Position Statement in Respect of transportation and Access matters for land at Policy AL3, Between DTA (for TMP), Highways England and Northamptonshire County Council as Local Highway Authority

Context

1. The Access and Transport Policy Requirements for the allocation are set out under point 4 thus:

   4. Access and transport
      a) A new roundabout facility will be provided at the junction of the A43 and the Northampton road (Hulcote Turn) and the layout of the proposal will enable the closure of the central reservation turn at the Tiffield Lane junction in order to improve road safety on the A43; and
      b) good accessibility to public transport services should be provided for, including contributions to the cost of diverting existing routes through the site or to support existing local services and to promote sustainable travel;
      c) a transport assessment and travel plan will be required to assess the transportation implications of the proposed development and to identify appropriate mitigation measures; and
      d) provision of new footpaths and cycleways that link to existing networks and safe crossing points on the A43.

2. All parties agree these tests are appropriate in the context of the local plan. Dealing with each in turn:

Point A - Access

3. The masterplan envisages the conversion of the existing Northampton Road / A43 junction into a four arm signal controlled roundabout. This will provide the main access to the site. In addition, the junction with Tiffield Road will be restricted by the closure of the right turn from the A43 into Tiffield Lane. A new spine road (to be built to adoptable standards) through the site will provide an alternative route for existing users of Tiffield Road.

4. Discussions have been held with Highways England and NCC (Since May 2016) regarding the site and subject to the appropriate transport assessment and design work, there were no objections in principle to the allocation and development of the site to be served by a consolidation of the existing A43 junctions north of Towcester.

5. The principle of the arrangements as proposed, is agreed with both highway authorities and neither have any objections in principle to the proposed access arrangements set out above.
6. They have requested a number of detailed studies including an alternative options appraisal and business case to be prepared. Whilst this work is ongoing, all parties agree there are no fundamental showstoppers to the delivery of an access solution to serve the site that would meet the policy requirements as set out in the submitted Part 2 Local Plan.

7. The new roundabout will bring with it potential safety improvements by allowing the closure or changes to two existing at grade priority junctions.

8. In terms of feasibility, the works can all be completed within either Highway Land or AL3 and are thus fully feasible. At present they are designed to a detailed concept stage and that has highlighted no fundamental design constraints or departures from standard. That work is ongoing and as part of the application the scheme will be supported by a full design review, appropriate Road Safety Audits (GG119) and a Walking, Cycling and Horse Riding Assessment and Review (HD42/17). At the detailed design stage, a full technical audit will be required and any arising matters dealt with at that point. The works will be undertaken by agreement under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980.

Point B – Public Transport

9. As set out above, formal pre-application discussions have commenced and options for public transport access are being discussed in detail. The options to serving the site at AL3 by bus have been considered further in consultation with NCC with the principles being set out below.

10. The primary option is to provide access through the site via Tiffeld Lane. Northbound buses would turn left from the A43 and along Tiffeld Lane, before turning right onto the development spine road. They would then re-enter the A43 at the new junction. Bus stop infrastructure would be provided along the spine road. In a southbound direction buses would stop at a new layby to the south of the new roundabout junction on Northampton Road and/or the A43 subject to the design and capacity discussions as set discussed above. The site would be connected via new signalised crossings.

11. It is proposed to introduce a no entry for motorised vehicles southbound from the development spine road along Tiffeld Lane apart from for access. This is to require traffic to use the new junction and not the existing simple priority junction at the bottom of Tiffeld Lane and to also minimise vehicle conflict between public transport accessing the site and other users of Tiffeld Lane, whilst maintaining access to the existing properties on Tiffeld Lane. This option would provide potential significant benefits to existing service patronage and development accessibility.
12. In addition, the Towcester South Residential development is committed to providing additional public transport services which has the potential to reintroduce a town centre service. AL3 has the potential to form the northern point of a loop with the access enabling safe crossing of the A43 from the development along Northampton Road towards the centre of Towcester.

13. NCC have a requirement to “future proof” the development spine road to include a westbound stop with supporting infrastructure for the longer-term aspiration of the A43 to A5 link between AL1 and AL3. This will be incorporated into the masterplan.

**Point C – Transport Assessment and Travel Plan**

14. A Transport and access strategy and scoping report has been previously submitted to Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) and Highways England (HE).

15. Matters including trip generation, committed developments, assessment scenarios, modelling requirements and future accessibility have all been agreed.

16. At the time of writing this report the outputs of the Northamptonshire Strategic Transport Model runs are awaited. It has been agreed that the outputs from this model in terms of traffic flows will be input into a new microsimulation model that will test the operation of the A43, site access and Local Road network to a high level of detail.

**Point D – Accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists**

17. The site access arrangements described above will incorporate signal controlled crossings. The crossing can be incorporated into the signal controlled entry. This will operate on a walk-with-traffic basis, i.e. the crossing will be called concurrently within the circulatory traffic phase. A separate crossing will be required on the exit arms.

18. This will be linked to improvements to the pedestrian facilities on Northampton Road.

19. The masterplan will be refined to ensure that it does not prejudice the provision of further combined linkages to AL1 and AL2.