, so there is considered to be the potential for significant cumulative effects'.*

WSCC advice goes on to state:

*3.31, The Arun District Council response to the Scoping Request in relation to cumulative impacts should also be taken into account.*

a) Highways/WSP omitted to follow WSCC and ARUN advice and tailored their EIA Topic Study Areas to cover less challenging impact areas, and for some sensitive receptors, the area extents chosen were both illogical and outside recognised Best Practice.

Study Area extents for some topics are little more than the New Road application land take, appearing to minimise issues which might hamper the interests of promoting the road scheme, thus avoiding some likely unwelcome negative outcomes which might highlight significant 'cumulative impacts' using a different study area extent. Examples particularly relate to landscape, drainage, wildlife and biodiversity.

b) DBRM LA 103 (rev 1) Scoping Projects for Environmental Assessment confirms that a cumulative impact may arise *from 'the combined impact of a number of different projects (in combination with the environmental impact assessment project) on a single receptor/resource'.*

There are significant sensitive receptors impacted inextricably by both the new road and the Barratt's housing site, which serve each other, are dependent on each other and occupy the same land package, which is visually and physically contained by housing along Fontwell Avenue, Barnham Road, Chantry Mead area housing, and to the N and NE, by Eastergate Lane properties, woodland and hedgerows.

**c) The impossibility of addressing environmental impacts for the new road separately from the impacts of the inter-related housing development is particularly highlighted within Arun's Scoping Advice of 09.04.20, which Highways/WSP were requested to take into account by WSCC planners, in their Scoping opinion of 02.04.19.**

WSCC/WSP advise in the application that their Cumulative Impacts study areas were selected to suit their own *'good judgement'*, thus avoiding, as it suited their EIA process, local planners sound scoping advice.

## 3.0 BIODIVERSITY

a) Much of the Best Practice Guidance, which Highways/WSP claims to have followed during preparation of the application EIA, ecology issues, very clearly directs that the cumulative impacts of interrelated projects must be addressed. Such is repeatedly expressed in the most recognised EIA Guidance, claimed to have been followed: CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment, many sections of the DMRB regulations and GLVIA (3).

b) Arun DC scoping advice received comments from Natural England. The following are extracted:

5.11 *'the importance of assessments considering the potential cumulative effects of the development with other relevant and existing or proposed developments in the area'* and using CIEEM Guidelines.

5.12 *'a large loss of habitat for badgers from both the A29 Realignment and the proposed housing ... best not considered in isolation of the effects of the road scheme'.*

5.12 *'there is likely to be a severance to and loss of bat habitat ... and recommends 'a combined approach' to addressing cumulative effects.*

5.13 *'mitigating impacts on reptiles ...to coordinate that with the A29 realignment'*

5.14 *'A combined approach on achieving biodiversity gains would be beneficial'.*

b) continued.

How could the importance of addressing cumulative impact on Biodiversity be more clearly expressed?

However, the habitat study area that Highways/WSP used for its EIA biodiversity impacts, was spatially restricted to little beyond the application red line zone and not extending out to cover the whole of the Barratt's site. I note that wildlife assessment failed to mention the presence of a thriving group of deer and biodiversity missed Ancient hedgerows. (latter confirmed in BEPC objection).

e) With the A29 scheme coming forward first, before and separately from the Barratt's scheme, Highways/WSP should have accepted responsibility for assessing the cumulative developments impacts over the whole of the BEW Phase 1 land package. There is no Good Practice guidance suggesting that to do otherwise would produce acceptable EIA results. Additionally, with the road raised on a causeway, reaching up to 2.4ms above existing ground level on its eastern side as it passes Chantry Mead, the road inevitably and substantially divides and isolates habitats within the whole Phase 1 land package, from its easy access to the wider country side to N and NE. Also, the impacts of separation and restricted access to wider countryside will be compounded by road construction disruption. This applies to more wildlife than badgers.

**f) Not to undertake an EIA biodiversity study over the whole Phase 1 land package is a profound error and clearly harmful to local ecology and wildlife welfare. It is totally against CIEEM Good Practice and Natural England's early expressed views. This omission needs to be rectified before this application moves further forward, otherwise the Biodiversity section of this application EIA is worthless.**

#### **4) LANDSCAPE:**

a) WSCC Planners scoping opinion, 02.04.19, (contained in App 5.2, 3.3,) warns of the potential for adverse impacts to north and east, which will remain rural, and to south which is *'allocated for housing and recommends adherence to GVL1 3 Guidance'*.

WSCC planners Scoping Opinion in 3.31 requested *'The Arun District Council response to the Scoping Request in relation to cumulative impacts should also be taken into account'*.

Further in Arun DC's Scoping Opinion of 09.04.20 advice to barrett's agent included:

5.16 *'A significant change to the local landscape will occur as a result of both proposed developments (ie realignment of the A29 and the proposed (Barratt's) housing. Co-ordinating the landscape and visual assessment and landscape design rather than undertaking an isolated approach, would benefit the place qualities, enable a more integrated landscape/townscape and reduce the impacts of both developments'*.

5.34 *'the proposed housing development and the A29 realignment are both promoted in the local plan and proposed for the same location'. ...'where impacts/effects are similar co-ordinating design and mitigation would improve both proposed developments ... to reduce significance of adverse effects, ... one purpose of the EIA.'*

Arun DC was very clear, that a single co-ordinated and comprehensive approach to landscape impacts and mitigation design was needed, covering the whole of the Phase 1 developments land package. Since the road scheme came forward first this put the duty on Highways/WSP to undertake the co-ordinated approach for the whole Phase 1 land package.

b) Essentially, the road realignment scheme should not have come forward first, without co-ordinating and addressing EIA landscape impacts over the whole Phase 1 developments land package, to provide for co-ordinated and sustainable landscape and Biodiversity mitigation.

**WSCC has no excuse not to act in the best interest of the locality and local community it is charged to consider and respect, and in accordance with its own planners advice when seeking planning permission for its road scheme.**

**c) Isolating potential Road environmental impacts from others which will shortly arise over the rest of the Phase 1 land package, is clearly flagged up by Arun DC as ill-advised, and I suggest it to be significantly harmful 'bad' practice, against protecting the interests of the local environment and local communities.**

d) Within application text, the landscaping scheme is guided by ARUN's A29 GREEN INFRA-STRUCTURE POLICY (GIS) and the specifically stated objectives within that policy are repeated and reinforced elsewhere within the application documents text.

For example, the GIS promotes roadside amenity planting and planting to separate footpath/cycle ways from the A29 Road realignment scheme, for walkers and cyclists amenity and pollution control. App 8.2, 1.2.2 clearly describes *'Planting of trees in verges between the carriageway and combined footway /cycleway.'* and there are 21 different illustrated landscaped road sections to reinforce the design requirements.

