

PROOF OF EVIDENCE

The Leicestershire County Council (A6006 Zouch Bridge Replacement) Bridge Scheme 2017

Department for Transport Ref: NATTRAN/EM/LAO/144

The Leicestershire County Council (A6006 Zouch Bridge Replacement, Classified Road) (Side Roads) Order 2017 – Pursuant to the Highways (Inquiries Procedure) Rules 1994

Department for Transport Ref: NATTRAN/EM/LAO/144

The Leicestershire County Council (A6006 Zouch Bridge Replacement) Compulsory Purchase Order 2017 – Pursuant to the Compulsory Purchase (Inquiries Procedure) Rules 2007

Department for Transport Ref: NATTRAN/EM/LAO/144

Witness:-

Wendy Crawford BSc Dip LA CMLI

Landscape Architect, Environment, Policy and Strategy Team,
Environment and Transport Department
Leicestershire County Council

Date: 31 July 2018

1 WITNESS DETAILS, ROLE AND RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

- 1.1 **Wendy Crawford** (Landscape Architect), Leicestershire County Council (LCC).
- 1.2 I have worked for LCC for 30 years, dealing with landscape related aspects of minerals, waste and Regulation 3 planning applications, transport infrastructure projects and preparing and co-ordinating environmental improvement schemes throughout the county.
- 1.3 I have been a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute since 1989.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 As a landscape architect for Leicestershire County Council I was originally made aware of the poor condition of the Zouch Bridge and of the need for a scheme to replace it in 2016. I was informed of the proposals to replace the Zouch Bridge in August 2016. Given the nature of the scheme to replace an existing structure as close as possible to its current location I anticipated that my involvement would be limited, at least initially. It was not a new route or road, which would require landscape input but rather my involvement would arise as part of the detailed landscape requirements after the location of the new bridge had been established. My understanding proved to be correct and since August 2016 I have maintained a watching brief as the replacement scheme progressed. It was always intended that any planning permission obtained would be made conditional on the provision of appropriate landscape measures and that I would be responsible for developing them.
- 2.2 I have been requested to design landscape proposals for the Scheme. In carrying out my design approach as a Chartered Landscape Architect I have applied my 30 years experience of transport infrastructure projects with regard to the Landscape Institute's general principles of landscape design, including determining the needs and desires of users, understanding the site and identifying the opportunities in order to develop an integrated landscape design solution.
- 2.3 There are two components of landscape and visual assessment, assessment of effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right and assessment of effects on specific views and

on the general visual amenity experienced by people. Throughout this evidence the two elements will be referred to jointly as landscape impacts.

- 2.4 Planning Permission for the replacement bridge has been granted and it is subject to planning conditions, including landscape proposals being designed and approved prior to the commencement of construction.
- 2.5 Throughout this evidence I will refer to the totality of the proposals to replace the bridge with a new structure as shown on the plans in my Appendix A as 'the Scheme'. I will treat it as a single element despite the fact that it is subject to two separate planning consents to reflect the fact the bridge spans two local authority areas as that is not a consideration I need to take into account. Leicestershire County Council is responsible for the whole Scheme and I have been asked to design the landscape proposals for all of it.
- 2.6 I am involved in the preparation of the requisite landscape proposals which will include the condition to determine suitable planting for the various areas within the site, including the landscaping of the redundant highway carriageway and footway areas, the side slopes to the realigned carriageway slopes and replacement vegetation prior to the construction phase.
- 2.7 I have therefore, pursuant to the granting of planning permission, started to design landscape proposals for the Scheme in order to deal with the landscaping impacts.
- 2.8 As part of this design I have incorporated landscape proposals which will serve to mitigate against the concerns raised by Mr R Farrow, of 25 Main Street, in his objection as follows:-
- ***I am against the proposals which would bring the traffic nearer to your house leading to increased noise.***
 - ***The scheme proposes to lose trees and take quite a big chunk of land***
 - ***My proposed alternative is that the current bridge is demolished and the traffic temporarily diverted while the new bridge is built in the same location as the existing bridge.***
 - ***My suggestion would not require compensation, which means that it would be cheaper for the Council.***

