



Hemel Garden Communities (HGC) Transport Workshop

Thursday, 30 January 2024, 9.30 – 12.30pm

Hybrid: Teams and In Person Meeting at The Forum, Hemel Hempstead

DRAFT MINUTES

Name		Name	
Simon Willison (SW)	Aecom (HGC)	Annika Fowle (AF)	SLR Vectos
Simon Richardson (SR)	Aecom (HGC)	Jonathan Wellstead (JW) (Teams)	(HCC)
Sue Jackson (SJ)	HCC	Peter Blake (PB) (Teams)	Savills (TCE)
Emma Turner (ET)	HCC	Ryan Bruty (RB)	Pigeon
Chris Briggs (CB)	SADC	Jason Wooliscroft (JW)	Bloor
Nathalie Bateman (NB)	HGC	Tom Haslam (TH)	i-Transport (Bloor / Pigeon)
Phillipa Zieba (PZ)	HGC	Sara Sweeney (SS)	Kitewood
Selma Hooley (SH)	DBC/HGC	Matthew Lewis (ML) (Teams)	National Highways
Pennie Rayner (PR)	DBC	Mark Kirby (MK)	Velocity (Kitewood)
Jonathan Hale (JH) (Teams)	Jacobs (HCC)	Izzy Grigg (IG) (Teams)	TCE
Roger Flowerday (RF)	HCC	Janice Burgess (JB) (Teams)	National Highways
Issy Spence (IS)	SADC/HGC	Helen Harding (HH)	WSP/Homes England
Vanessa Cooper (VC)	HGC	Sophie Waggett (SW)	Homes England
Ronan Leydon (RL)	DBC	Adam Wood (AW) (Teams)	Hertfordshire Futures
Shalini Jayasinghe (SJ)	DBC	Elissa Borthwick (EB) (Teams)	Savills

Apologies:

Wendy Frost (SADC), Rob Snowling (Pigeon), Luke Garrett (TCE), Fionnuala Lennon (Homes England), Ella Wragg (HGC), David Bird (SLR Vectos), Marcus Della Croce (SLR Vectos), David Joseph (Bloor), Neil Marshall (i-Transport (Bloor / Pigeon)), Philip van Reyk (Kitewood), Jennifer Searle (National Highways), Kelly Milburn (National Highways), Chris Bearton (Homes England), Caroline Seare (Homes England), Jon Sandford (Homes England), Bev Coupe (WSP/Homes England), Aaron Peate (WSP/Homes England), Russell Monck (HCC)

1.	<p>Welcome, Introductions and Purpose of the workshop</p> <p>Those new to the group introduced themselves.</p> <p>IS requested the meeting be recorded. Agreed.</p>
2.	<p>Hemel Hempstead Transport Study & HGC IDP</p> <p>SW and SR introduced themselves and gave a presentation on the 'Requirements for sustainable transport corridor through the North Hemel development'. SR advised he would be sharing the work in progress, focussing on key plans of the STC and have an open conversation with the group.</p> <p>RB referred to the East Hemel STC and noted he thought it would continue to M1, J8 through the TCE land (South) with the main spine road shut off with the exception of active modes of travel and queried if this would be the same for the south? SR advised from findings provided by SLR Vectos this showed the first initial section of the STC was public access through the whole East Hemel development. The team were developing the thinking around sections with a mix of usage. The junction with Hemel Hempstead Road incorporates bus priority,</p> <p>Discussions took place on the form and usage of the STC route how it could encourage 60% sustainable mode share with public transport and active travel having priority and general traffic having more circuitous routes via the secondary /tertiary street network. Concerns raised on how the other 40% of personal trips (which would be vehicle based) would move to sites in the northern part if there are restrictions and tertiary or secondary routes haven't been fully built. SR advised the plans presented are the baseline for the principles. The current thinking is that a central STC route through most of the northern development site would be for active modes and public transport. SR advised there would be 2 major points of vehicle access into the North with access from Leighton Buzzard Road and Hemel Hempstead Road. SR confirmed that further work to develop the secondary and tertiary network would be part of the ongoing site masterplanning work.</p> <p>TH flagged that a location for the junction with Hemel Hempstead Road has been identified to the west of that shown in the AECOM work.</p> <p>Action: TH to share junction plan with AECOM</p> <p>Discussions also included the constrained point of access through Marchmont Farm along with ownership issues and green belt planning and topography constraints making it difficult to deliver. PB noted from the TCE's perspective, there could be difficulties for TCE to deliver access to their wider site from that location. HH added that if there were two routes through Marchmont Farm, we would need to ensure the walking and cycling and sustainable provision through it doesn't suffer and residents have a nice facility. JH noted the limitation of the volume of development that can be served of a single vehicular access and Marchmont Farm already has planning applications for 300 homes which would cause another constraint. SR confirmed he has received a copy of the indicative scheme for Marchmont Farm.</p>

