

Job Name: Land at Wisloe

**Job No:** 44396 **Note No:** TN002

**Date:** 15 October 2019

Prepared By: K. Stock

Subject: Highways and Transport Technical Overview

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Technical Note (TN) has been prepared by Peter Brett Associates, now part of Stantec (PBA), on behalf of the Ernest Cook Trust (ECT) and Gloucestershire County Council (GCC). It provides an overview of the highway and transport technical studies completed to date in support of the promotion of "Land at Wisloe".
- 1.2. This site is identified in the Stroud District Council Local Plan Review Emerging Strategy Paper November 2018 as PS37 Land at Wisloe: at least 1,500 dwellings by year 2040, 5ha employment land, retail, community uses and open space.
- 1.3. PBA conducted a detailed site visit on Wednesday 21st August 2019. The purpose of the site visit was to identify the constraints and opportunities associated with the site and to inform the development of the potential vehicular, walk/cycle and public transport access strategy.
- 1.4. Feedback received from Scoping Workshops and consultation events held to date has been used to understand baseline local conditions and development of the access strategies.
- 1.5. PBA has also engaged with Highways England and Gloucestershire County Council, as the relevant highway authorities, at this early stage to discuss the emerging proposals for the site and way forward in terms of potential impacts and mitigation requirements.

#### **Site Location**

- 1.6. The site comprises approximately 135 hectares of land located between the A38 and the M5 approximately six kilometres south of Junction 13 of the M5. The location of the site is shown on **Figure 1**.
- 1.7. Slimbridge village is around 1.2 kilometres to the north of the site where there is a primary school and post office. Cam is located around 2.5 kilometres to the south where a wide range of facilities can be accessed including a Tesco supermarket, doctors, retail and employment opportunities.

#### **DOCUMENT ISSUE RECORD**

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1.8. Bus stops are located along the A4135 with services operating at around an hourly frequency, and Cam and Dursley railway station is located around 2 kilometres walk distance from the site offering connections towards Bristol, Gloucester and the Midlands.

#### 2. Planning Policy

#### Stroud Local Plan

- 2.1. The site is identified in the Stroud District Local Plan Review Emerging Strategy Paper (November 2018) for a "new settlement ... where there is the potential to create new sustainable communities along garden village principles". Wisloe is identified within the Berkeley Cluster for "at least 1,500 dwellings by year 2040, 5 ha employment land, retail, community uses and open space".
- 2.2. Page 34 of the document confirms that:
  - "At Wisloe (south of Cambridge and Slimbridge) the strategy envisages: delivery of a new garden village community incorporating housing, employment, shopping, community and open space uses, with the opportunity to improve access to local facilities for existing residents and businesses whilst protecting the setting of existing villages."
- 2.3. The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (April 2018) confirms that there "are capacity issues at peak times at [M5] junction 12, 13 and 14 serving the south of the District within South Gloucestershire", and page 35 of the Emerging Strategy Paper goes on to confirm that the Emerging Strategy:
  - "will require improvements to M5 Junction 14, but may also benefit from public transport and other planned improvements to services and facilities within this wider area."
- 2.4. The Local Plan also identifies the Cam and Dursley cycle route (and any proposed future extension to Uley) for protection from harmful development.

#### **Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan 2015-2032**

- 2.5. The Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan 2015 2031 (LTP) sets out the long-term transport strategy for Gloucestershire up to 2031 and identifies not only the issues and priorities for the county but the approach to managing transport demand.
- 2.6. Within the LTP, the 'Connecting Places Strategy' (CPS) for Stroud (including "Cam, Dursley... and surrounding areas") is detailed, within which Cam is confirmed to be one of five "strategic growth locations", and states that:
  - "By concentrating development within or adjacent to the District's larger settlements, the strategy should make delivery of new and improved transport infrastructure easier and more viable (to serve both existing and new communities). Potential links to rail, bus and other forms of public transport and the strategic road network are all maximised by choosing to locate... at the larger settlement areas of Stroud. Cam and Stonehouse."
- 2.7. The LTP confirms that relevant key issues facing the area include:
  - Traffic congestion on the A419 corridor;
  - Limited active travel routes linking communities;
  - Motorway junctions which may reach their capacity during the plan period;
  - A lack of bus timetable information and limited timing and reliability of bus/ train connections;