- 2.9 The particular objections relating to landscape matters are the loss of trees and the loss of 'a big chunk of land' as described in the first two bullet point of the objection.
- 2.10 The drawing 2/23/176/1, which is included at appendix A comprises the landscape proposals for the Scheme.
- 2.11 The drawing. 2/23/176/2, which is included at appendix B, provides the landscape proposals which indicates the various species of shrubs and trees to be planted in the areas adjacent to 25, Main Street.
- 2.12 The approach adopted which applies throughout the Scheme as shown on the plan at appendix A, although it is described in more detail in respect of Main Street in appendix B is as follows. A dense mixture of native broadleaved and evergreen trees and shrubs are proposed which, in conjunction with the solid barrier of the close board fence, will provide a visual screen, will help to reinforce noise mitigation and will benefit wildlife. The trees and shrubs will help reduce the perception of noise by creating a visual barrier between the A6006 and the residential properties along Main Street. The vegetation will also help to mask the traffic noise through the rustling of leaves and movement of branches. No fence provision is intended west of the river as it is not required as the road is further from the property.

3 PROOF OF EVIDENCE

- 3.4 The potential landscape impacts and effects which can arise from the Scheme are loss of habitat, trees, hedgerow and grassland and increased visibility of the road and vehicles on the road from immediate properties and the surrounding landscape. I have therefore been instructed, pursuant to conditions 12 and 13 of planning permission reference 2017/0878/02 (2017/Reg3Ma/0097/LCC) granted on the 16th July 2018 to design the landscape proposals for the Scheme. Although that planning permission technically only related to the part of the Scheme within Leicestershire I have prepared a landscape proposal for the whole Scheme as I anticipate that a similar condition will be imposed on any planning permission issued by Rushcliffe Borough Council.

- 3.5 The landscape proposals for the Scheme are shown on drawing 2/23/176/1, which is included at appendix A and comprises an indicative proposal for each of the identified areas.
- 3.6 The existing redundant highway carriageway and footway will be broken up and part topsoiled and planted with native tree and shrub species such as *Betula pendula* (Silver Birch), *Salix caprea* (Goat Willow) and *Sorbus aucuparia* (Rowan) and part left to naturally regenerate to maximise opportunities for biodiversity, especially pollinating insects and invertebrates.
- 3.7 The side slopes to the realigned carriageway will be planted with native tree and shrub species locally common to the area to provide compensatory and additional habitats for wildlife. Species have been chosen for their range of wildlife benefits including value for pollinating insects, birds, mammals and invertebrates. Species will include both broadleaved and evergreen species to provide all year round interest and vegetation cover. Species will include *Acer campestre* (Field maple), *Cornus sanguinea* (Dogwood), *Crataegus monogyna* (Hawthorn), *Corylus avellana* (Hazel), *Viburnum opulus* (Guelder Rose), *Ligustrum vulgare* (Wild Privet) and *Ilex aquifolium* (Holly).
- 3.8 The areas surrounding the open ditches will be seeded with wildflower grass seed to provide a complementary habitat for areas of trees and shrubs and to increase biodiversity. A wet wildflower grassland mix will be used to compliment and boost wetland habitats within the Soar Valley.
- 3.9 The areas of highway verge will be seeded with a low maintenance highway verge grass seed to enable maintenance operations to maintain clear grass margins against the carriageway.
- 3.10 The landscape proposals for the areas adjacent to 25, Main Street, Zouch (Mr Farrow's residence) is outlined in drawing 2/23/176/2, which is included at appendix B and comprises the following:-

- 3.11 The proposed native trees and shrubs are species locally common to the area to provide compensatory and additional habitats for wildlife. Species have been chosen for their range of wildlife benefits including value for pollinating insects, birds, mammals and invertebrates. Species will include both broadleaved and evergreen species to provide all year round interest and vegetation cover. Species will include *Acer campestre* (Field maple), *Cornus sanguinea* (Dogwood), *Crataegus monogyna* (Hawthorn), *Corylus avellana* (Hazel), *Viburnum opulus* (Guelder Rose), *Ligustrum vulgare* (Wild Privet) and *Ilex aquifolium* (Holly).
- 3.12 The proposed hedgerows will comprise a native species mix chosen to comprise species locally common to the area including *Crataegus monogyna* (Hawthorn), *Corylus avellana* (Hazel), *Viburnum opulus* (Guelder Rose) and *Ligustrum vulgare* (Wild Privet). The hedgerows will be managed to achieve a desired screen height of approximately 2.50m – 3.00m and help to restore linkages between existing habitats and new planted areas.
- 3.13 The proposed hedgerows will also be planted with native heavy standard trees at 10m spacing to provide an overall height at planting of between 3.50m and 4.00m and an instant visual impact. Species chosen to comprise species locally common to the area and to include *Acer campestre* (Field maple), *Sorbus aucuparia* (Rowan) and *Alnus glutinosa* (Alder).
- 3.14 In accordance with the planning condition 13 attached to the above application the landscaping scheme will be maintained for 10 years.