Discussions concluded that options should be kept open at this stage focussing on the desired outcome of a 60% sustainable mode share rather than how vehicles can be accommodated. There may be some sections where the STC needs to be open for all modes (due to local constraints). Further detail should be worked up through the masterplanning and reserved matters processes.

SR referred to the West side access via Leighton Buzzard Road (LBR) and the landscape report and asked for the forums views around whether road infrastructure is viable. PB advised that the TCE have carefully considered road alignments and provided information through the vision document that was submitted as part of the Reg 19 consultation. SLR Vectos have also provided plans to Aecom at a technical level i.e. engineering. From their perspective, a road can be delivered with suitable engineering and landscaping. This has been provided in various documents over the past couple of months.

JH noted that there was some merit in having LBR as the primary vehicle access as this would give a journey time penalty to private vehicles over other forms of transport. SR noted that there could be opportunities to constrain the width / make it a more indirect route.

RL advised that DBC are going through a lot of evidence submitted through the plan at the moment. Landscape has been touched on before and RL has had a discussion with David Bird some time ago. The consultants that worked on the landscape and Greenbelt for North Hemel were asked if they could look into the landscaping. Their findings have given RL confidence that in landscape terms there are some acceptable options for an access link. This will be firmed up as local plan evidence to give confidence to inspectors for the local planning examination in due course.

SR referred to the early phase plan and has been looking to direct active travel routes down to the town centre and down Leighton Buzzard Road. The principle is to make active modes as logical and as fast as possible. From the early phase perspective, SR advised there was no information on developer build rates so has taken the logic that sites would build out so the first phase would be to allow vehicle access through Marchmont Farm I with no restrictions. An option could be to build from Leighton Buzzard Road which would require significant infrastructure for a significant distance which could be an issue if development isn't likely to be built up in this area for a long time. The active travel route proposed onto the link road to the west of Marchmont Farm could be used as a connection for construction and emergency vehicles and act as a secondary point of access for a period of time and then altered to be an active mode route only – sensitivity with this option would be needed.

SR advised that at the other end of the network it would be similar. The road would be built in its final position and used as a standard vehicle point of access until a critical mass of development is met and bus network/frequencies are matched. Potentially emergency access could be provided via Holtsmere End Lane. Monitoring of build out and travel plans would be needed.

Secondary access points were discussed and TH and JW advised they have been looking at similar lines. TH agreed to share drawings that potentially sets out the potential phasing of the access and how they come forward.

Action: TH to share information with SR.

MK noted that if the early phase isn't considered as a continuous route through North Hemel this could be limiting for Kitewood's parcel in the north to be linked up and development to come forward. They would want the infrastructure to come early with a strategy at the beginning which would be plugged into the various developments otherwise it will hold back development.

RF queried how it could be achieved for stepping rights for Kitewood to use land they don't own to deliver. PZ advised that the HGC Developers Forum have been discussing the need for an overarching agreement which would be key to achieving this. It would require everyone to get together and agree to the stepping rights.

SR advised that Cupid Green Lane isn't appropriate as an access point to sites to the north. MK suggested that the vehicular access on the STC was indicated as extending further north and that this could be converted to bus / active travel only at a later date when the secondary / tertiary network was more developed.

PZ referred to the suggestion of extending the road and queried under what rights do you then remove the ability for all vehicles to use that route? RF advised the aspiration should be set with the principle of needing to connect the STC/key destinations and be able to demonstrate how it is quicker to walk/cycle /use public transport. Developers could then state how connections to their sites could be achieved. This gives a level of flexibility.

SR reiterated the overarching principle of having a route through the heart of North Hemel for buses and sustainable modes whilst having alternative less direct accesses for cars.

PB referred to the western access (Marchmont Farm) and raised that first phase access can only be achieved if landowners release land for development (third party land) and this hasn't been done in the past 5-6 years. This could be risky and open to challenge. TCE access via Leighton Buzzard Road is available now. TCE are partial landowners on the extension of Marchmont Farm access into the northern part of the HTC but don't control the whole of it.