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- Inadequate bus and rail services to Bristol, Gloucester and London.
- 2.8. The LTP states that:
  - "There is a real desire to improve rail access through the Greater Bristol MetroWest project which, during phase 2 of the project, could see more services extended to Gloucester via Cam & Dursley... [additionally] As with rail there is a real desire to increase cycle use among local communities"
- 2.9. GCC note that they are "looking at expanding the size of the car park and improve cycle links to reduce the need to travel by car when accessing" Cam & Dursley railway station, and note that whilst they acknowledge that services could be improved, it is "hoped that linkages to the expanded MetroWest service would address this."
- 2.10. Additionally, station improvements are identified as a long-term investment, with a proposed timescale of 2021 to 2026.

## 3. Existing Transport Conditions

#### **Strategic Highway Network**

- 3.1. The M5 motorway abuts the southern boundary of the site. Junction 13 is located around six kilometres to the north and Junction 14 is located around 12 kilometres to the south, both of which are accessed via the A38.
- 3.2. The M5 runs between Exeter and Birmingham with sections of 3 and 4-lane motorways and smart motorways established on much of the route. The section of motorway between Junctions 13 and 14 has three mainline lanes and is not Smart motorway controlled.
- 3.3. The site is located adjacent to the A38, approximately six kilometres south of Junction 13 and 12 kilometres north of Junction 14 of the M5 motorway.
- 3.4. A comprehensive improvement scheme is being implemented along the A419 corridor between Stonehouse and M5 Junction 13. The scheme includes a package of improvements to junctions and carriageway widening along the corridor incorporating improvements to the pedestrian and cycle network. Work began in March 2019 at the Chipmans Platt roundabout, with work being undertaken sequentially West to East along the corridor until Spring 2020.
- 3.5. The scheme aims to improve the operational capacity of the corridor, support planned growth in the vicinity of the corridor, Stonehouse and Stroud, and improve pedestrian/ cycling facilities.

#### **Local Highway Network**

3.6. The Local Highway Network is shown on **Figure 1.** 

#### <u>A38</u>

3.7. The A38 abuts the site at its northern extent on a southwest – north east alignment. The A38 extends north towards Gloucester at M5 Junction 13 in the north, and Bristol and M5 Junction 14 in the south. Footways are provided on the northern side of the carriageway and at the roundabout junction. It is subject to a 50mph speed limit in the vicinity of the site.

#### A4135

3.8. The A4135 bisects the site and forms a roundabout junction with the A38. It then follows a northwest to southeast alignment providing access to Dursley.



- 3.9. A narrow footway is provided on the eastern side of the road only between the A38 roundabout and the Dursley Road which crosses the Bristol to Birmingham railway line, separated from the carriageway for the majority of its length by a one metre wide grass verge.
- 3.10. Immediately south of the railway bridge, the footway briefly terminates at Brunel Road, which is an access road to several dwellings and runs which is broadly parallel with the A4135. On site observations suggest that pedestrians continue to walk on the verge and within Brunel Road. The footway begins again to the south of Brunel Road towards Box Road.

#### **Dursley Road and Wisloe Road**

- 3.11. Dursley Road and Wisloe Road are minor unclassified roads that extend across the site to link the A4135 with Cambridge to the north. Both are single carriageway of variable width, with limited pedestrian and cycle infrastructure.
- 3.12. The roads facilitate access to a small number of dwellings, industrial units, and local facilities including Slimbridge AFC.

#### **Unnamed Track**

3.13. An unnamed farm track abuts the site to the south. GCC has confirmed that the track is publicly maintained highway; the through connection of which was stopped up when the M5 was constructed. The lane appears to provide access into the agricultural land to the north. It is not lit, and marks part of the southern border of the site.

## St John's Road

- 3.14. St John's Road is a lit, single carriageway road which provides access into Slimbridge village and onwards to the Slimbridge Wetland Centre. It is subject to a speed limit of 30mph with footways provided on at least one side.
- 3.15. Slimbridge Primary School is located around 60 metres north of the A38 roundabout. A warning sign with flashing lights is located on the approach to the school. "School Keep Clear" zig-zag lines and barriers to prevent parking are present along the school's frontage with further 'keep clear' markings to the north.