4 RESPONSE

4.4 Two objections were received:

Name:	Objection to:	Specific issues:
Mr. & Mrs. Mee (Shepshed Rd, Hathern, Leics)	CPO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to their land; • Provision of acceptable gates & fences; • Public FP access.
Mr. R. Farrow (Main St, Zouch, Notts)	Bridge Scheme & SRO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in noise levels due to proximity of proposed road; • Loss of trees & land; • Preferred the route to remain on its existing line.

Note: on 20th July 2018 Mr & Mrs Mee withdrew their objection

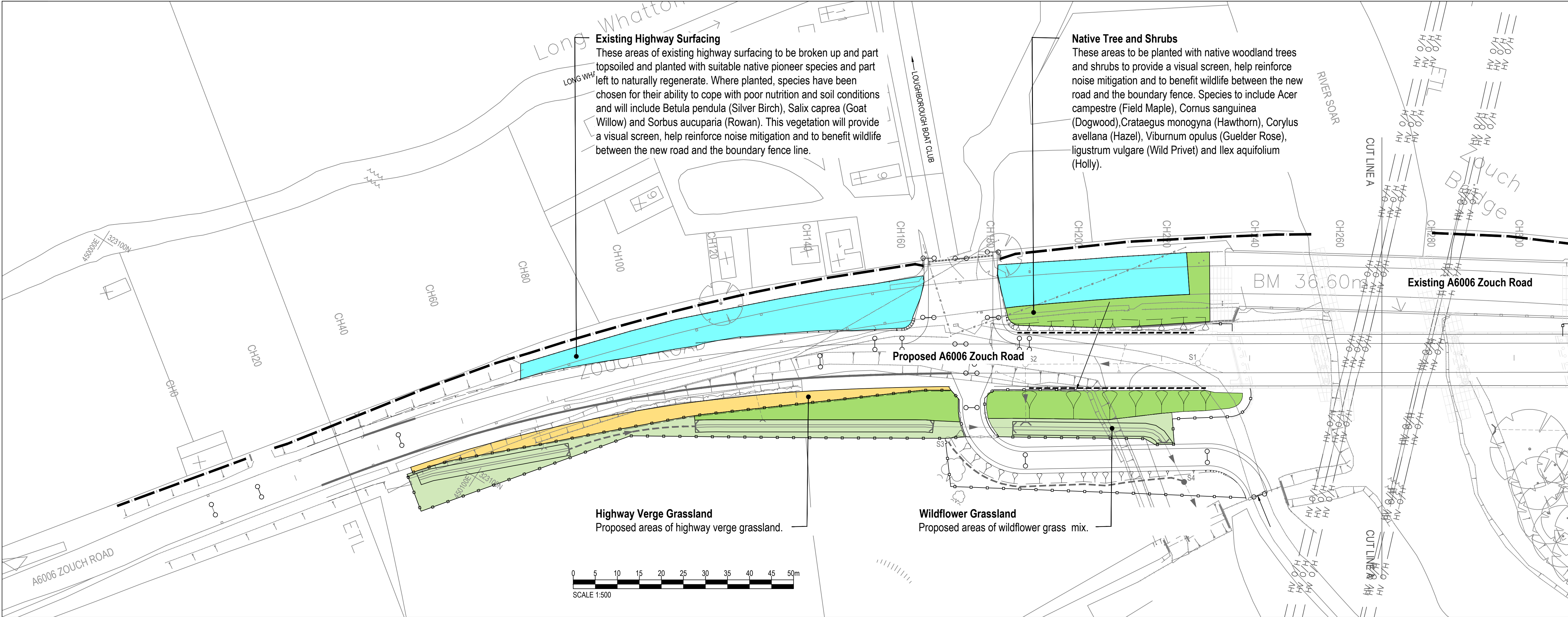
- 4.5 Mr and Mrs Mee have formally withdrawn their objections and I need not add any further comment.
- 4.6 The objection raised by Mr Farrow, as it relates to matters within my expertise has been addressed earlier within this evidence. In so far that also raises support for the alternative proposal of re-building the bridge on line I have inserted my comments into the Alternative Assessment document so that all relevant matters are contained within that one document.