**However, no such planting exists on the Phase 1 Road Scheme planting drawings. Various text references corroborate the provision of separation planting but it isn't anywhere to be seen on drawings nor included in plant schedules. I believe that such may have been included originally but later removed to provide for increased drainage capacity within roadside swales and requiring open access for clearance maintenance. I note that the roadside 'raised planters' remain on the drawing uncomfortably sitting over swales. They are mentioned in text, but are not accounted for in plant schedules.**

**To my mind removing the urbanising raised beds would be a definite plus. Raised beds are not in keeping with our Eastergate Rural Sussex village landscape character and I would not wish this new Eastergate Road to become known as the 'seaside holiday makers approach to Bognor'. This remains Eastergate.**

## **5 DRAINAGE:**

a) Arun DC's scoping opinion advice on drainage was quite robust and highlighted the need to address cumulative effects:

*3.42 'Further, as confirmed by WSCC as Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), the road would be in an area of high seasonal groundwater levels', so 'full consideration is given to the site in the context of the wider allocation .... a comprehensive surface water management strategy is developed ... high risk of groundwater flooding'.*

*5.27 'While drainage for the A29 realignment and the proposed housing is likely to be designed separately, the future cumulative impacts on the water environment will need to be considered in the EIA for all adjacent developments.'*

So, WSCC with their scheme coming forward first had the responsibility to account for *'the future cumulative impacts on the water environment'* for the whole Phase 1 land area development package.

b) There are no SW sewers to serve the Phase 1 development area and Barnham is recognised as having high seasonal water table levels, requiring enhanced and specific SuDs system standards. A High Flood Risk Zone level 3 is evidenced in the application Flood Risk sections, spreading over the line of Barnham Lane Ditch, very close to Downview Road, Ewens Gardens, Chantry Mead and Merrell Gardens. Chantry Mead (DR/EG/CM/MG) has suffered for years from a failed developer installed SuDs system, for which no one takes full responsibility to rectify. With the new raised road causeway cutting off natural land slope drainage and together with two new ('lined') balancing ponds, one overflowing into Barnham Lane Ditch and the other with no overflow provision except potential to flood over adjacent pony grazing meadowland.

**DRAINAGE:** continued

c) A co-ordinated drainage scheme is not just advisable, it is good practice and essential to protect the interests of surrounding 'at risk' house and land owners. A co-ordinated design needs to be placed in the public domain for scrutiny, particularly to protect the interests of DV/EG/CM/MG housing which is clearly at increased risk of flooding by the Phase 1 developments.

c) Arun scoping advice, para 5.31, recognises '**climate change as one of the biggest challenges facing the district...in particular through increased flood risk, declining water availability and increased health problems for those vulnerable to extreme temperatures.**'

In application drainage correspondence, the risk of climate change enhancing rainfall events is mentioned as being a potential exacerbating factor to increasing flood risk. Also, I note a WSCC/WSP reference to **Arun DC being 'happy' to drop enforcing its Barnham specific SuDs drainage standard**, from applying to the road development. Such a concession is totally unsatisfactory and not in keeping with Arun DC's own Scoping Opinion. The Barnham special SuDs standard is important and arising from a history of flooding events in and around Barnham, and applying it rigorously will be becoming more important not less with raised flood risks from Climate Change.

d) Various, within the New Road Application documentation, there are expressed assumptions that '**flood risk won't be enhanced**' by dropping the Barnham SuDs standard and get out of jail comments referencing that if any requirement for drainage changes are identified from on-going data monitoring results, those changes can be made later. This approach raises significant uncertainty about the effectiveness and capacity of the new road drainage design AND it can't be other than reckless for our local WSCC authority to assume it can award itself permission to opt out of current important SuDs standards applying to all development in and around the Barnham with its high water table risk.

**Applying double standards, and against good practice, to facilitate the delivery of a local authority controlled road development, against the best interests of the BEW local community (which our local authority is charged to protect), is totally irresponsible. A co-ordinated Phase 1 land package drainage system must come forward to allow the already 'at high flood risk' property owners to be confident that their interests are protected, in terms of their stress welfare, enjoyment of their properties, maintenance of property values and uninhibited house selling opportunities. Additionally, Barnham Road residents and its travellers need to be given similar confidence that the regular flooding events on that road, will not increase.**

**WSCC Planners need to be robust in insisting on their own 'good practice' drainage design advice, reinforced by Arun DC, to get a co-ordinated BEW Phase 1 area SW Drainage scheme, properly researched and designed. Without a cumulative impacts drainage system design coming forward, to meet current applicable Barnham SuDs drainage standards, this road development application should be refused.**

**6 APPLICATION ERRORS & INCONSISTENCIES.**

a) There are many obvious errors and inconsistencies between different application documents which may have resulted from scheme design changes not adequately edited through all documents, such as in;

- study area descriptions, Habitat Survey, Post Development Habitat assessment resulting in Bio Diversity Net Gain miscalculations.
- landscape strategy drawings, plant schedules, Aruns A29 Green Infrastructure Strategy and application landscape mitigation claims.

Errors and inconsistencies, seem to indicate that radical reductions in the mitigation landscaping scheme have been made, probably following the July 30<sup>th</sup>, issue of Capita's finalised New Road Scheme Details. The BEPC objection appends a summary of landscape strategy and planting schedule inconsistencies, and comments on the thoroughly misleading Fly-Through Video landscaping, but I wish to draw attention to other inconsistencies to be found elsewhere within the Application documents

## **6 APPLICATION ERRORS & INCONSISTENCIES.** continued

### **b) Site Descriptions, Habitat Survey, Post Development Habitat Assessment and Biodiversity Net Gain.**

App 9.1 Prelim Eco Report *identifies 'extensive orchards to the north and hedgerows all of which are Habitats of Principal Importance (HPI)', and having 'potential to support a range of protected and notable species, including bats, badger, hazel dormouse, wintering and breeding birds, great crested newt, reptiles and invertebrates, as detailed in Section 4.'*

*1.1.6. In order to assess the ecological impacts of the Proposed Scheme, a 'Survey Area' was identified to include the Proposed Scheme footprint and areas set aside for landscape enhancements and mitigation works, the extent of which is shown on Figure 1.*

**So, a very limited Habitat Study Area extent was chosen, thus avoiding addressing cumulative effects arising from development of the whole Phase 1 Land package, and the knock on effects the road scheme might have to north, through the fragmenting of the immediately adjacent, existing large open 'Green field' area and its valuable ecological features.**

*1.1.8. Land within the Survey Area has also been subject to ecological survey in the recent past. An existing Phase 1 report for the Site (WYG, 2016) has been considered in the assessments. However later it is noted that 'anything over 18mths-3 years cannot be relied upon', for use as sound baseline evidence.*

*5.1.3. The Survey Area contains a range of habitats including some of elevated ecological value such as traditional orchard and hedgerows, which are considered to be HPI (High Protection Importance) (the loss of which must be compensated for).*

### **c) App 9.9 5. Habitats Regulations Screening Assessment**

In Conclusions, 5.1.2 states *'No in-combination effects with surrounding devs (namely the BEW allocation) are anticipated'.*

This conclusion is incomprehensible and appears totally wrong, given that the survey Study Area is clearly inter-relationship with the Barratt's housing scheme, both occupying the same discreet land package with specific habitat types extending continuously and uninterrupted, over both development areas and the ultimately fragmented greenfield land to N and NE.

