Design and Access Statement

for

New Vehicle Turning Area

and

Towpath Surfacing

at

Sutton Cheney

Nuneaton

Leicestershire

DEVELOPMENT
SERVICES

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Planning, Design and Access Statement is in support of a Planning Application for:

Provision of a New Vehicle Turning Area and Towpath Surfacing at Sutton Cheney Wharf, Nuneaton, Leicestershire.

The purpose of this application is to improve the safety of the access to the site of a café, sanitary station and wharf whilst maintaining the quality of the site which is within the Ashby Canal and the Sutton Cheney Conservation Areas.

The overall site is owned by British Waterways, although the entrance track is owned privately. British Waterways has retained a right of access over this area from the time that the Sutton Wharf Bridge was realigned in 1974/5. The car park serving boaters and café tenants, whilst previously the subject of a lease to Leicestershire County Council, has now reverted to British Waterways.

On the Sutton Cheney Wharf, British Waterways leases the premises of the Rose café and ancillary accommodation to the Ashby Boat Trip. The sanitary provision for all is the responsibility of the café owners to keep clean and tidy using materials provided by British Waterways [See Fig.2 Ownership Plan].

The proposed works entail the formation of a hard standing area for vehicle turning and the resurfacing of the existing track leading up to it. The vehicles accessing the site will be British Waterways' maintenance vans, septic tank emptying vehicles, maintenance, vans or small lorries for deliveries to the café, and refuse collection vehicles. The construction of the vehicle turning area will allow a safer operation of maintenance/service vehicles on this site improving overall public safety and circulation in the carpark.

Further proposed work entails the resurfacing of the existing towpath and footways immediately around the cafe with 'Leo Chip' buff colour, which should provide a surface with more grip yet of natural materials in keeping with the rural locality.

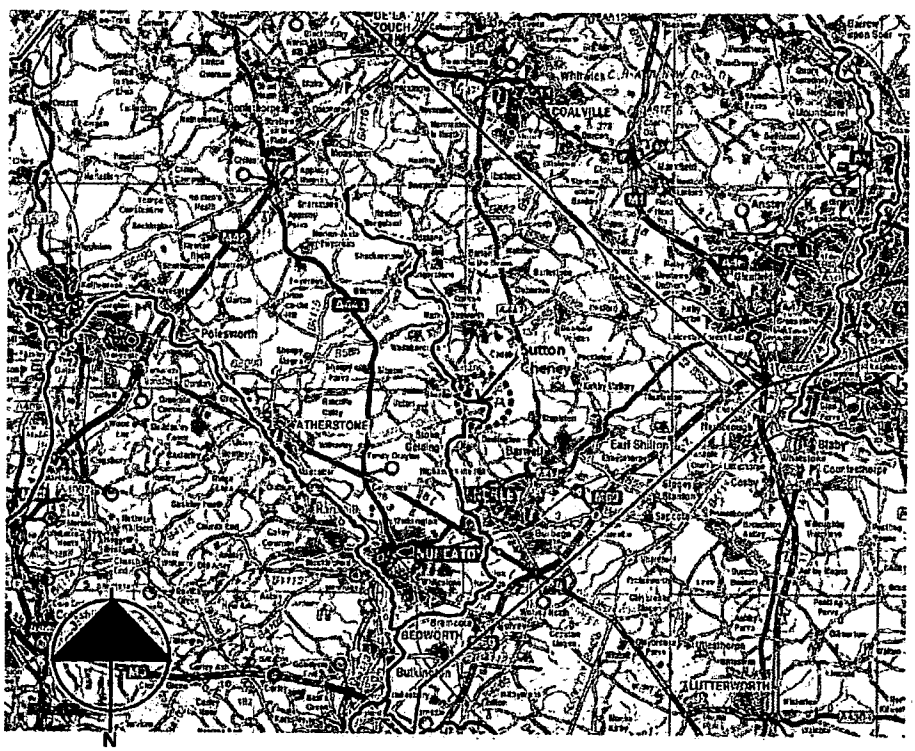

Fig 1. – Location Map

2.0 DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

The following statement has been prepared to describe in detail the design concept and access arrangements regarding the Provision of a New Vehicle Turning Area and Towpath Surfacing at Sutton Cheney Wharf, Nuneaton.