5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

- 5.4 The landscape impacts relating to the replacement bridge scheme have been identified as loss of habitat, trees, hedgerow and grassland and increased visibility of the road and vehicles on the road from immediate properties and the surrounding landscape.
- 5.5 Following assessment of the site and consideration of those identified landscape impacts in my professional opinion the landscape proposals set out in appendix A will mitigate those impacts in time to ensure there is no net loss for biodiversity.
- 5.6 Additionally, following consideration of the impacts identified by Mr R Farrow, relating to the loss of trees and the loss of land, in my professional opinion the proposals suggested and identified on plan 2/23/176/2 in appendix B will mitigate any effect or consequence in landscape and visual terms arising from the Scheme. Although the specific noise change has been assessed by others the proposals I have developed will achieve a level of psychological advantage given the combination of fences and planting. It is further recommended that the landscape proposals identified on plan 2/23/176/2 in appendix B be accepted as a measure to further mitigate against the negligible increase in noise which has been calculated for the scheme and that Mr Farrow's objection to the Bridge Scheme and Side Roads Order be rebutted.

6 STATEMENT OF TRUTH

6.1 The evidence prepared by me and provided for this Inquiry in this Proof of Evidence is true and has been prepared by me in accordance with the standards and requirements of my professional institute. I confirm that the opinions expressed are my true professional opinions.



KEY

EXISTING TREES AND HEDGES TO BE RETAINED (To be protected for the duration of the construction works)

EXISTING HIGHWAY SURFACING (To be broken up and landscaped)

PROPOSED NATIVE TREE AND SHRUB PLANTING

PROPOSED HIGHWAY VERGE GRASSLAND

PROPOSED WILDFLOWER GRASSLAND

PROPOSED TIMBER POST AND FOUR RAIL FENCE

PROPOSED VEHICLE RESTRAINT SYSTEM (VRS)

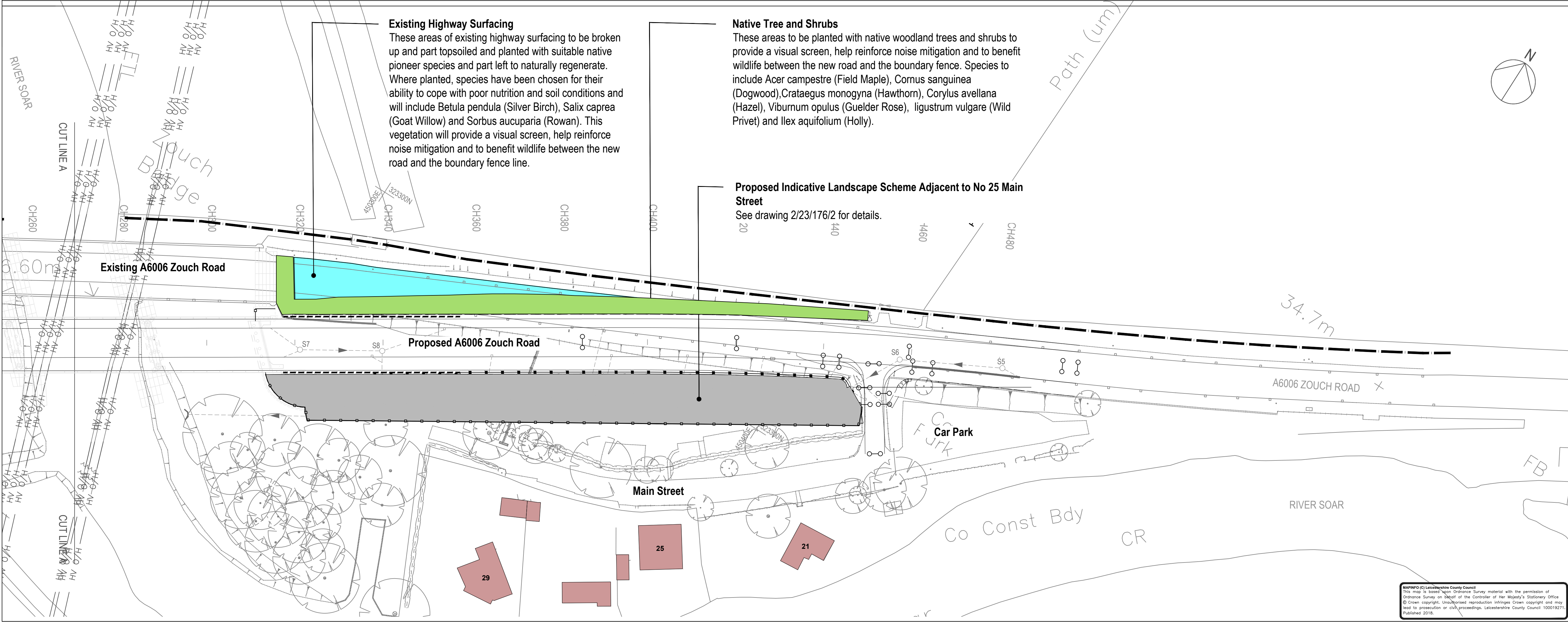
INDICATIVE LANDSCAPE SCHEME ADJACENT TO NO 25 MAIN STREET (SEE DWG 2/23/176/2)