The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) sets out the Good Practice Guidelines for Ecological Impact and assessment in the UK and Ireland. It requires an assessment of Cumulative impacts and effects, (on biodiversity). Significantly its guidance highlights importance of assessing cumulative impacts 25 times.

*to: 'Identify any other projects which could give rise to a significant cumulative effect. Describe and assess any potential cumulative effects and determine whether they would be significant or not (and in which geographical context). Provide a robust justification for the conclusions reached.'*

This has not been undertaken by Highways/WSP since it avoided looking beyond the application red line zone.

**d) I note that the Habitat Survey does not identify any presence of Ancient hedgerows (see BEPC objection) and that there is no 'orchard habitat' identified on the survey plan, despite its recognised Habitat Protection Importance status. Implementing orchard replacement, presumably to meet HPI requirements, is mention several times in the application text, but to my mind 3/5 apple trees at 30ms centres, mixed in with various non-native exotics, does not compensate in any way for lost HPI orchard habitat. The remaining immediately adjacent, existing traditional orchards have a planting density of 200 apple trees per (acre) 0.4ha, not just 5. Additionally, since there will be later, further significant HPI orchard loss from later Phase 1 land package development, the avoidance of assessing the wider area for cumulative impact on habitats totally fails to meet CIEEM Good Practice, as claimed to have been followed.**

**6 APPLICATION ERRORS & INCONSISTENCIES.** continued

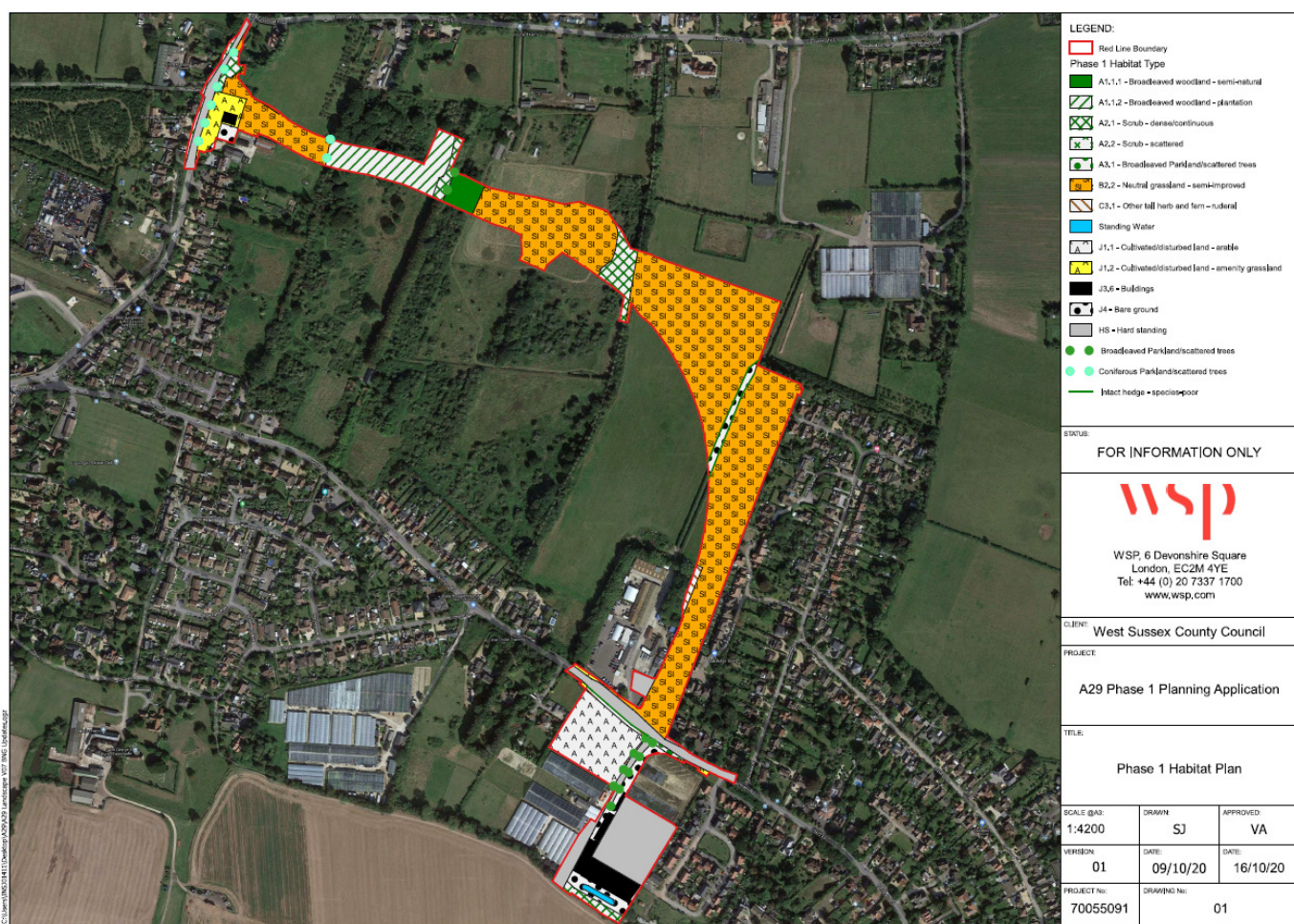
e) Habit Survey Results

The Highways/WSP application Planning Statement describes the application site as *'mostly arable'* but the **Habitat Survey Plan** clearly shows *Neutral Grassland- Semi Improved* to be the most significant ground cover. This extensive 'green cover' is borne out in its own baseline aerial photographs.

**So how closely could Highways/WSP have looked at this site to get its land condition description so wrong?**

App 9.10 Bio Diversity Net Gain G Final Assessment evaluates the bio diversity losses and gains related to the new road development design and appraises the soundness of the design methodology and design elements.