It was noted that the most logical and appropriate route should go into the plan. DBC could use their CPO powers to secure the link to ensure the site is delivered. At this stage, show the most appropriate routes and options to the types of outcomes that align to the vision.

SW provided an update on work carried out so far on Bus Service Requirements and advised this has focussed on the North Hemel side rather than Hemel as a whole. SW advised they have been looking at the existing bus network but noted the networks do evolve over time so could be subject to significant change. The scope included looking

at the current bus services, predominately provided by Arriva, optimum journey times to key destinations and what infrastructure would be needed.

SW gave a summary of key conclusions including that a number of services do show potential for extension /diversion into the development areas (e.g. 20,46,721). SLR Vectos trip generation data was used to indicate likely demand and required frequency of service and indicates a need for a bus every 12 minutes which is a significant step change in provision. A significant service provision is also needed to cater for internal trips within the growth area needing a new orbital route. Further discussion with Vectos to confirm the correct data is being used and there has been no double counting. SW advised HERT hasn't been taken into account but that existing services should be accessible from North Hemel with active travel route improvements to access stops.

Action: Aecom and SLR Vectos to check the correct data is being used.

JH flagged the need to further consider the relationship between bus frequency and demand. Generally, a 10-minute (turn up and go) frequency is needed to generate a step change in use of buses.

SJ advised that Marcus has previously suggested SLR Vectos were doing their own bus study and queried with AF how far the study has come on and is it worth an offline conversation with Aecom? AF advised she was going to suggest something similar, and it would be good to understand what has been included in the Aecom. AF asked for confirmation that the study was only including existing routes and the extra orbital route that runs through HGC and no consideration of extra bus routes that would have East West connections? SW advised it would be a combined package with the potential to reroute some. Discussions took place on frequencies and the assumptions on passenger numbers.

Action: SLR Vectos and Aecom to discuss SLR bus study offline.

How the infrastructure would be funded was discussed. It was suggested that infrastructure should come early to accommodate the sites and would need to be forward funded. The aspirations and funding gaps would need to be identified and then we can look to Central Government for what funding pots are available to allow us to front load the delivery and unlock infrastructure. This would ensure it is fundable and viable for the development. Developers would also contribute, and this is being discussed at the HGC Developer Forums. RB queried if the next stage of the scope would be to look at funding? PZ advised that high level conversations have already started with some identification of sums. It was agreed that this is a work in progress.

HH requested a conversation offline with Aecom on the assumptions that are being made around Marchmont Farm.

Action: HH and SW to discuss the assumptions offline.

TH queried if the outcome of Aecom's piece of work would set out the final strategy for bus public transport provision and will it consider phasing? SW advised that it wouldn't. The assessment is going to be higher level and would not be an overarching strategy.

	<p>It will give conclusions and recommendations on what we are aiming for. RF advised it would form part of the evidence for the Local Plan to demonstrate the infrastructure required is understood and will work in principle and that the development can afford to pay.</p> <p>RL added that the Plan would not pass unless we have the overarching evidence, funding gaps identified and how it goes to the next level. We are not at the application stage; this discussion is about trying to solve the high-level matters overall.</p> <p>PB queried if the next step is to take this work and put into the HGC IDP to be costed and provide the robust evidence base to give to inspectors and say the schemes are viable? This was agreed. PB advised it would be good to have the timings on this.</p> <p>PB referred to the Aecom Sope of Work A4 package (Gade Valley access) and queried when the work would be carried out and if they he can be involved in it? SW advised that this work is ongoing, so the timing is right if PB wants to engage.</p> <p>Action: PB to reach out to Aecom offline.</p>
3.	<p>Transport Modelling</p> <p>SJ gave an update on the COMET modelling which including that the assumptions behind the test of the combined effect of the two local plans for Dacorum and St Albans Tests have been undertaken for the end of the plan period (2041). Traffic flow comparisons with and without growth were shared including impacts of modal filters on Adeyfield Road and Station Road.</p> <p>MK referred to the link through the north of Hemel and queried if it is just the STC? SJ advised that it has been coded as a bus only route with access points from Hemel Hempstead Road/Redbourn Road in the North East and Leighton Buzzard route from the West. Secondary access would be in the Marchmont Farm area. It has been assumed that there would be 1500 units in the North by the end of the plan period.</p> <p>SJ discussed the pressure areas and the plans for Phases 1 and 2 project Breakspear (signalisation of the A414 /Green Lanes/ spine road junction) which is needed to support the SADC Local Plan growth. However, when you combine the growth, there is some significant pressure in this area indicating that Phase 3 of Project Breakspear (upgrade of M1 junction 8 to provide an overbridge over the M1 from the East Hemel development and a new roundabout coming into M1 J8 – from east and north spine road) may be required by the end of the plan periods with combined growth to take the pressure off the southern part of the spine road and A414 junction.</p> <p>With this there are still some delays in the area which is due to layout assumptions at junction 8 which may need further modification. Part of the issue previously discussed was the design assumes 1 lane around the circulatory causing delays. SJ has been in discussions with SLR Vectos to try to understand the assumption. AF advised that she wasn't aware of any updates from SLR Vectos but would take it as an action to find out.</p> <p>Action: AF to clarify M1 junction 8 upgrade layout assumptions.</p>