SLOPE (Generally 1 in 2.5)

OPEN DITCH

EXISTING PROPERTIES

NOTE:
All proposed planting to be maintained for 10 years in accordance with planning condition reference: 2017/0878/02 (2017/Reg3Ma/0097/LCC).



Leicestershire County Council

ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT

ANN CARRUTHERS
DIRECTOR

Leicestershire Highways

CLIENT:
Leicestershire Highways

TITLE:
A6006 Zouch Bridge Replacement
Indicative Landscape Scheme

DRAWING NUMBER	SCALE
2/23/176/1	1:500

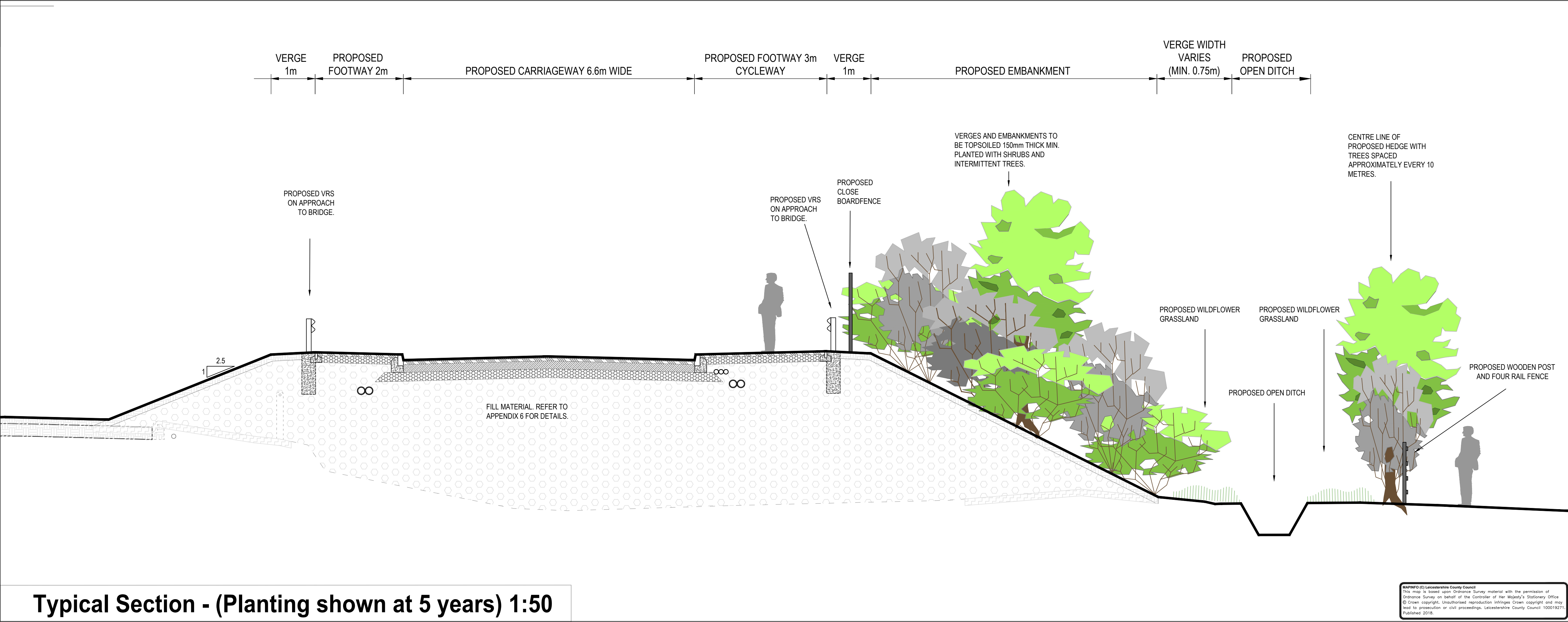
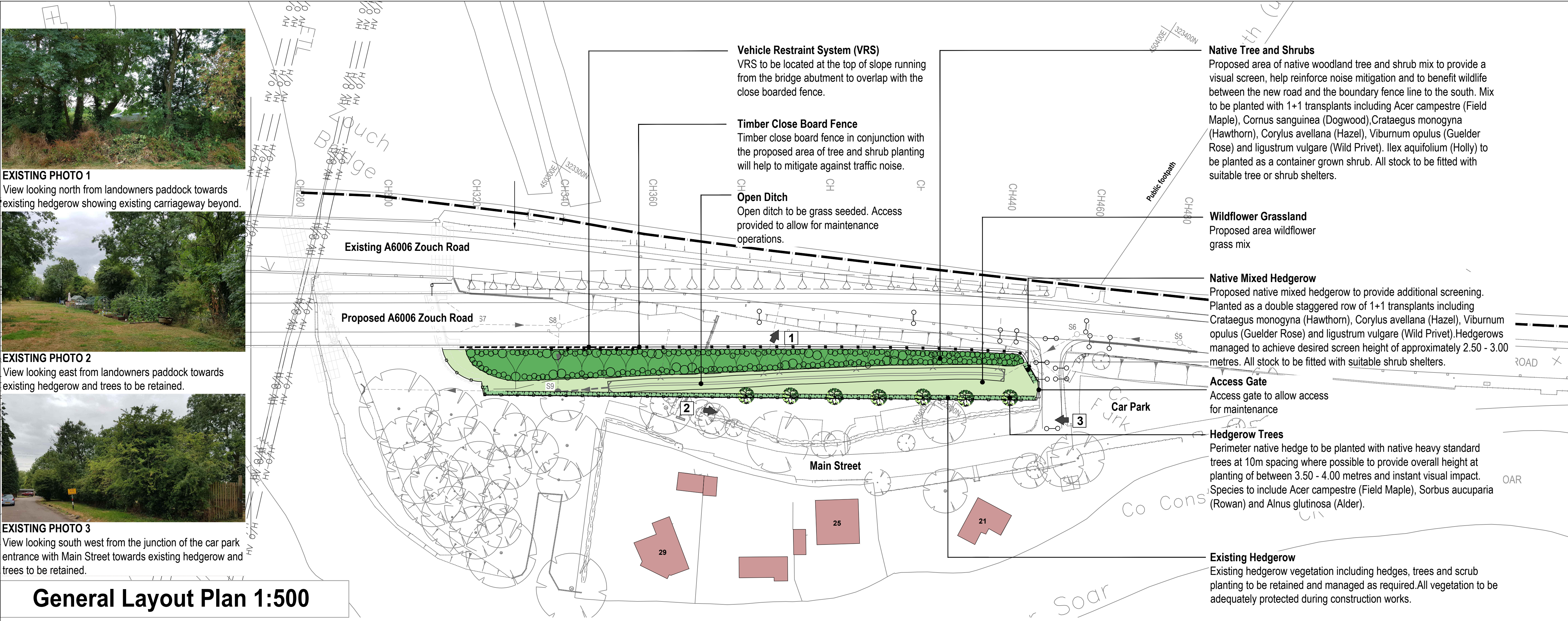
PREPARED BY:	WEC	DATE:	July 18
CHECKED BY:	BWE	SIZE:	A1
APPROVED BY:		CORR. FILE:	

AUTOCAD PROJECT DIR:

AUTOCAD FILENAME:

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Published 2018.



Leicestershire County Council

ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT

ANN CARRUTHERS DIRECTOR

Leicestershire Highways

CLIENT:
Leicestershire Highways

TITLE:
A6006 Zouch Bridge Replacement
Indicative Landscape Scheme
Adjacent to No 25 Main Street, Zouch

DRAWING NUMBER
2/23/176/2

SCALE
As shown

PREPARED BY: WEC
CHECKED BY: BWE
APPROVED BY:

DATE: July 18
SIZE: A1
CORR. FILE:

AUTOCAD PROJECT DIR:

AUTOCAD FILENAME:

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