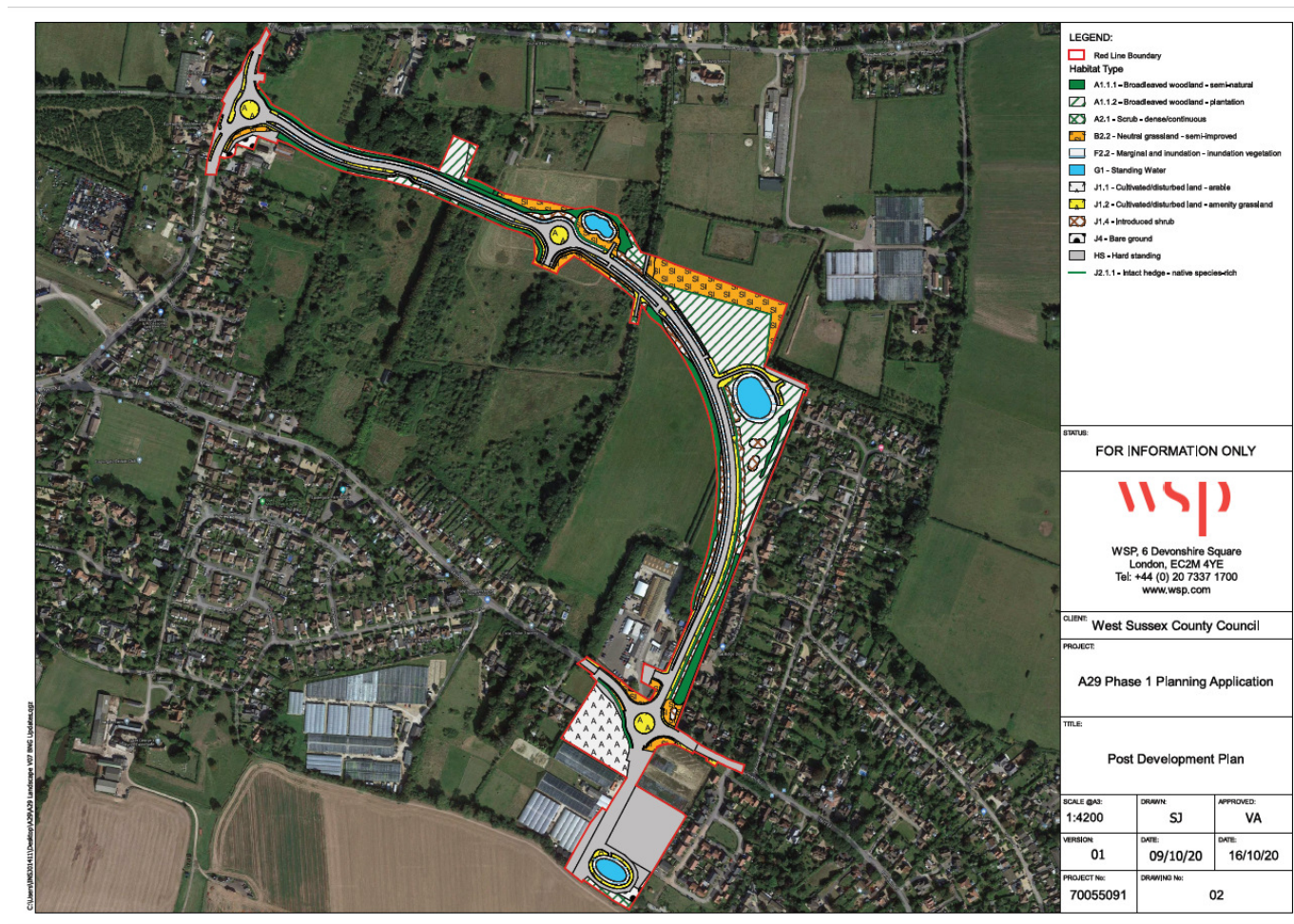
Its Executive Summary confirms that *'the biodiversity value of existing habitats has been quantified using the: Natural England Biodiversity Metric 2.0, 2019 on the basis of comparing the identified existing habitats present on site (Appendix, Figure 1) and those proposed under the current design of the post-development landscape design (Appendix B, Figure 2)'*. I note that both habitat plans were issued 09/10/20, so quite close to application submission.



The above Semi-natural and Plantation Broadleaved Woodland patterns, existing habitat identities, (solid Green and Green horizontal stripes), are carried forward for use on the Post Development Plan, to identify proposed mitigation habitat types, taken from the application landscape drawings.

App 9.10 (Bio Diversity Net gain Assessment Final) stated that the Post-Development Habitat Plan was digitised from the WSP Soft Landscape Plan drawing no. A29-WSP-LAGA-001 - Version 7-06.10.20 (WSP, 2020) received on 05 October 2020.

f) Habit Survey Results continued.



Comparison of the Post Development Habitat Plan against the Scheme Soft landscaping drawings and associated plant schedules, reveals substantial inconsistencies.

There is **woodland edge** planting indicated on Soft landscape drawings and in associated plant schedules, comprising smaller growing native trees and shrubs. However, there is **no woodland core in the soft landscape proposals**, though I note it remains identified in Drawing (pattern) Key. Additionally, provision of Woodland mitigation planting is variously mentioned throughout the application documents and identified on the Post Development Habitat Plan but there is no **woodland core mix** on scheme soft landscaping or in plant schedules.

**So there will be no mitigation woodland, as claimed variously throughout application texts, to replace that lost and to restore connectivity with adjacent woodland. There are no tall growing, native woodland, species, characteristic of this site's existing woodland surroundings, anywhere in planting proposals; no oaks or hornbeam.**

g) ARUNS A29 GIS Planting guidance is:

*'Design with native planting palettes. In general, plant species should be context-sensitive and in keeping with local species. Trees should be of local provenance where possible, particularly in areas adjacent to agricultural fields and other native habitats.'*

The area identified as 'Broad leaved woodland plantation' habitat on the Post Development Habitat Plan is almost one hectare but on landscape drawings as it is identified as Wildflower Meadow, with 11 'specimen' trees spaced approximately 30metres apart. From the plant schedules, out of these 11 trees, beech is the only climax native woodland species and its more suited to drier Downland than wet meadowland. Others included are smaller growing natives, commercial apples and larger growing 'parkland' exotics. Not an oak in sight, yet oak is the most important local woodland climax species best suited to this site?



h) Could omission of Oaks be for reason of risk of 'Sudden Oak Death' disease, (*Phytophthora ramorum*)? This disease is not indicated in our local area, disease free UK stock is available, and anyway, Horse and Sweet Chestnuts are included in the scheme and they are equally susceptible ... so why no oaks or hornbeam which are characteristic of the sites and better adapted to its ground conditions? Ash Dieback is prevalent so I endorse omission of Ash. The Specimen Area' around the NE balancing pond is likely to be seasonally wet .. so why no native willows and alders?

**I believe that inclusion of trees typical of Parkland are not in keeping with our local village countryside setting where planting will front retained existing woodland and open fields, all be they fragmented. I hope this 'exotic' tree planting beside the new road is not part of a happy holiday-makers approach road design, to make our village the gateway to Bognor'.**

i) Arun's Green Infra-Structure policy (GIS) is included in the application and it sets out an aim for sustainable developments to provide *a Biodiversity Net Gain of 10%*. The road development scheme is claimed '*to achieve a net gain in Area Based habitat Units (+44.53%) and a no net loss in Hedgerow units, (+3.85%)*. *It acknowledges a failure to gain the full 10% additional hedgerow, and goes on to suggest this is for reason of lack of land.*

Another 50metres of Native Species Rich Hedgerow does not sound difficult to achieve. What about planting some hedging closeby roundabouts at Fontwell Ave and Barnham Road? The Fly Through video shows many opportunities, such as behind the substation which currently is very prominent? If the missing 7% hedgerow gain represents 50ms, what about providing an extra 70% of gain by planting an additional 500ms hedging to screen the completely '**in your face**' noise barrier from both pedestrian and traffic view?