SJ talked through the conclusions and noted the key point was the importance of modal shift and the need to have this locked in from the start.

MK referred to the modelling work done for the end of plan period and queried what happens when the remaining growth come forward? SJ advised there would be 1/3 of homes to come forward after 2041, mainly in North Hemel, some in East (3,500 residential units in Dacorum area and 1200 in SADC). A 2050 HGC end point modelling run is being developed. Sensitivity tests will be carried out and opportunity to test the modal shift targets to see what it looks like. The 2050 tests will include the more strategic schemes – J8 modified layout, HERT, STC through the north and Aecom’s thinking of the bus services and other infrastructure needs identified through the Phase 2 transport study. The work will build on the pre-existing 2041 model run.

ML referred to areas highlighted as having significant additional delay on the modelling diagrams presented and advised he’d be interested to know the absolute delay figures for those areas flagged as having greater than a 2 min delay. SJ advised she would liaise with WSP to pull together information and share.

Action: SJ to liaise with WSP and share information.

TH queried the timeframes for modelling. SJ advised WSP have said they need to build to 2050 and make adjustments to the matrix so this will be a 6-8 week process. The next stage will depend on what comes out of the Aecom study and will likely need another 4-6 weeks to code in additional infrastructure.

TH asked about the status of local modelling. The Paramics model is a 2041 forecast model. It’s been audited and was sent to National Highways for comments which have now been addressed. We are now waiting for National Highways to confirm they are happy with the changes. We haven’t done our own tests yet as have been looking at the strategic model.

JH queried with ML if there have been any discussions at National Highways on the SRN link to development and whether this area is included in their spatial studies programme, noting there is a significant volume of growth on the network so they should have a position on it. ML advised he would need to take this away and discuss with the studies team and can report back.

Action: ML to report back.

JH noted there are problems with using Paramics when testing high growth scenarios as operational models such as this tend to lock up so flagging as a word of caution before everyone uses it. SJ noted this was an important point to note.

4. **DBC LCWIP**

PR provided a brief update on the LCWIP including that DBC is going to public consultation on 10 February until 23 March 2025. PR is currently checking the

	<p>stakeholder list with HGC and will then email it out to everyone and upload to social media. The comms and engagement plan is being finalised to get a good distribution.</p> <p>PR advised the plan is for the LCWIP to go through the political approval process at the end of Summer – early Autumn, subject to how many reps are returned and time needed to process.</p> <p>SJ noted that the LCWIP is the first part of how we start to build the high-quality active travel routes. It is important that we get feedback from this group to feed in.</p>
5.	<p>HCC Capital Projects Programme</p> <p>ET provided a short update on the implementation of HCC capital projects for Jarman Park and the Boundary Way Roundabout.</p> <p>Jarman Park – there has been an upgrade for walking and cycling including a new at grade crossing of the A414 which feeds into the wider plans for active travel and delivers on some of the aspirations of the transport plan. This was opened in November. SJ advised that there has been some positive feedback on how it has transformed journeys and impacted lives such as those with mobility issues who found the incline of the previous bridge to steep.</p> <p>Buncefield Quietway – this is part of the HGC Green Loop. The southern section of Buncefield is being provided with new and improved access from the Boundary Way roundabout – with a new Dutch-style roundabout. This includes a reduced number of traffic lanes, pedestrian crossings, dedicated cycle space and wider foot ways. Further north there has been a change in junction priority to favour cycling.</p> <p>SJ noted the provision is starting to future proof the network for access to the future growth of HGC. The scheme is being implemented with DfT Active Travel Funding and demonstrates HCC are starting to deliver on schemes as funding comes forward.</p> <p>AW noted that the Dutch style roundabout in Cambridge has had feedback that Drivers don't know how to use it. AW queried if there is likely to be a programme/information made available on how to use it? SJ advised that there will be. HCC has an active and safer travel team who are developing a programme on how to educate cyclists and an information campaign to share that the roundabout has changed. SJ concluded that the roundabout is new and innovative for the UK.</p>
6.	<p>Monitoring and Evaluation approach</p> <p>SJ noted she previously talked through a monitoring and evaluation framework at the December meeting. There is a need to establish a good baseline on how people are travelling around town for the HGC Transport Vision and Strategy. Traditionally, the Census journey to work data was used however, the last one was during the covid restrictions so will not provide an accurate picture of travel behaviour.</p> <p>HCC are undertaking a countywide Travel Survey this Spring. This I Survey will be sent to households and include a 1-day travel survey. It will be a controlled survey with a balance of household types and across the county and will be looking for a minimum target of 300 responses across Dacorum. SJ shared what questions will be covered in the survey.</p>