#### **Box Road**

- 3.16. Box Road forms the minor arm of a priority junction with the A4135 approximately 600 metres south of the Dursley Road overbridge. It is a lit, single carriageway road which extends on a broadly northeast southwest alignment from the A4135 in the south to Cam and Dursley railway station in the north.
- 3.17. The carriageway is approximately 5.5 metres wide and is subject to a speed limit of 30mph.
- **3.18.** Footways of variable width and quality are provided on at least one side of the carriageway for its entire length. Dropped kerbs are provided where it is necessary to cross the road.
- 3.19. On-site observations show that a priority chicane has been installed towards the southern extent of Box Road which would give priority to traffic travelling in a southbound direction.
- 3.20. At the Design Workshop we understand that concerns were raised about the layout of the junction between Box Road and the A4135. Whilst dropped kerbs and tactile paving is provided, the island located in the centre of the bellmouth is not currently designed for use as a pedestrian refuge. Visibility to oncoming vehicles for pedestrians wishing to cross the carriageway in this location was observed to be below recommended design standards.

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3.21. As part of ongoing development schemes coming forward on Box Road the disused railway line which connects Box Road with Draycott Mills to the southeast, will be converted into a pedestrian/cycleway. This will emerge on to Box Road around 100 metres north of the junction with the A4135. The route comprises part of the 'Cam, Dursley & Uley Greenway' project (lead by various councils, and the community), which when complete will provide an 8 kilometre cycle, horse rider & pedestrian route linking Cam (up to Cam & Dursley railway station), Dursley and Uley and eventually the National Cycle Network Route 41 in Slimbridge.

#### **Committed Development**

- 3.22. There are a number of committed development sites located along the Box Road corridor which include improvements to the local highway network including:
  - works to the A4135 junction with Box Road including the provision of a 2-metre-wide footway on the northern side;
  - (ii) improvements to the pedestrian network in Cam, including the installation of uncontrolled crossings and the upgrading of existing footpaths;
  - (iii) mitigation scheme at the A38 / A4135 roundabout; and
  - (iv) improvements to the footway/cycleway along the former railway line which connects Box Road with Draycott Mills (PRoW number CAM 28).

#### **Existing Public Transport**

#### **Bus Services**

- 3.23. The closest bus stops to the site are located on the A4135 at Wisloe Road and Coaley Junction and are served by several bus services, shown on **Figure 1**.
- 3.24. Additionally, the 'Crossroads' bus stops on the A38 are located to the west of the site and are served by additional services. Overall there are a range of bus services which provide accessibility by non-car modes to local facilities and to employment destinations further afield. Services 60 and 60F provide commuting services to Gloucester and Service 60 and 62 provide connections to Thornbury and Bristol City Centre. Bus Service 65 operates every two hours but provides opportunity for commuting to Stroud. Bus services 60,62 and 65 also serve Dursley Hospital and Cam & Dursley town centres.
- 3.25. Additional bus stops are located at the Gossington turn on the A38, which are served by one morning and one evening school service in each direction.

#### **Rail Services**

- 3.26. Cam & Dursley train station is located on the Bristol to Birmingham line. The station provides direct connections to Bristol, Gloucester, Cheltenham, Ashchurch for Tewkesbury, Worcester and Great Malvern. Journey times to Bristol Temple Meads is approximately 40 minutes while journey time to Yate and Gloucester is around 13 minutes.
- 3.27. The station has cycle parking facilities for 30 bicycles and 90 car parking spaces. There is a ticket machine and each platform has a shelter and seating. A ramped footbridge over the railway line provides access between the two platforms.
- 3.28. Feedback from the Design Workshops suggest that the station operates over capacity which can result in overspill parking on Box Road.