The statement needs to be read in conjunction with the deposited drawings, SC/AS- 019-03, SC/AS- 019-04 and 05 provided with the application.

The statement has been prepared having regard to the provision of PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development, in addition to the CABE's document 'Design and Access Statements: How to write, read and use them '.

2.1 Existing Site and Site Context

Grid Reference: OS 441 000, 299 413.

The application site is adjacent to the Ashby Canal, off the Sutton Wharf Bridge and Wharf Lane, which from the A5 joins the A447 via Sutton Cheney village.

The application site lies in a rural location and an extremely popular destination within its locality and from further afield with the Rose café and the Ashby Boat Trip. The site is near to the Battle of Bosworth Battlefield Heritage and Country Park centre and is part of a 9 miles circular cycle trail, the Wider Bosworth Battlefield Trail.

Ecology - The application site lies in a rural location, and is particularly important for nature conservation. The canal supports nationally important populations of Water Voles, a species that has suffered catastrophic declines throughout the United Kingdom. The adjacent land comprises of wet grassland, Springs and Flushes a recognised Biodiversity Action Plan habitat for this region. This habitat supports many species of rushes, marsh flowers, invertebrates, amphibians and breeding birds such as the Snipe, Redshank, Lapwing and Skylark. The area is also likely to be important for BAP species such as Barn Owl, with the canal potentially being important for Otter, Bat species and White Clawed Crayfish.

The proposed works and increased access have been assessed by our ecology officer and will be undertaken so as to have no detrimental effect on the ecology.

Heritage

Sutton Cheney Wharf is adjacent to the Ashby Canal and is a part of a conservation area designated in December 1990 as shown in the Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, Ashby Canal Conservation Area document[1] and as shown on Map no.6 of the same document.

The Ashby Canal is one of the oldest canals in the Midlands and runs adjacent to the Village of Sutton Cheney close to the location of Market Bosworth, site of the Historic battlefield of Bosworth.

Construction on the canal began in 1794, when an Act of Parliament was obtained for the construction of the Ashby de la Zouch Canal from the Coventry Canal at Marston Junction to Wadlands Wharf in Ashby Woulds. The primary purpose for the canal's construction was to aid distribution of coal from the Leicestershire/South Derbyshire's coalfield to a larger market than its immediate surrounding area. The first section between Ashby Woulds and Market Bosworth opened in 1798 became operational but further construction was severely hampered by escalation in the construction's cost and a reduction in the profit's of coal. These factors meant that further branches of the canal were replaced by horse-drawn tramways by 1802. The Ashby Canal was opened in its entirety in April 1804.

[1] Reasons for the designation include its considerable industrial archaeological and natural interest.

