

Land off Brampton Road, Greytree, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire HR9 7

Initial Site Access Appraisal

Client: National Animal Welfare Trust (NAWT)

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

General

- 1.1 This Initial Site Access Appraisal has been prepared by Badingham Limited on behalf of the National Animal Welfare Trust (NAWT) in respect of land off Brampton Road, Greytree, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire, HR9 7.
- 1.2 The potential for the development of the site is currently being explored. This Appraisal examines options and requirements to successfully access the site by vehicles and other sustainable transport modes.
- 1.3 As a unitary authority, Herefordshire Council is both local planning authority and highway authority for the area. The site lies within Ross-on-Wye West ward. The site is currently green field and in agricultural use, predominantly as pasture, and enclosed by trees and hedgerows. Refer to Figure 1 Site Location Plan and Figure 2 Aerial Photo.
- 1.4 The site is located approximately 1.3 kilometres to the north of the centre of Ross-on-Wye. It lies immediately outside and adjacent to the settlement boundary shown on the UDP Proposals Map contained in Appendix 3 and within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). To the north is a shelter belt of trees and a lake. The east of the site is bounded by the property known as Westfields and the Brampton Road highway. The western boundary to the site is formed by a watercourse that leads into the River Wye. Reference to the Environment Agency's Online Maps for the area shows the site to lie outside of any fluvial flood plain and groundwater source protection zone. The southern boundary is punctuated by residential properties served by a series of avenues all of which are accessed from the Greytree highway.
- 1.5 During the preparation of this report we have liaised with the following officers:

Bruce Evans Senior Area Engineer - Herefordshire Council Transportation -
Planning Development Control

- 1.6 A site visit and meeting with Bruce Evans (Herefordshire Council) was undertaken on Tuesday 9th October 2012. Photographs from the site inspection are contained in Appendix 1.

Extent of Public Highway

- 1.7 The extent of public highway in the area is shown on the plans provided by Herefordshire Council and contained in Appendix 3.

Local Highway Network

- 1.8 Brampton Road has a northerly alignment with a general downhill gradient in the vicinity of the site from south to north. It has a variable carriageway width and in the vicinity of the site's eastern frontage it is characteristic of a rural country lane. It is subject to a 30mph speed limit close to its junction with the highway known as Greytree but is derestricted (60mph) as it passes the site to the north. It bends sharply to the east opposite the property known as Westfields where there is a minor country lane extending northwards toward The Dingle. There is a significant gradient associated with this minor lane as it leads north from its junction with Brampton Road. The Brampton Road frontage has a footway on its western side atop a steep and high embankment. The footway is of a substandard width and is made more hazardous by overhanging trees. The eastern boundary to the highway is formed by overgrown hedgerows screening the Netherton Road employment area. There is a footpath connection to this area on the east side of the carriageway close to its junction with Greytree.
- 1.9 The highway known as Greytree has an approximate southwest/northeast alignment that runs parallel and to the north of the A40 dual carriageway. It has a variable carriageway width, a flanking footway on its north side together with street lighting. The highway falls steeply to the west near its junction with Third Avenue before bending sharply to the south close to the access to a rugby ground and Abbots Close. It is subject to a 30mph speed limit and has double yellow line parking restrictions over its length. It is understood that the parking restrictions are to discourage illegitimate parking associated with the Brampton Abbots Primary School and John Kyrle High School nearby. The John Kyrle High School has a vehicular access with Wallhouse Road and the primary school is accessed via Brampton Road.

- 1.10 Greytree is a bus route (Optare type vehicles) and provides access to the residential area to the north that is accessed from six avenues extending north from and perpendicular to the Greytree highway. Greytree becomes known as Homs Road as it passes beneath the A40 dual carriageway before becoming Greytree again on the approach to the town centre. On-street parking limits the effective available carriageway width of the western approach on Greytree.
- 1.11 Greytree joins Brampton Road at its eastern end in a simple priority junction arrangement close to the bridge over the A40 dual carriageway. Brampton Road becomes Brampton Street as it extends south to the town centre. Greytree serves a predominantly residential area and traffic flows are therefore relatively light with few large vehicles or through traffic movements. It is understood that there is an independent school to the north served via Brampton Road, which can lead to busy periods at drop-off and collection times.

Strategic Highway Network

- 1.12 Access to the wider strategic highway network is to the south via Brampton Road and the B4234 Ledbury Road that connects with an at-grade roundabout junction with the A40 (& A49 to the west) and A449 that links to the M50 Motorway to the east. It is noted that the Three Crosses Road highway provides a shortcut for traffic between the Ledbury Road and Brampton Road that may prove an attractive route for future development traffic.