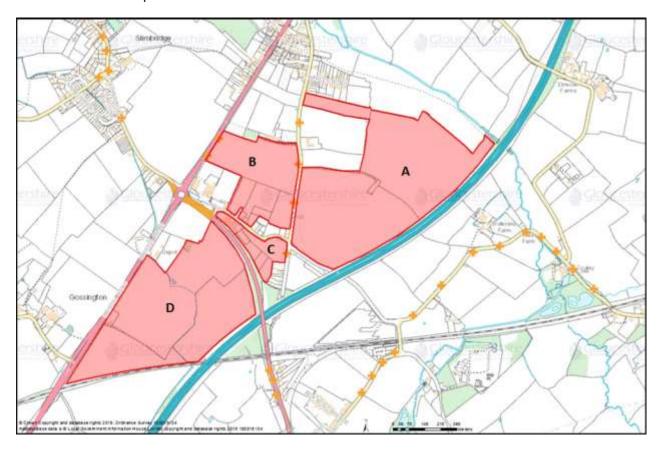
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# 4. Potential Site Access Strategy Options

- 4.1. PBA has undertaken an initial review of the potential vehicular, pedestrian / cycle and public transport strategy for the site. A preliminary review of the potential options for access to the development parcels is provided, including location and form, based on our initial observations and will inform the ongoing development of the Masterplan and access strategy.
- 4.2. The Potential Site Access Strategy is illustrated on Figure 2.
- 4.3. For the purpose of describing the access strategy in this TN, the development parcels have been labelled as follows:

Plate 4.1: Development Land Parcels



4.4. The options set out below should be considered as conceptual only at this stage. Each of the options will be subject to further technical investigations including traffic modelling, detailed design, and a review of highway boundary data, land ownership data, and topographical surveys in due course.

#### **Potential Vehicular Access Options**

#### Potential vehicular access from the A38

4.5. Primary vehicular access into development parcels **B** and **D** could be taken from the A38, north and south of the A38/ A4135 roundabout respectively. This would provide the most direct access to the strategic road network.



- 4.6. Any design would need to comply with the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) standards due to the existing speed limit on the A38, and the composition of vehicles proposed to use the junction in the future (i.e. whether HGVs and buses will require access).
- 4.7. Following discussions with highway officers at GCC, their initial views are that access points on the A38 may impact on the operation of the A38/ A4135 /St John's Road roundabout and that this would require further consideration in due course.
- 4.8. Subject to confirmation of technical investigation in due course, at this stage PBA consider that it is possible to provide access to Parcel B and D in these locations.

#### Potential vehicular access from the A4135

- 4.9. The site is bisected by the A4135. It will therefore be important to connect the development parcels to the north and south of the road to provide integration and connectivity across the site.
- 4.10. Primary vehicular access into development parcels C and D could be taken from the A4135. Initial discussions with GCC highway officers suggest that this is their preferred approach. A number of different options could be considered here, including:
  - Construction of a new roundabout on the A4135 with access arms into each of the development parcels;
  - b) Construction of two independent ghost island priority junctions from each development parcel onto the A4135, or;
  - c) A signalised junction arrangement.
- 4.11. Any of the above site access junction options to Parcel C would be required to incorporate either:
  - d) the stopping up of Wisloe Road to the east of the access road to the north of the A4135 (except for access to existing dwellings etc.), or
  - e) the creation of priority junctions on to the site access road.
  - f) It is likely that any design would need to comply with DMRB standards considering the existing speed limit of 50mph along the site frontage. However, reducing the speed limit to 40mph along the A4135 should be considered.
- 4.12. All of the above would need to take into account the potential for integrated pedestrian/ cycle and bus access.

#### Potential vehicular access from Wisloe Road and Dursley Road

- 4.13. Secondary vehicular access points could also be taken from Wisloe Road and / or Dursley Road to connect development parcels A, B and C where they are bisected by the roads.
- 4.14. Whilst the existing speed limit on the corridor is 60mph, it is likely that this would be reduced as part of the proposals. The form of any potential junction(s) in this location would likely need to be compliant with either Manual for Streets (MfS) or DMRB (depending on the proposed nature of the proposed street).
- 4.15. Potential access/ connection forms include:
  - 1. Construction of individual priority junctions from each development parcel onto Dursley Road;