	<p>There will be a travel diary to be completed by all members of the household on their trips from the previous day picking up details on how/why they are travelling.</p> <p>There is an opportunity to undertake a booster survey to pick up more specific information on travel in Hemel Hempstead.</p> <p>The travel survey is focussed on residents and whilst it will capture some travel to employment sites there is a need for more comprehensive data on current travel for Maylands Business Area.</p> <p>JH advised that there is decent data on travel pre-pandemic to Maylands from the Smartgo survey but there is little on how behaviour has changed post lockdown. There was a Summer 2020 survey on how they think they will travel post lockdown so it would be good to see if those suggested changes have manifested over time.</p> <p>SR referred to the travel survey questions on impairments and queried how much HCC is drilling down on the impairments and what the barriers are? SJ advised that there is only a high-level question on whether someone's day to day activities is affected with no details asked as people are often reluctant to share information on paper surveys. Focus groups later down the line could look into this.</p> <p>PZ noted the travel surveys are run every 3 years and queried if this was the right time? SJ advised if the survey didn't happen in 2025 the next one would be in 2028 when applications are coming forward and by doing it now information could help inform these as well as the wider HGC monitoring baseline.</p> <p>RF noted his view that as funding is being secured, the DfT asks for an assessment of the baseline position, and it is useful to have this to demonstrate the challenges being faced and help build the case for targeting the right infrastructure. HH advised that traffic count surveys have been completed. They are waiting on the results and noted there were some diversions during the survey time so need to be cautious. HH confirmed she would share the data.</p> <p>Action: HH to share the traffic count findings.</p>
7.	<p>Stakeholder updates</p> <p>a. <u>SLR Vectos</u></p> <p>AF advised they are holding community design workshops today and yesterday and will report back with findings. They are intending to run the Paramics model with a cordon of the joint local plan COMET run and will share findings when complete. They are looking at the alignment of access to the west via LBR and once complete and reviewed AF can circulate this too.</p> <p>Action: AF to share model findings and LBR access alignments</p> <p>TH queried if the Paramics model is ready to use? SJ advised it has been used by SLR Vectos. The base model was signed off by National Highways and HCC and has been audited. National Highways raised a few points, and we've not had final sign off yet. SLR Vectos are using it under licence.</p>

	<p>b. <u>National Highways</u></p> <p>ML will chase their response on the Paramics modelling update</p> <p>c. <u>Homes England</u></p> <p>SW advised they met with ward members last week and held PPA meetings with Officers, there's another next week. By end of next week, the newsletter should be issued to residents. They are progressing for resubmission mid to late February.</p> <p>HH advised they've made a request for some trip distribution data to HCC.</p> <p>d. <u>iTransport</u></p> <p>TH advised they are working on bits and pieces with SLR. The main point is the access on Hemel Hempstead Road.</p> <p>e. <u>Velocity</u></p> <p>SS advised there wasn't anything to update at this stage.</p> <p>f. <u>Other</u></p> <p>There were no other updates.</p> <p>SJ referred to the various consultations taking place with local residents e.g. Vectos' Community Design Workshops, Marchmont Farm, LCWIP, Local Plans and queried if this is being captured as part of the overall communications plan noting there is the danger of residents getting lots of bits of information and being unsure how they link up.</p> <p>PZ advised that these get reported into the HGC Communications Group which have representatives. PZ suggested this could be a standing agenda item and would take this away and consider.</p> <p>Action: PZ to consider how to capture various consultations.</p>
8.	<p>AOB</p> <p>The next meeting will be in person. Date to confirmed.</p>