SECTION 2: CONTEXT & DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

Other Developments in the Area

- 2.1 There is a current planning application (Ref. S121045/F) for the erection of 14 dwellings on land south of Greytree close to its junction with Third Avenue. The development proposes frontage driveway access. A plan of the proposal is contained in Appendix 6. It shows traffic calming proposed on Greytree.
- 2.2 Bruce Evans recalls that the Brampton Road site was considered in the past as part of the SHLAA but was dismissed on landscape impact grounds as well as means of access.
- 2.3 The Brampton Road site comprises four land parcels as shown coloured on the Land Registry plan contained in Appendix 2. Permitted rights of access are understood to exist across the Westfields (yellow) plot extending from Brampton Road to the green area. The total site area extends to some 6.46 hectares. The (approximate) site areas have been measured as:
- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| ▪ Blue | 3.136 ha. |
| ▪ Yellow (Westfields) | 0.275 ha. |
| ▪ Pink (Greytree Cottage) | 0.193 ha. |
| ▪ Green | <u>2.857 ha.</u> |
| Total | 6.461 ha. |
- 2.4 It is assumed that some 75% of the land is developable for residential purposes once the needs for Public Open Space, roads and landscaping are taken into account. This would result in a potential total yield of some 194 dwellings assuming a medium density of 40 dwellings/hectare, which provides an approximate theoretical indication of the scale and maximum level of any potential development for assessment purposes.

Potential Traffic Generation

- 2.5 In general terms, a mixed housing development of 194 dwellings can be expected to generate 97 outbound and 48 inbound vehicular movements during the morning and a similar reversed flow during the evening peak hours. Such a proposal can be expected to generate some 7-10 daily two-way vehicular movements per dwelling.

SECTION 3: VEHICULAR ACCESS

3.1 In terms of suitable potential access points the site is somewhat constrained with access considerations only really possible from either Brampton Road on the site's eastern boundary or from the access roads serving the existing residential settlement to the south. Refer to Figure 3 Street Plan.

Access via Brampton Road

3.2 Vehicular access via either the pink (Greytree Cottage) or green land parcels is not considered achievable owing to the significant difference in gradient and the difficulty in providing required visibility splays for the speed of the road.

3.3 Access via the yellow (Westfields) land ownership is also not considered feasible. This is the obvious position for a junction as it enables more suitable visibility along both sections of Brampton Road. However, it is difficult to provide an appropriate access to include the unnamed lane adjacent to the north. This lane joins at an oblique angle with a significant gradient and makes the achievement of satisfactory visibility splays and suitable junction geometry problematic.

3.4 Notwithstanding the difficulties in providing vehicular access, the Highway Authority has indicated that because of the rural characteristics and nature of Brampton Road the addition of development traffic on this highway is likely to be resisted.

Access via First Avenue

3.5 Vehicular access via First Avenue is not considered feasible. The carriageway width is narrow, there is no footway provision, and visibility is restricted at its junction with Greytree. The extent of public highway does not extend to the site boundary creating a potential ransom. Refer to Extent of Highway plans contained in Appendix 3.

Access via Third Avenue

- 3.6 The middle section of this highway is wider than the southern section extending from its junction with Greytree. The northern end of the highway appears to terminate in an access serving Lavender Cottage and if access were to be proposed in this location land ownership will need to be determined as the extent of public highway does not abut the site boundary. The narrow southern section precludes two-way working. The footway provided on the western side of the carriageway is of a substandard width. The wider central section is characterised by on-street parking. Access in this location may be further compromised by the development proposed on land opposite and to the south of Greytree. Access is therefore considered not feasible.

Access via Fourth Avenue

- 3.7 Vehicular access via Fourth Avenue is not considered feasible. The carriageway width is narrow, there is no footway provision, and visibility is restricted at its junction with Greytree.

Access via Fifth Avenue

- 3.8 Vehicular access via Fifth Avenue is not considered feasible as the northern section of the highway is not in public ownership and does not abut the site boundary.

Access via Sixth Avenue & Blackthorn Close

- 3.9 Vehicular access via Sixth Avenue is less than ideal. The carriageway width, particularly at its southern extent is narrow with limited footway width and restricted visibility at its junction with Greytree. The road is characterised by on-street parking. Its northern section is built to a more modern standard. An extension of Blackthorn Close may be possible but the land ownership between the site and the highway will need to be determined. There also appears to be a pinch point adjacent to the sewage pumping station on the west side of the highway. As a single point of access for the whole site this route is not considered appropriate. However, a modest number of units may be feasible as an extension to Blackthorn Close.