**This Biodiversity Net Gain calculations are based on comparing the existing and post development habitat plans, and since the scheme landscaping drawings do not correspond with the Post Development habitat Plan, the BNG calculations are meaningless. They only serve to indicate that mitigation woodland was once included in the scheme proposals but now is omitted.**

j) Speculating why 'woodland core' planting may have been removed, I suspect that enhanced SW drainage concerns demanded a substantial increase in land take to provide for raising the road causeway embankment, more flood water meadowland and more extensive swales; all to the detriment of comprehensive mitigation landscaping and habitat restoration proposals.

**Additionally, I am left wondering whether Highways/WSP assumed that their EIA was just an exercise that must be undertaken, not necessarily needing to be accurate, (since their study area was so illogically restricted) or meet the objectives of good practice guidance given in CIEEM and GIS, and directly advised by WSCC and Arun planners. Did Highways/WSP assume an approval to be automatically forthcoming?**

**k) Given such extensive application confusion, how can the public be able to consider the implications to their interests arising from this scheme?**

**I hope WSCC planners will be robust in assessing this 'error ridden' application and not minded to expedite it. Any planning application produced by our own WSCC authority must be properly prepared, in keeping with planning policies and applicable existing regulations, in accordance with good practice, particularly since its own WSCC planning department will be responsible for scrutiny and decision advice to our WSCC councillors. Our WSCC councillors will not have time to scrutinise this application and will be relying on the due diligence of WSCC planning officers.**

a) WSCC Website 'Fly Through' Video:

Please see BEPC attachment to appreciate how little of the landscape mitigation planting in this video, shown at maturity of 30-40 years hence, is evidenced within the road scheme landscape proposals.

Local people were directed by the WSCC project manager, to watch a WSCC Website Fly Through Video of the predicted completed road scheme, so that they could appreciate its appearance within its local setting.

This video is set against calming background music and shows:

- unrealistically low levels of evenly flowing car traffic, one bus and there is absolutely no sight of any HGV's, tractors and farm machinery.
- a sunny summer's day, with large growing trees at about 40yrs maturity, in woodland and along the roadside, much of which is not evidenced on the scheme soft landscaping drawings.
- extensive planting around Fontwell Avenue and Barnham lane roundabouts, around Halo and SPR commercial sites, none of which are indicated on soft landscape drawings or included in schedules.
- attractive amenity balancing ponds, which to be effective are more likely to be empty and looking like muddy craters on most summer's days.
- an above traffic, eye line view, is presented resulting in the extensive and massive visual impact of the 3.0m height, rusty wall, noise barrier, being visually diminished .
- peripheral mature screening tree belts are in place to protect amenities of existing dwellings abutting the west, south and east boundaries of the whole BEW Phase 1 developments land package; the missing 'elephant in the room' is Barratt's housing development with its extent innocuously indicated as beige coloured, flat land surrounded on west, and south sides with boundary mitigating planting, which is not part of the Phase 1 road scheme.

**This missing 'elephant in the room' will have significant cumulative effects on the local landscape, its character and its community, since it is inextricably visually linked to the road serves it.**

## 7 TRAFFIC CONGESTION & COMMUNITY WELFARE ISSUES

a) An assessment of traffic data errors is appended to the BEPC Objection, indicating that the traffic forecasts Highways/WSP are relying on count data approximately 300% below that which can be realistically expected from the extent of housing developments forthcoming in and around the BEW locality.

**Accordingly, any impacts analysis used by Highways/WSP in support of their road scheme design, based on their traffic figures are unreliable and will substantially underestimated Traffic volume impacts.**

### ACCIDENT RISKS

b) Aruns A29 GIS Strategy states *'create inclusive junctions that can accommodate pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians'*.

DMRB GG 142 guides the Walking, Cycling and Horse-Riding Assessment & Review.

*'The aims of carrying out a walking, cycling and horse-riding assessment are:*

- 1) to gain an appropriate understanding of all relevant existing facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians (users) in the local area;*
- 2) to provide background user information that can be referred to throughout the development of the highway scheme;*
- 3) to identify opportunities for improvement for users.'*

c) GG142 Scope 1.2 confirms that this A29 New Road Realignment Scheme will not qualify to be exempt from an Assessment and Review of WCHR.

**I am surprised that the lack of a WCHR was not picked up by the Road Safety Audit, demonstrating lack of rigour and due diligence.**

Without undertaking a WCHR Assessment and Review, how could Highways/WSP possibly conclude that it would not be necessary? The local area has horse racing and many types of stables. Many people walk and sometimes cycle when traffic is heavy, to reach facilities at each end of Fontwell Ave, schools, doctors, post office, recreation ground, play grounds, shops, eateries and bridleway access into Slindon Woods. There is Govt and LA policies designed to encourage cycling and walking instead of driving and the new road cuts through a long established Public Footpath. A similar situation applies along Barnham Road. WCHR in villages communities are equally adversely impacted since both roads have only one continuous roadside footpath being cut through by this new road at its access roundabouts

c) HIGHWAYS/WSP have described a provision for controlled crossings in their Application Scheme summary. However, no controlled pedestrian crossing points are identifiable within the road scheme details. The application states: *'does not foresee a raised risk of traffic accidents'* and a WCHR survey was considered un-necessary within the scoping review, that is without any evidence to support this decision against GG 142 requirements.

**I expect that Highways/WSP remain completely unaware of the Hft Care Village, along Eastergate Lane, providing residential accommodation for disabled adults, who, in normal non-covid times, are able and do walk unsupervised down to Eastergate Village Centre Post Office. Rights of access for the disabled should be supported within this road scheme through the provision of safe pedestrian crossings, both on Fontwell Avenue and Barnham road, to allow the most vulnerable residents to continue walking safely through their community, even if this road scheme is developed. This will adversely affect the predicted 1 minute journey time improvement on a trip to Bognor but that holds no weight against properly carrying out a WCHR assessment.**

**Covid has significantly impacted all WCHR patterns in our community. I notice that the 'less able' in our communities no longer regularly walk along our footpaths and there are more family recreational cyclists using our roads. Until Covid is controlled, how can a meaningful WCHR assessment be undertaken that can relied upon to usefully inform this new road design.**

## **NOISE, POLLUTION & CONGESTION RISKS**

d) The WSP App 5.2 scoping opinion 3.3 advises that: *'no significant adverse environmental effects are expected to arise on population and health'*.

By underestimating traffic forecasted traffic volumes by approximately 300%, (See BEPC objection) there will be significantly increased traffic congestion particularly along the upper stretch of Fontwell Avenue which will take all traffic travelling north and south along both the new and the existing A29 routes, between the new Fontwell Avenue Roundabout and the A27 roundabout. This increased congestion will enhance adverse impacts of noise, pollution and stress to both passing WCHR and roadside householders. There will be similar enhanced impacts along Barnham Road too, until the Phase 2 Road Section is completed.