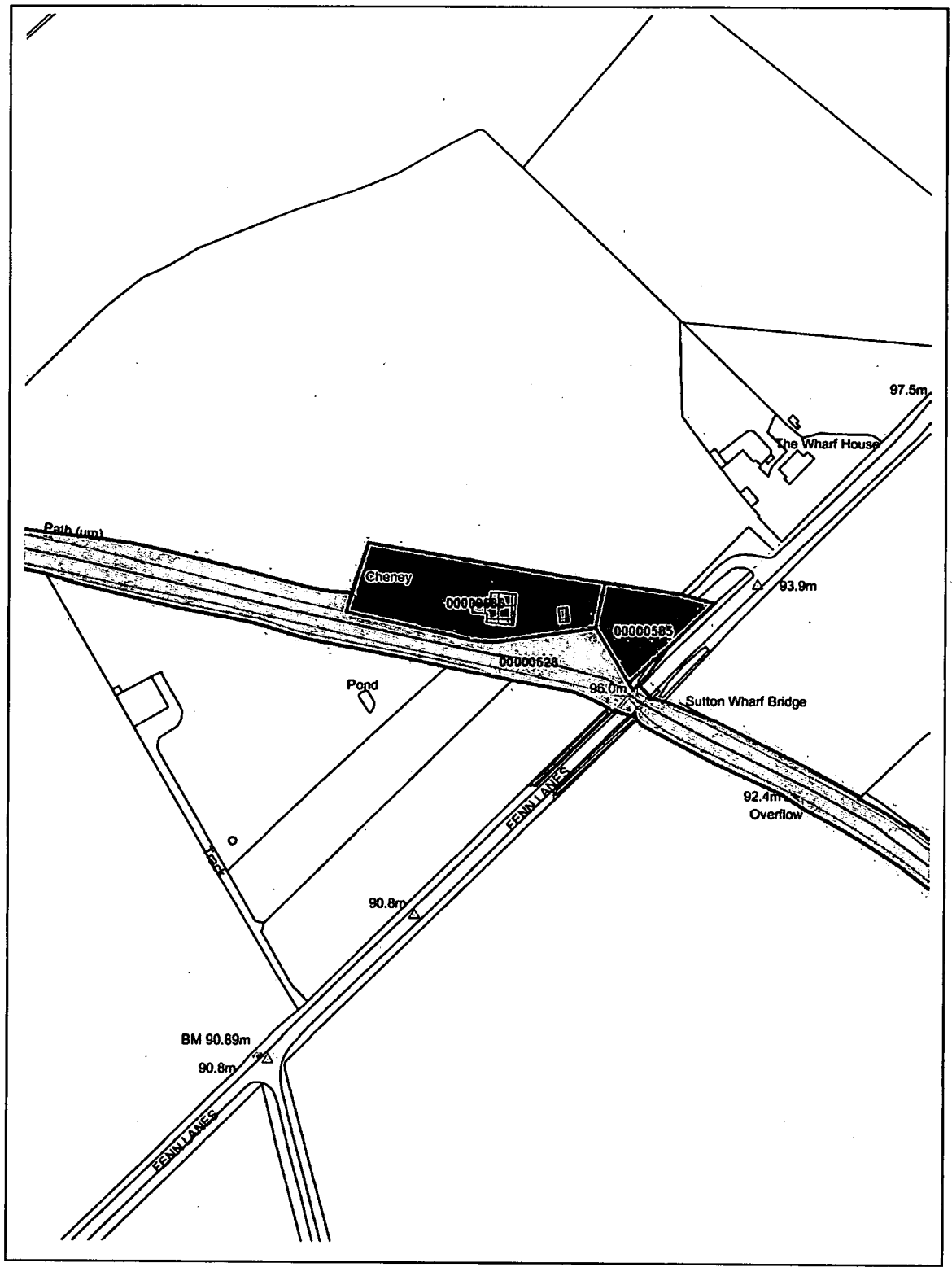

Fig 2. – Ownership Plan 1 : 2500

2.2 Design Principles

As previously described Sutton Cheney is a popular destination but the majority of visitors arrive there by car.

Currently British Waterways' maintenance vans, septic tank routine emptying and maintenance, vans for deliveries to the café and refuse collection vehicles need to reverse and maneuver the vehicles towards the carpark.

The desire for the proposed works forming part of this application is borne by the necessity to improve current public access and safety to and through the site.

Following careful analysis of the site and its use, including ownership, it became clear that better access and public safety required addressing. The proposal entails the formation of a hard standing area for vehicle turning and the resurfacing of the existing track leading up to the turning area.

The works will:

- Preserve and enhance the location as a destination area, both locally and for the wider public, by making it more serviceable
- Provide a safer physical environment in which public and service provision can better co exist.
- Improving the viability of the navigation on the Ashby Canal.
- Provide a more user friendly and better quality towpath finish and café' surrounding.

Mitigation – As previously outlined this site very important for nature conservation in this rural location. The type of habitat present is well represented within the local area and is not considered to be habitat for protected or BAP species due to the size of the areas and its proximity to the existing facilities (human disturbance). As such its loss with the construction of the turning area would not be detrimental to the wider environment. However a way to improve the biodiversity locally, with wider benefits also; would be to create an open drainage channel desirable both in terms of water quality and biodiversity and this will be provided as part of the scheme.

This channel would not be intended to drain land, but to take surface water from the turning point location and hold it in channelled away from the site of disturbance. The new channel would then be of value to Water Voles and amphibians.

2.3 Construction

Refer to Appendix 1 – Annotated photographs for locations of work.

Access road and turning area - The concept is to create a better quality access road beginning from the end of the carpark [Photo1 and leading to the existing storage compound [Photo 2] and the vehicle turning area. The vehicle turning area will be to the same specification as per the adopted access road of approximately 125m2.

It is proposed that the finish for the road should be redressed with existing stone chipped surface. The road will have concrete kerbs installed with drop kerb areas to allow disabled access to facilities.