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- Construction of a new roundabout with access arms into each development parcel. The northernmost arm could be restricted to use by for buses and access to existing dwellings only.
- 3. Realignment of Wisloe Road into the site, with a simple priority junction formed to serve existing dwellings to the east.
- 4.16. To the north of **Parcel A**, land is available to provide a connection to Dursley Road, emerging around 75 metres south of Narles Road. The site frontage appears to measure around 45 metres in this location. Whilst this land has not been considered in detail at this stage, PBA consider that this could provide bus only access, or a "green corridor" for pedestrian and cycle access only. The suitability of this link will need to be considered further in due course.
- 4.17. The above options would need to be considered in terms of their appropriateness for pedestrian/ cycle and bus access, especially as Dursley Road could be considered as a potential bus route with associated bus gate. Initial discussions with GCC and bus operators suggest that this is a desirable option.

# **Potential Pedestrian/ Cycle Access Options**

- 4.18. Pedestrian and cycle access into and between the development parcels could be provided from the vehicular access options on to the A38, A4135, Wisloe Road and Dursley Road.
- 4.19. Additional segregated pedestrian and / or cycle connections could also be provided from public rights of way, the A38, A4135, Dursley Road and / or Wisloe Road.
- 4.20. There will be a requirement for crossing points at site access junctions and within the development parcels to provide integration and connectivity across the site. Options for crossing points include:
  - Controlled crossing points to facilitate crossing between the development parcels, which could comprise Pelican, Puffin, Toucan or Zebra crossings. This could be incorporated into the access design or provided independently.
  - 2. Uncontrolled crossing points to facilitate crossing between the development parcels, which could comprise pedestrian refuge islands, dropped kerbs and tactile paving.
  - 3. Elements of shared space where the parcels meet one another along Wisloe Road and Dursley Road, and within the site.

# Options for the Provision of Enhanced Pedestrian and Cycle Connections to Cam & Dursley Railway Station

- 4.21. As set out in **Section 3**, existing pedestrian and cycle connections between the site and Cam & Dursley railway station are sub optimal.
- 4.22. Providing better connections between the site and the station will enhance the connectivity and accessibility of the site, also offering continuous links between Cam, Dursley and Slimbridge.
- 4.23. PBA therefore suggest that options for providing enhanced connections towards the station are considered as part of the ongoing development of the site. Initial options that should be considered further are to:
  - Widen the footway across the existing railway bridge by implementing shuttle working for vehicular traffic.
  - 2. Provide a new foot / cycle bridge adjacent to the existing railway bridge, tying into the existing footway connections either side of the bridge.

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- 3. Provide a new link across the M5 to the east of Dursley Lane.
- 4. Relocate the station into the site.
- 4.24. This implementation of any of the above could greatly enhance accessibility from the proposed development towards Cam & Dursley railway station, as well as providing the 'missing link' between the Cam, Dursley and Uley Greenway and NCN route 41 at Slimbridge, as shown on **Figure 3**. Each of the above options are considered further below:

#### 1. Shuttle Working

- 4.25. In order to widen the footway across the railway bridge, the width of the carriageway would need to be reduced. Given the existing widths in this location, the only option would be to introduce shuttle working across the bridge for vehicles.
- 4.26. Shuttle working could comprise a priority system with one direction giving way to the other, or the introduction of traffic signals to alternate flows across the bridge. The footway would likely be segregated from the carriageway using a physical barrier such as a raised kerb.
- 4.27. This option would be subject to discussions with the highway authority and further technical works such as traffic modelling in due course.

#### 2. New Bridge over Railway Line

- 4.28. There is the potential to provide a new pedestrian only bridge adjacent to the existing vehicle Dursley Road Overbridge.
- 4.29. This is likely to be provided to the east of the existing structure and would need to tie into the existing footways to the north and south of the bridge.
- 4.30. This option would be subject to detailed discussions and agreements with the highway authority and Network Rail in due course. Whilst there are constraints with this option, full technical investigation will be needed to assess the extent of these and the mitigatory options that could be required.