**These 'cumulative' impacts on existing village roads, particularly affecting upper Fontwell Avenue are totally ignored within this application. The harm to community health and welfare should be considered to investigate what improvements can be provided to overcome increased cumulative impact harm to existing communities. There needs to be public understanding of any associated harmful community impacts arising from this new road and how they will be mitigated.**

**NOISE, POLLUTION & CONGESTION RISKS**

e) Within various Application Text, separation planting for amenity and pollution filtering is promised along verges between new Foot/cycleway and the road. As given elsewhere, this separation planting is a major objective within Aruns GIS, illustrated in 21 separate road sections.

*'Provision would be made within the design for cyclists and pedestrians and will consider inclusive design.'* but, alongside the new road, none of the roadside amenity planting promised, to filter pollution between road and cycle/footpath, is being delivered although I note it is recommended 21 times in pictorial section details within the Arun A29 GIS strategy.

f) **NEW ROAD CAUSEWAY & NOISE BARRIER**

Noise impacts arising from this New Road will significantly, but indirectly, impact upper Fontwell Avenue and Barnham Road but for housing within Downview Road, Ewens Gardens, Chantry Mead and Merrell Gardens, the current road design will be intolerable.

ARUN'S GIS A20 promotes:

Design Opportunity: Minimise noise levels:

- Consider the use of green acoustic barriers at the southern end of the Phase 1 Site where space is limited
- Along the Proposed Scheme, there is a balance to be struck between the visual amenity of adjacent visual receptors (particularly residents) and users of the highway corridor - including pedestrians and cyclists.
- The positioning of green acoustic barriers needs to be close to the noise source (the traffic) whilst not impinging on possible space for the adjacent paths. Acoustic barriers can be a physical separation between the Proposed Scheme and surrounding communities, so it is important to try and maintain connectivity across and through the Scheme.
- Where an acoustic barrier is needed, the alignment of the carriageway should be designed to allow the maximum amount of space to the side of the carriageway where a buffer is required. This will enable planting to be used as a noise buffer or planting to act as screening to conceal an acoustic barrier. Where which will reduce the overall height of the barrier.

**Clearly Highways/WSP have been challenged to design a Green Acoustic Barrier, towards its southern end, presumably as it passes by at least Chantry Mead and Merrell Gardens,**

g) The Application Planning Statement states:

*4.4.1 The topography within the Site varies between 8 and 16 metres above ordnance datum (m AOD). The existing ground profile in general falls from Fontwell Avenue towards Barnham Road'. The existing ground profile in general falls from Fontwell Avenue towards Barnham Road.*

*4.4.6. The majority of the new carriageway will be built upon **a small embankment** to avoid road construction within areas of high groundwater levels. Drainage swales, filter drains and a grass filter strip are proposed adjacent to the carriageway to catch and filter 'over the edge' surface runoff.*

Capita issued detailed road scheme drawings on 30.07.20 including sections and ground profiles along the road alignment. These are very technical drawings so the public will most likely have missed crucial impact details of the raised road design, which will apply to them.

## NOISE, POLLUTION & CONGESTION RISKS

h) The road cross sections drawn up by Capita are carefully selected to avoid the position of highest road level, coinciding with the curving stretch as the road passing beside Barnham Lane Ditch, Ewens Gardens, Chantry Mead and Merrell Gardens, (EG/CM/MG) and disingenuously, Capita has shown all existing ground levels on all its road cross sections to be flat, which hides the actual differing level changes created on each side of the elevated causeway, resulting from the easterly downwards slope towards Barnham Lane Ditch and the adjacent east boundary housing.

Appreciating the magnitude of the east side embankment heights can only be gathered from a close examination of the technical drawings, which is unfair to the public, particularly those most impacted. The causeway east side banking rises to over 2.4ms close by the EG/CM/MG housing and this is not described in any way to allow any level of public understanding.

Highways/WSP description of the raised road being '*built on a small embankment*' would fail to raise public concerns about the high level proximity of the road and its associated Noise barrier, passing close by east boundary housing ... which is totally unfair.

i) Throughout the application documents, there are comforting words about mitigation screen planting alongside the rear east face of the noise barrier, but, at the worst visual impact position by CM/MG, the full 3m height of the noise barrier, and 600mms or more of the causeway bank, will be clearly visible over the garden fences, from gardens and house windows. Many fences are less than the 1.8m (shown in the attached sections) but are lower, visually open post and rail. Additionally, there will be no screen planting between bank slope and garden fences, where access for maintenance clearance of Barnham Lane Ditch will be required.

One might argue that planting on the bank will provide, over time, effective noise barrier screening, but on a raised compacted bank the growing conditions will be very challenging, particularly during hot summers (such as 2020), and more likely to occur with climate change. No-one will be regularly summer watering any of the rear of causeway bank planting and the given maintenance/failed planting replacement commitment ceases after just five years. Certainly, it will take many more than 5 years for establishment of effective plant screening, even if there could be a high standard of maintenance. There is land drain running along the bottom of each side of the road causeway banks, which is likely to become blocked with roots from bank side planting over time seeking water and encouraging flooding.

**I am of the opinion that the visual harm this road scheme will have on Chantry Mead and Merrell Gardens residents, in terms of normal enjoyment of their properties, will be substantially compromised by the present of such a high embankment and unattractive noise barrier, totally blocking their westward views. As a result, their house values and selling opportunities will be significantly diminished. I conclude that this road is far too close to these houses and needs to move westwards, taking more of the Halo site and with a more landscape and community setting friendly noise barrier design evolved.**

## 8 DRAINAGE & IMPACT ON LANDSCAPING

a) Capita issued its drainage proposals on 30th July, 2020 and landscape drawings were updated in August and again later. I believe that the mitigating landscaping provision was substantially reduced following Capita's release of its drainage scheme, although the landscape drawing revision notes do not explicitly say. This would give reason behind the many false application claims of providing landscaping mitigation expressed in application text, the planting reduction inconsistencies between text, planting plans, plant schedules, and even the failure to meet the GIS Policy aims and objectives ... and why the habitat drawings and Bio Diversity Net Gains calculations are wrong.

**The landscaping fails to meet the intended landscape protection and improvement required to meet planning policies at all levels and this reduced minimal landscape scheme needs to be challenged by WSCC planners as inadequate.**

b) The new road on its raised causeway effectively cuts off the existing natural North-South surface land drainage pattern. The Northern Balancing Pond, located on northern side of the road raised causeway has no overflow water discharge provision, other than just flooding over the adjacent grazing meadows, which already will be seasonally at field capacity; thus making these meadows water-logged and unsuitable for animal grazing.

The drainage scheme text recognises that the water table will be seasonally nearly at ground level, and no doubt the high water table flood risk will be increased by the 'cut off' effect of the continuous presence of the raised compacted causeway, without adding over-flow from ponds.