Towpath – Existing path and patio area to be resurfaced in Leo Chip, buff colour. The extent of the resurfacing is shown on plan SC/AS -019 – 04.

The proposed works do not relate to the canal bank, but involve the resurfacing of the existing towpath. However, it is understood that the wet grassland on which the turning area has been proposed is of value because of the diversity of species that wet grass land supports.

2.4 Site Preparation

Preparation work includes removal of vegetation in the required area and of top soil to a dept of 300mm and cart away.

Preparation and laying of sub base to road and hard standing, all as shown on drawing 05.

3.0 CONCLUSIONS

The scheme is consistent with development plan policies the principles of which are established within Sutton Cheney Conservation Area of enhancing the historic village by the tidying and improving of access ways, for the use of local residents and facilities with out increasing the development pressure in the area.

The proposed access road and vehicle turning area will improve public access and safety on the carpark. The resurfacing of the existing path and patio area should provide marked environmental improvements to boaters and café users.

APPENDIX 1 – ANNOTATED PHOTOGRAPHS

Photo 1 – Existing vehicular access and exit from Wharf Lane- not altered



Photo 2 – Existing carpark to remain as existing showing service road to be resurfaced

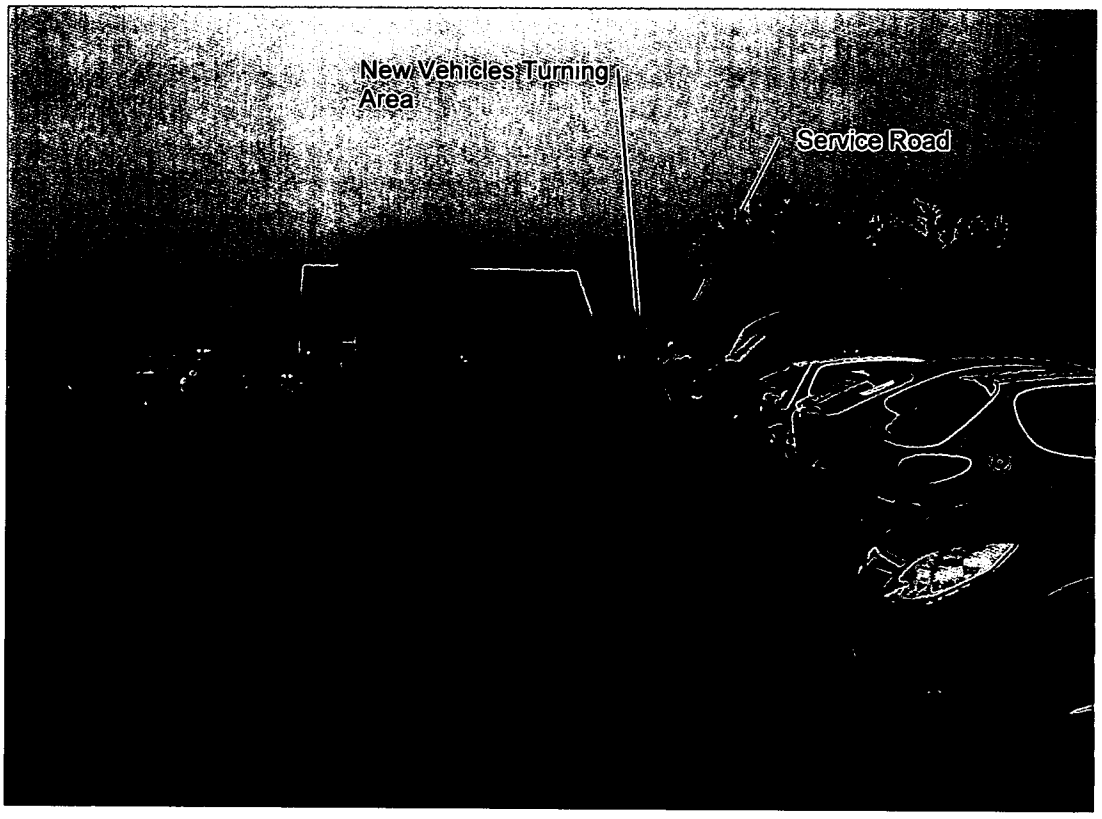

Photo 3- Start of service road to be resurfaced with tarmac

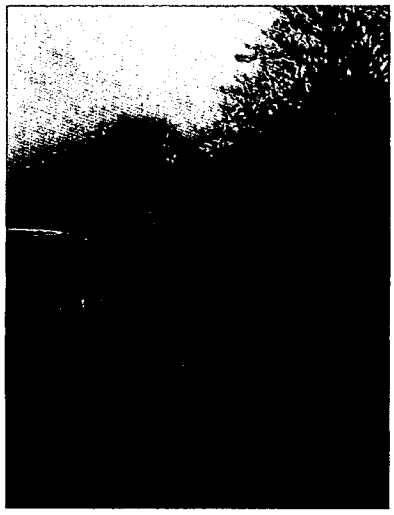

Photo 4 – Existing track and proposed turning area

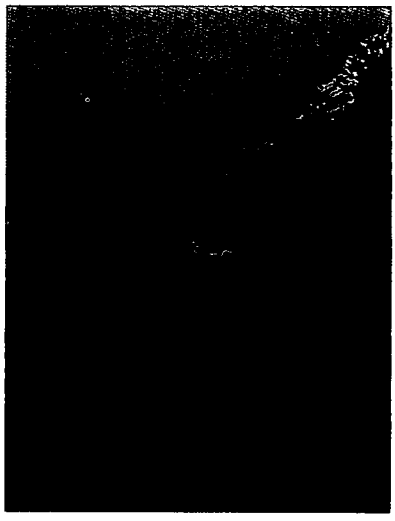

Photo 5- Existing track looking towards carpark and toilet block- paths to doors to also be surfaced but in 'LeoChip' as towpath and around the building as shown on drawing SC/AS – 019 – 04

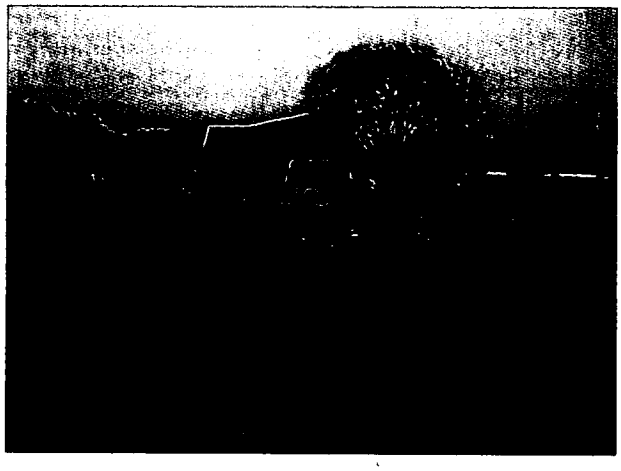

Photo 6- Tarmac to be provided up to storage area



Photo 7- Start of towpath resurfacing

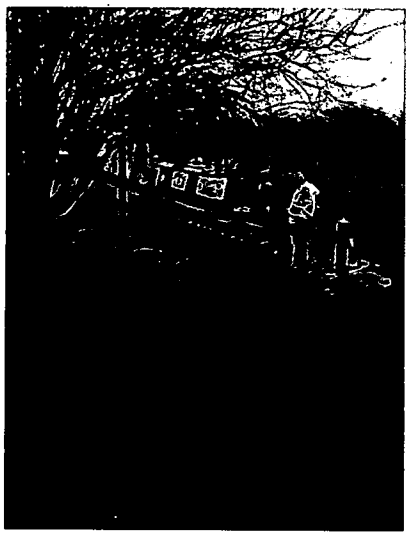

Photo 8- Towpath to be resurfaced

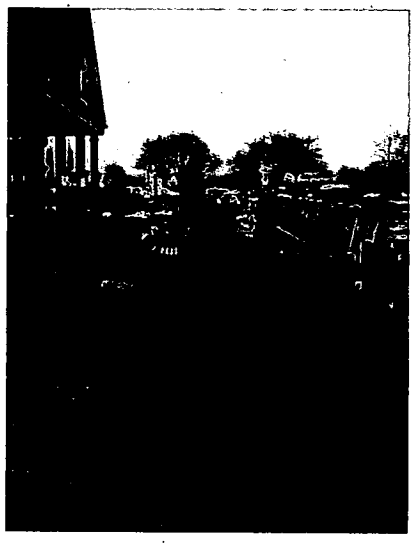

Photo 9- Extent or resurfacing – see Plan SC/AS- 019 - 04