Access via Second Avenue

- 3.10 Second Avenue offers the greatest scope for vehicular access provision. The carriageway width at some 4.5m is wide enough to enable safe and efficient two-way working. The highway ownership extends right up to the site boundary. On-street parking appears to be less of an issue on this avenue as the majority of properties are provided with on-curtilage parking. However, the straight alignment may encourage increased vehicle speeds and require some form of traffic calming. The junction with Greytree has probably the best visibility splays of the various avenues considered, although it remains less than ideal. It is close to Brampton Road and therefore is likely to encourage traffic in this direction rather than on the south-western section of Greytree.
- 3.11 There is a noticeable difference in gradient of about a metre between the north end of Second Avenue and the site, which will need to be addressed as part of any detailed design. Continuous footways of a standard width are provided on both sides of the carriageway together with street lighting. No tactile paving or dropped kerbs are provided at the various uncontrolled crossing points in the area. These would benefit from improvement to enhance pedestrian accessibility.
- 3.12 The theoretical capacity of this link means that it is probably likely to be able to support the level of potential development trips outlined above. However, there is likely to be strong opposition from local residents on Second Avenue. The capacity and operation of the junction with Greytree and the junction of Greytree/Brampton Road will need to be considered as part of any Transport Assessment as well as the impact of traffic flows on the western side of Greytree and the Brampton Road corridor to the town centre. The somewhat limited visibility splays with Greytree are also likely to be raised as an issue by the local highway authority. If traffic speeds could be reduced on Greytree the visibility requirements will reduce accordingly. Speeds may well reduce as a result of the traffic calming proposed by the residential proposal nearby on Land to the South of Greytree.

Proposed Means of Access & Internal Layout

- 3.13 The access and internal highway will need to be designed to adoptable standard to ensure low traffic speeds with a target design speed of 20mph. Appropriate lighting will need to be provided to ensure adequate and safe access. The design should accord with Herefordshire Council's '*Highways Design Guidance for New Developments*' (2006).
- 3.14 Any development needs to be beneficial to the area in terms of traffic and transport and not compound any existing traffic issues in the town.

Proposed Car Parking

- 3.15 Car parking will need to be provided to Council standards.

Proposed Cycle Parking

- 3.16 Cycle parking will need to be provided to Council standards.

SECTION 4: ACCESSIBILITY & SUSTAINABILITY

General

- 4.1 Current Government policy directs that residential developments need to consider accessibility and transport choices in respect of employment, healthcare, education, retail and leisure destinations.
- 4.2 The site is located adjacent to Ross-on-Wye's existing northern settlement boundary. Analysis of the 2001 Census data for how people travel to work in Ross-on-Wye West Ward is outlined in Table 4.1 below:

Travel to Work (People aged 16-74) Percentage (%)	Ross-on- Wye West Ward	Herefordshire	West Midlands	England
People who work mainly at or from home	9.89	15.23	8.94	9%
Underground, Metro, Light Rail or Tram	0.12	0.08	0.18	3%
Train	0.12	0.52	1.52	4%
Bus, Mini Bus or Coach	1.15	2.92	8.75	8%
Motorcycle, Scooter or Moped	0.69	1.03	0.89	1%
Driving a Car or Van	58.01	57.75	59.97	55%
Passenger in a Car or Van	6.66	5.74	7.19	6%
Taxi or Minicab	0.5	0.33	0.44	1%
Bicycle	2.19	4.2	2.25	3%
On foot	20.32	11.66	9.52	10%
Other	0.35	0.54	0.33	0%
Average distance (km) travelled to fixed place of work	12.27	14.76	11.87	13.31
Public transport users: With car or van	83.33	76.85	67.17	69.00%
Public transport users: Without car or van	13.89	23.05	32.42	30.45%

Table 4.1 How people Travel to Work in Ross-on-Wye West Ward

- 4.3 Table 4.1 above shows that the area is relatively car dependent with levels of car use above the national average, reflecting its somewhat rural location. Levels of walking however are significant when compared with the local, regional, and national averages. However, this is off-set by a limited level of bus and train patronage.

- 4.4 The average commuting distance of some 12km is less than for Herefordshire or the national level and suggests commuters travel mainly to work in Hereford and Gloucester.

Walking

- 4.5 Reference to Herefordshire Council's website indicates that there are no established rights of way across the site. Pedestrian research indicates that acceptable walking distances depend on a number of factors, including the quality of the development, the type of amenity offered, the surrounding area, and other local facilities. The Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (CIHT) document '*Providing for Journeys on Foot*' details suggested walking distances, which are outlined in Table 4.2 below.