The balancing ponds are shallow at 1.0m depth and lined, which is atypical for normal balancing pond design, especially being so shallow. 1.0m water depth is insufficiently depth to ensure that the ponds do not become overwhelmed with peripheral water plants, such as reed mace, reducing the balancing pond capacities. Regular pond plant removal will be needed to maintain the pond's drainage water retention capacity but, of course, such maintenance will conflict developing amenity values and encouraging wildlife.

There is likelihood that the N and NE ponds seasonally will provide little or no balancing capacity so will flood over adjacent meadowland and the Barnham Lane Ditch, which sits within a High Flood High Risk Zone level 3. This ditch runs northwards past Chantry Mead, Ewens Gardens and very close by 31A & 31B Downview Road (DR) properties.

c) From reading the background FRA correspondence, in the application appendices, I discern there is disquiet about how the drainage system will be perform.

In the Flood Risk Assessment Appendix 11.1, Pt 4, App B.2 there is correspondence from Arun to a redacted recipient, dated 30.04.20.

Arun's drainage engineer states that the defectively installed Chantry Meads SuDs system on-going problems are almost resolved but confirms that groundwater at MG/CM is known to peak at 150-300mms below ground level.

**I suggest when the compacted raised causeway bottom of bank land drains and Barnham Lane Ditch are full, the risk of DR/EG/CM/MG flooding will be worryingly raised, even if the estate SuDs scheme problems are resolved since it also feeds into Barnham Lane Ditch.**

d) Pt 6 FLA includes a land survey with levels and contours, but this is unreadable as presented since it is cut into two pages which don't seem to fit together, uses pale colours and tiny text against a white background. Also, there is no title block, no north point or no landmark positioning information to allow the survey to be orientated and understood within the application site boundaries.

**Planning application documentation must be clear and easily read, so not to hamper public understanding.**

e) Pt 10 FLA includes a 03.07.20 email from WSP to Arun & WSCC, so before the Capita drainage scheme plans were finalised. In it WSP asks Arun and WSCC to confirm that **they are happy to reduce the Barnham flood standards for the Scheme**, which seems to indicate that the required Barnham SuDs Standard could not be met.

**I believe that there remains uncertain drainage risks associated with the road scheme that will heighten flood risks to N and E, land and properties, particularly to grazing paddocks, the very close-by properties of 31A and 31B Downview Road and others in Ewens Gardens, Chantry Mead and Merrell Gardens all within the High Flood risk zone.**

**Surely, It would be profoundly unacceptable for the SuDs standards for Barnham to be reduced by our local authorities to facilitate the approval of a drainage defective scheme for one of WSCC's own planning applications? I hope that the WSCC planners will remain objective, duly diligent and not be swayed.**

## **9.0 CONSULTATION**

a) WSCC has been aware from an earlier stage public consultation, that many within the Eastergate and Barnham communities were unhappy about adverse impacts arising from the proposed BEW Phase 1 Proposals, realigned road and inter-related housing, which will affect many local lives, their enjoyment of their properties and their local environment.

Application Environmental Statement.

Para 1.1. 5 - confirms the schemes adherence to Town & Country Planning EIA Regs 2017.

This TCP document includes: *'The aim of Environmental Impact Assessment is also to ensure that the public are given early and effective opportunities to participate in the decision making procedures.'*

The application text mentions an 'online consultation' addressing noise impacts applying to Eastergate and Barnham communities dwellings. I was present and can confirm that there was no consultation, all 'green options' presented were unimaginative and ruled out without evidence provided or discussion, leaving the community feeling steam rolled and not consulted. Options of a rusty barrier, a painted metal barrier and a plastic barrier were the only solutions the Highways/WSP team engineers were prepared to discuss.

b) DBRM LA 111Rev 2 states:

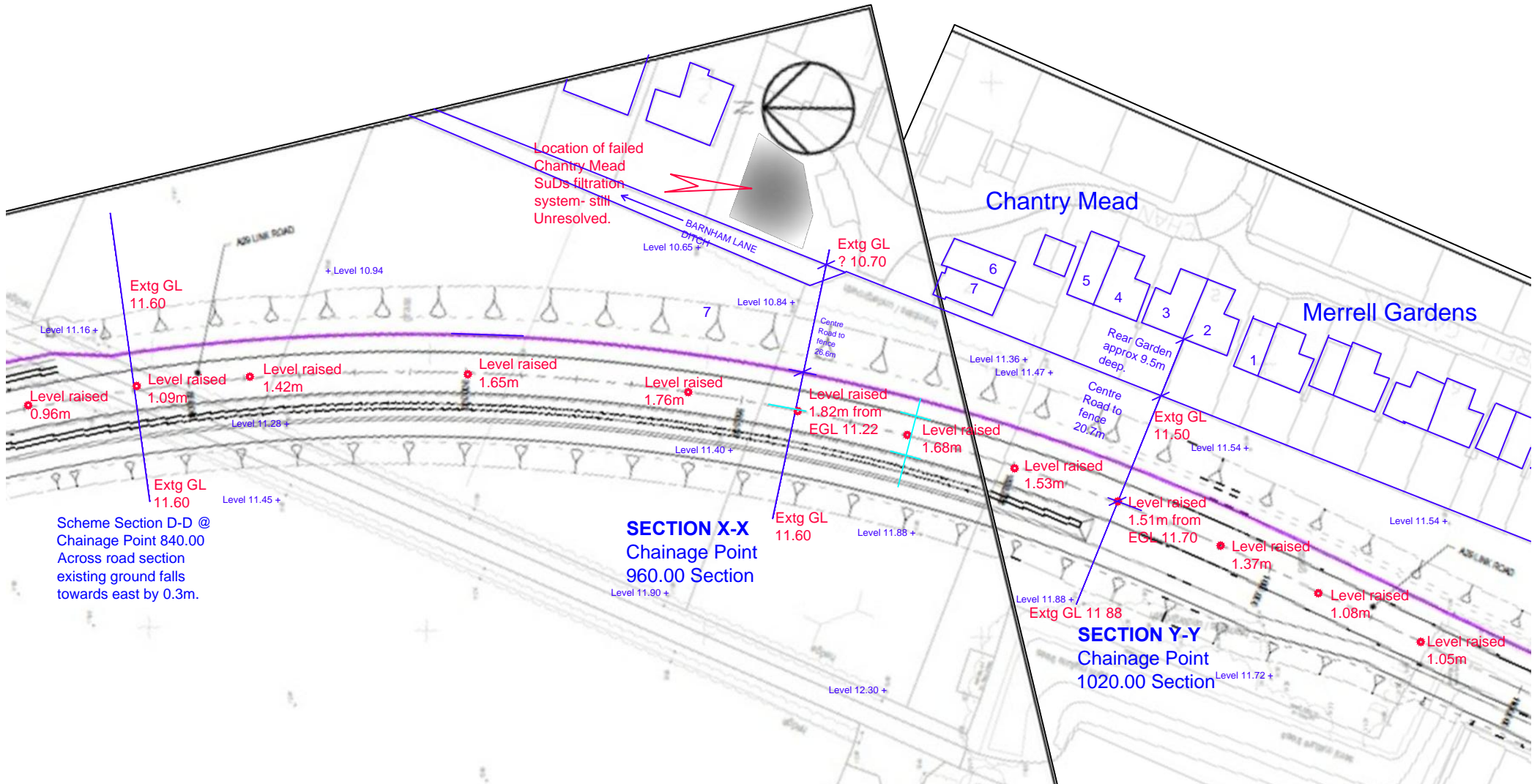
*3.65 The suitability of each potential mitigation measure for use within the project area shall be determined based on the following criteria: .....*