#### 3. New link over M5

- 4.31. As set out in **Section 3**, there is an existing field access track leading from Dursley Road towards the M5. GCC have confirmed that this route, and the track to the south of the motorway in this location, is maintained at public expense.
- 4.32. There is the potential to provide a pedestrian and cycle link across the motorway in this location to connect to existing provisions.
- 4.33. This could be in the form of a new bridge over the motorway, or a subway under the motorway (noting that we understand there may have historically been a cattle crossing in this location).
- 4.34. As there is no existing infrastructure on either side of the motorway in this location, any new bridge will need to provide ramped access at gradients of no more than 1:12. This should be taken into consideration when looking at land take, for example.
- 4.35. This option would be subject to detailed discussions and agreement with Highways England in due course. Initial discussions with HE suggest that this was potentially acceptable and would provide a sustainable link between the site and the railway station.
- 4.36. A preliminary review has highlighted that as the footbridge will need to span over the 6 lanes and hard shoulders of the M5 carriageway and would therefore need to be single span with no intermediate supports.

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4.37. To tie in the proposed link over the M5, a new bridge over the railway line may be required or a new access to the station will need to be provided from the north.

#### 4. Relocating existing Cam Dursley Station into the site

- 4.38. At recent design workshops, it was suggested that the existing Cam & Dursley station could be relocated into the site to provide enhanced connectivity for future residents.
- 4.39. The existing station site opened in 1994, however we understand that a station (Coaley Junction / Dursley Road) was previously located around 400 metres further south of the existing site with a spur to Cam & Dursley via the Dursley and Midland Junction Railway branch. This subsequently closed in 1970.
- 4.40. However, the previous station location is on a bend on the railway and would therefore require curved platforms. This is not desirable. In any event, it does not abut the boundary of the site.
- 4.41. The only location where the existing railway abuts the site boundary is at least 800 metres to the south of the existing station, to the west of the M5.
- 4.42. The cost of relocating the station, plus additional provision of a footbridge to facilitate access across the railway and / or M5, are likely to prove to be an unviable option for the delivery of the site.
- 4.43. Access for existing users, as well as potential new users in consented schemes, of the station would also need to be considered. Moving the station would mean it is further from existing facilities at Cam and Dursley, and as such one or a combination of options 1 to 3 set out above would also likely be necessary. Furthermore it is likely that this would be vociferously objected to by the developers of development along Box Road who would have progressed these schemes on the basis of good accessibility and hence sustainability of their site.

#### **Potential Public Transport Strategy Options**

- 4.44. It will be necessary to ensure that a high quality and effective public transport system will be in operation in order to maximise the opportunities for sustainable travel and secure a low level of private car use.
- 4.45. The location of the site and the existing local public transport network mean that several options are initially being considered for improvement of services in the Wisloe area. These are:
  - Extension / diversion of services 60/61 into the development;
  - Provision of a new service; and
  - Provision of bus priority infrastructure.
- 4.46. The potential for delivering any of the above options is proposed to be investigated further by PBA and be the subject of further discussions with GCC and bus operators. However, early views from Stagecoach at the Design Workshop suggested that there is the potential for bus service improvements that could support development at Wisloe.
- 4.47. There is the potential to provide a bus gate on Dursley Road in the vicinity of development parcels A and B. This would consist of a short section of road for the use of buses, taxis and cyclists only to provide a more direct connection for buses between the A38 and the development site.
- 4.48. As part of this, through traffic on Dursley Road could be restricted and existing dwellings to the north of the corridor would be required to use the A38 junction at Cambridge for all routes. This is not considered unreasonable given the location of these dwellings.

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- 4.49. This bus gate would need to be supported by a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) and appropriate signage.
- 4.50. The public transport strategy could deliver a development which is fully permeable and accessible by bus.