	Town Centres (m)	Commuting / School/ Sightseeing (m)	Elsewhere (m)
Desirable	200	500	400
Acceptable	400	1000	800
Preferred Maximum	800	2000	1200

Source: '*Providing for Journeys on Foot*', CIHT

Table 4.2 Suggested Walking Distances (CIHT)

- 4.6 The development will need to encourage permeability and integrate with the surrounding footpath and pedestrian network.
- 4.7 Brampton Road is likely to offer the principal pedestrian route to the schools and town centre.

Cycling

- 4.8 The site is relatively well connected in terms of opportunities for cycling, given the gradient constraints created by the surrounding countryside. The proximity to the rural edge within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty makes leisure cycling attractive. Lying approximately a kilometre from the town centre the site is well within a reasonable cycle distance as defined in the CIHT publication '*Guidelines for Providing for Journeys by Bicycle*'. The guidance identifies a cycling distance of 1,000m as desirable, 4,000m as acceptable, and 8,000m as the preferred maximum. Journeys to work tend to be longer.

Buses

- 4.9 The maximum recommended walk distance for residents to access bus stops is 400m. The nearest bus stop to the proposed development site is located on Greytree on the west side of its junction with Second Avenue. The southern boundary to the site is some 220.0m from the bus route on Greytree. This places the majority of the site within the recommended 400m walk distance of a bus stop. Pedestrian accessibility could further be improved with connections to the various avenues and to the eastern boundary to Brampton Road to provide connectivity and integration with the surrounding area.
- 4.10 Current bus provision at present can be considered adequate although improvements to frequencies, weekend services, and extended hours would all serve to improve the overall accessibility of the site. Other bus services (32, 33, & 35) operate from the town centre linking to other towns in the area. There is a National Express coach stop in Cantilupe Road. Refer to public transport information contained in Appendix 7.

Service	Route	Operator	Frequency	Days
40	ROW Circular	H&H	30min.	M-Sa

Table 4.1 - Summary of Bus Services

Rail

- 4.11 Ross-on-Wye does not have a railway station. Although the nearest station is at Ledbury the stations at Gloucester and Hereford are also of a similar distance and provide more comprehensive services and connections to the wider rail network.

Car Share

- 4.12 In addition to national schemes, TwoShare and Park & Share are operated in partnership with Herefordshire Council.

Summary

- 4.13 The site is well located in terms of accessibility and access to sustainable transport. It is situated near to a bus route and to both primary and secondary schools. It lies within a desirable cycling distance of the town centre and within walking distance of a nearby employment area. The site has relatively strong sustainable transport credentials making it highly accessible in terms of providing opportunities for sustainable travel in accordance with the new National Planning Framework.
- 4.14 A supporting Transport Assessment will be required as part of any planning application to determine the scale, level and impact of the development in transport terms.

SECTION 5: SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS

General

- 5.1 Potential options to access the site have been examined and two possible alternatives identified. These early stage initial options will need to be refined and appropriate detailed design and assessment undertaken to determine their suitability. The first (and main) option would be to explore access via Second Avenue. Sixth Avenue may be capable of providing a modest level of development (as a possible extension to the existing Close), depending on land ownership enquiries, but higher development levels are likely to be precluded by the poor visibility at its junction with Greytree. The visibility at the junction of Greytree and Second Avenue is also less than ideal and it may be necessary to seek the reduction of traffic speeds (to reduce visibility requirements) on Greytree by traffic calming for example. Traffic calming is already proposed on Greytree as part of another development proposal in the area.
- 5.2 The site location is relatively sustainable in transport terms with good accessibility for the majority of modes that can be further strengthened and developed as part of the development proposals to fully accord with the new Government policy as outlined in the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework in March 2012.
- 5.3 A preliminary assessment has been undertaken to provide an initial early indication of the level of vehicle trips likely to be generated by the proposals. A detailed trip generation analysis and link and junction capacity will need to form part of the Transport Assessment in due course.

Badingham Limited – 6th March 2013

FIGURES

APPENDIX 1

PHOTOGRAPHS

APPENDIX 2

LAND REGISTRY EXTRACT

APPENDIX 3

EXTENT OF PUBLIC HIGHWAY

APPENDIX 4

UDP PROPOSALS MAP

APPENDIX 5

EA MAPS

APPENDIX 6

LAND SOUTH OF GREYTREE LAYOUT PLAN

APPENDIX 7

BUS MAPS