*5) the impact of the measure across other environmental factors, for example the visual impact of a noise barrier.*

To be effective I know that noise barriers need to be close to the noise source and higher than the line of sight of the receptor. Also, I can see that for the current road layout, that limited space is the reason for selection of the 'rusty wall' Noise barrier, but this current road design will massively and badly impact the amenities and other aspects of DR/EG/MC/MG properties and their owners. Additionally, this 3.0m ht 440m long Rusty Barrier will become the Landmark Blot on our local Eastergate landscape. No longer will Eastergate be characterised by its historic village centre with Lion war memorial roundabout. It will become, **that village with the massive rusty wall**. This is totally unfair on Eastergate village, its setting and the people who live there and value the character and rural setting of their village.

**It is clear to me that the adverse impact on Eastergate's landscape character, together with all other identified seriously harmful impacts arising from this road scheme, all serve against this new road being pushed through a too narrow a gap on to Barnham Road. WSCC and Arun need to go back to the drawing board and come up with a much less harmful, landscape friendly, road scheme, moving it westwards over the Halo site and designing it to be more in keeping with Arun's own GIS policy objectives.**

**ROAD SECTIONS LOCATIONS ALONG FLOOD RISK ZONE LEVEL 3  
ALONGSIDE EASTERN SITE BOUNDARY OF A29 REALIGNMENT ROAD SCHEME  
BY EXISTING CHANTRY MEAD AND MERRELL GARDENS HOUSING.  
All levels taken from Capita land survey and profile land drawings.  
All dimensions interpolated from Capita road layout.**



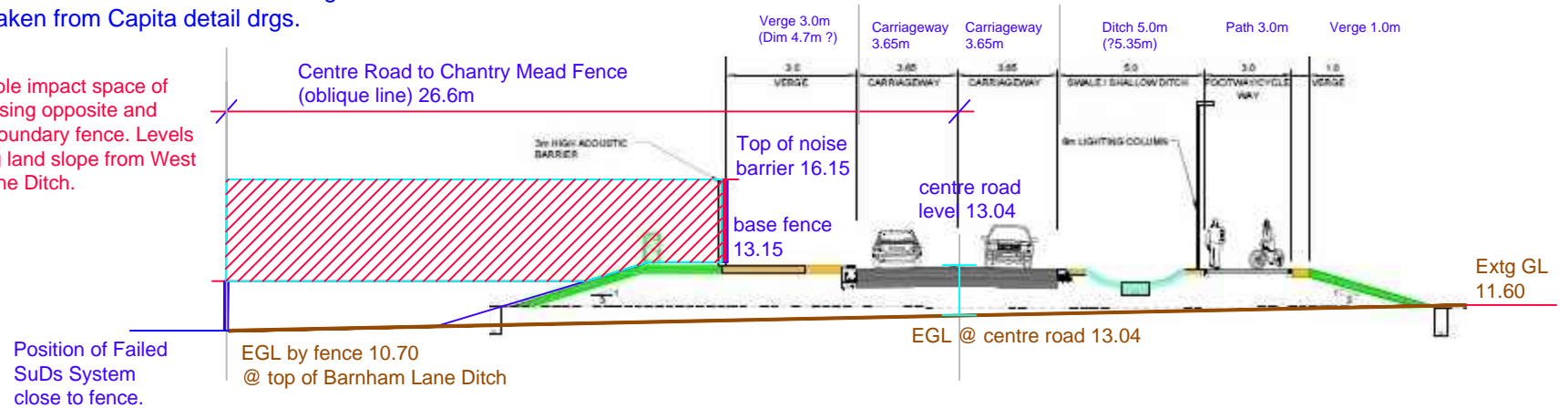


### SECTION X-X @ CHAINAGE POINT 960.00

Showing the relationship between Chantry Mead Housing Development, its failed SuDs system location, its estate fence running east of Barnham Lane Ditch and the Raised A29 Realignment Road with Noise Barrier.

All dims and levels are taken from Capita detail drgs.

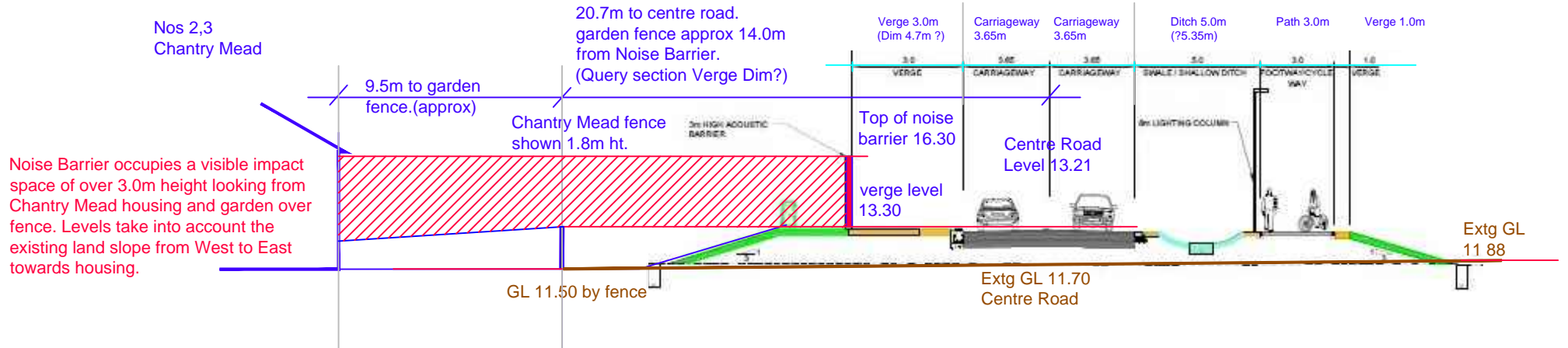
Noise Barrier occupies a visible impact space of minimum 3.65m towards housing opposite and pedestrians, looking above boundary fence. Levels take into account the existing land slope from West to East towards Barnham Lane Ditch.



### SECTION Y-Y @ CHAINAGE POINT 1020.00

To show the relationship between Chantry Mead Housing and the Raised A29 Realignment Road level & Noise Barrier.

All dims and levels are taken from Capita detail drgs.



Noise Barrier occupies a visible impact space of over 3.0m height looking from Chantry Mead housing and garden over fence. Levels take into account the existing land slope from West to East towards housing.