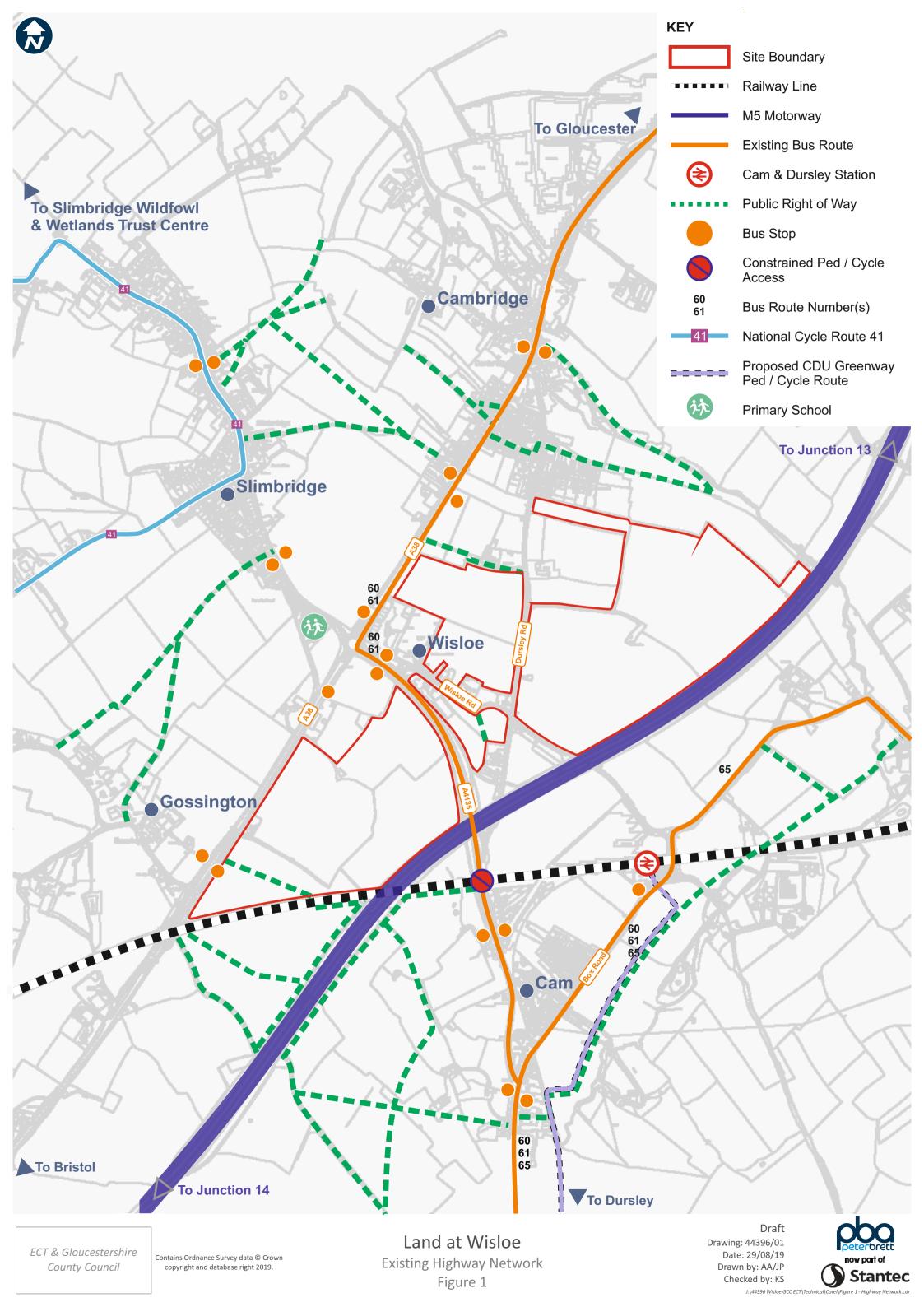
# 5. Summary and Conclusions

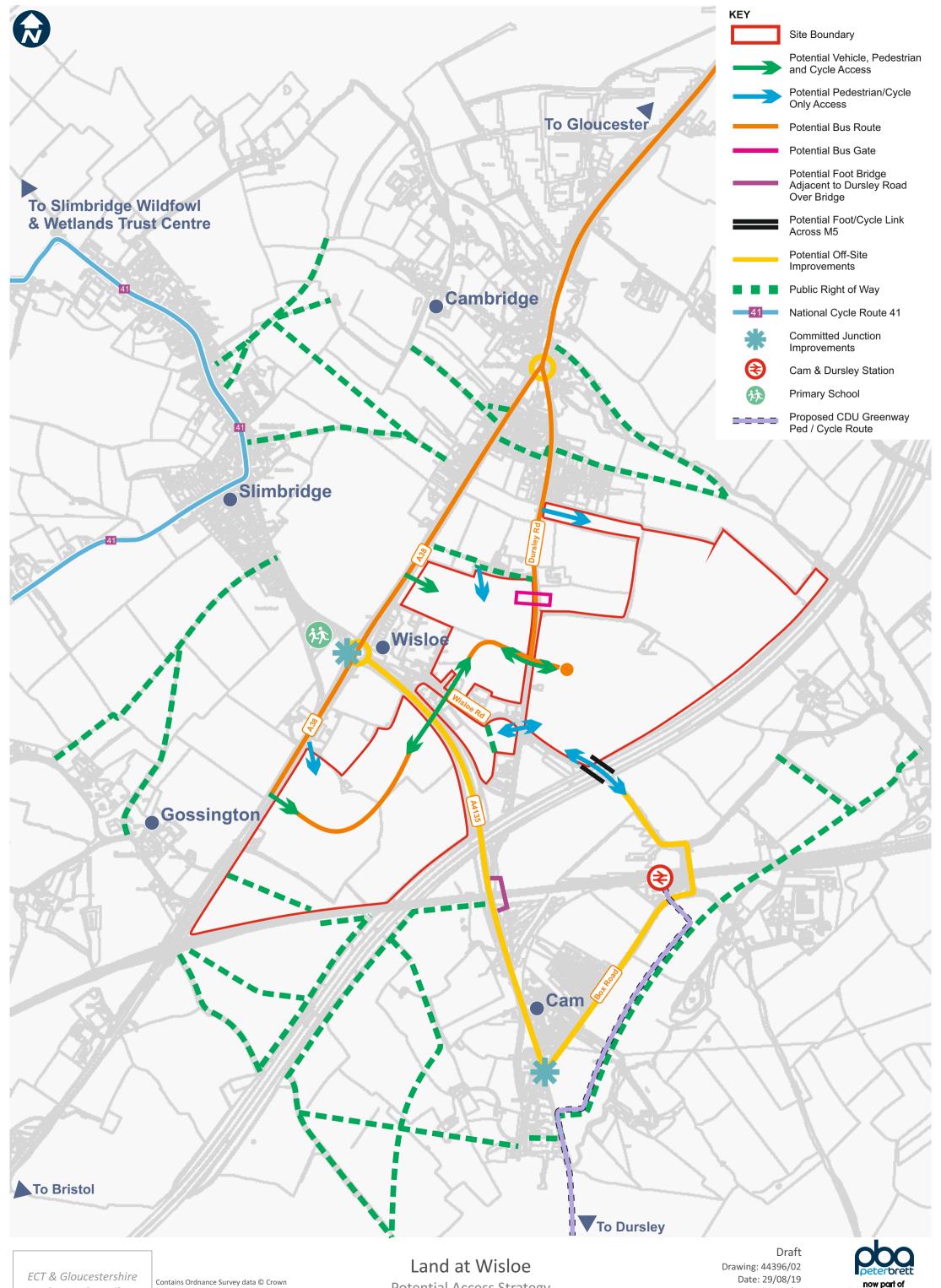
- 5.1. This Technical Note (TN) has been prepared to provide an overview of the highway and transport technical studies completed to date in support of the promotion of land of "Land at Wisloe".
- 5.2. This TN identifies the constraints and opportunities associated with the site and considers the potential vehicular, pedestrian / cycle and public transport strategy for the site which will inform the ongoing development of the Masterplan.
- 5.3. Further detailed technical work will be required in due course to confirm the suitability of precise junction locations. However, it has been confirmed that vehicular, pedestrian and cycle access options can be achieved from the A38, A4135, Wisloe Road and / or Dursley Road.
- 5.4. Positive discussions have been held with GCC and HE to date, and the authorities will continue to be engaged in the development of the emerging site strategy going forward.
- 5.5. The location of the site and the existing local public transport network mean that several options are available to provide a comprehensive public transport strategy for the development.
- 5.6. Improved connections towards Cam & Dursley railway station should be considered further, including the potential for pedestrian and cycle routes across the railway line and M5, to enhance the sustainability credentials of the site.

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# **TECHNICAL NOTE**

# **Figures**





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