

## Comments on the Stantec Review Technical Note TN02 re DC/25/0629

### 12 Allcard Close 13 August 2025 Introduction

Stantec is a global leader in sustainable engineering, architecture and environmental consulting with its headquarters in the USA. The company was commissioned by Horsham District Council to undertake a review of the Transport Assessment and Travel Plan submitted by Muse in support of Planning Application DC/25/0629.

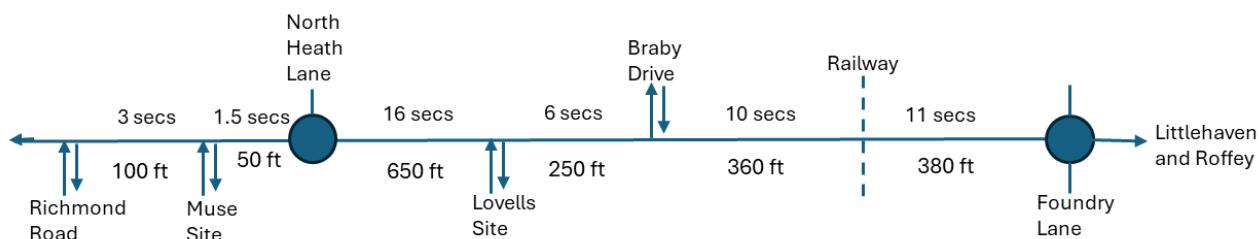
There is a concurrent application, DC/25/0415, from Muse for the development of an adjacent site.

Both Muse and Lovells are owned by the Morgan Sindall Group.

After some overall comments on the scope and chronology of TN02 the headings used are those adopted by Stantec.

I have lived within 200m of the Wimblehurst Road mini-roundabout since 1974. I have therefore first-hand experience as a pedestrian, cyclist and motorist. of the changes that have been made to the road layouts in the area, and the provision of Novartis employee and visitor parking

To provide context the schematic below shows the distances between junctions and roundabouts and the time (in seconds) taken by a vehicle travelling at 20mph.



### Scope, chronology and process

1. Stantec was commissioned by Horsham District Council to undertake a review of Transport evidence provided as part of a planning application for the developments set out in DC/25/0629
2. Report TN02 dated May 2025 states that Stantec undertook desk research and made a site visit on 2 May. No information is provided on the duration and scope of this site visit. This is important because the traffic flows at peak times can be significantly greater than during other periods of day. It would be standard practice to not only set out the schedule for the visit but also to state the traffic, pedestrian and weather at the time of the visit. It would also be standard practice to confirm if either the Project Director (GH) or the Discipline Lead (GH) were present at the meeting.

3. For comparison, this text comes from the RSA1 undertaken for the Application.

*"A joint visit to the site was undertaken to the proposed scheme on the 12th February 2025 between 09:30 and 10:00. Weather conditions at the time were overcast and the road surfaces were dry. Traffic flows were low and free flow speeds were moderate. There were low pedestrian flows, and no cycle movements observed during the site visit."*

4. Without this information it is not possible to fully assess the veracity of the report with respect to traffic management issues.

5. It is accepted that the problems of traffic management are most severe in the peak periods. That is why it is important to understand the scope of the site visit.

6. Stantec submitted a report designated TN02 in May 2025. TN02 is not day dated, and states only that it was submitted in May. This is a concerning omission as the date of a report defines the extent to which information was available to prepare the report.

7. In **para 1.3** Of TN02 it is stated *that the submitted document was updated in June 2025 post a meeting on 21 May with Paul Basham, Nexus Planning and Horsham District Council. The new documents were the Addendum Transport Assessment (ATA) and the revised Travel Plan. The Technical Note states that "the ATA addressed on-going Stantec comments as well as comments from WSCC."*

8. There is no confirmation as to whether all the Stantec comments, or only some of them. If the latter it should be specifically stated which comments had been addressed.

9. The situation is further complicated by the Document Issue Record on TN01 that states that they were updated in July to Version A. Standard practice would be to identify changes made to the initial document. The Issue Record notes that it was neither checked nor reviewed.

10. Version management is a core standard inside all consulting companies and IT departments. It is an element of conformance to ISO 9001:2015 for Quality Management, which has six mandatory requirements.

- Document Approval
- Document updating and reapproval of amended document
- Identify changes
- Make documents available where they are needed
- Control documents of external origin
- Prevent inadvertent use of obsolete documents

### **Existing conditions**

11. In **para 2.8** the comment is made that the *"factual account of the transport network serving the site and local surrounds.....is consistent with our desktop study and site visit observations."*

12. The point has been made by the Wimblehurst Road Residents Association (WRRA) and others that the Transport Assessment and the Travel Plan omit any reference to the ThamesLink services into Horsham Station, which double the number of train traversals of the Parsonage Road level crossing.

13. Stantec has also failed to note these train movements.

14. In **para 2.10** “*bus stop locations and service options (Metrobus 71, 71 and 200) to reach the town centre....are noted.*” Stantec has not recorded services 6, 23, 23X and 98 from the bus stops located close to the Lidl supermarket in Kings Road. These routes offer access to Crawley to the east and to villages along the A24 to Worthing. The Worthing routes (23 and 23X) are especially important as there are no train services to these villages and the rail journey to Worthing requires a change at both Three Bridges and Preston Park.

15. In its recent submission WRRA highlighted the number of schools to the north of the site that would require students (and children with parents) to cycle or walk across the level crossing either to attend school or to take advantage of the good local shopping centre in Roffey.

16. These movements are important as they will significantly increase the use that will be made of the pedestrian and cycle access from the site close to the level crossing.

17. Network Rail raised this as a concern in its response to the Transport Assessment but there has been no public response from the Applicant.

18. It is therefore very questionable that Stantec can state that **para.2.13** “*this chapter presents a reasonable and appropriate description of the local transport network*” when clearly this is not the case

### **Proposed development**

19. I am pleased to see a comment in **para 2.18** about the issues around refuse traffic on the site as a result of 4.5m road widths. Stantec comments that if residents and their visitors use the appropriate parking spaces, parked cars are not an issue.

20. However, no reference is made to the impact of courier vans, supermarket deliveries and removal vehicles, all of which are likely to disrupt the movement of cars and cyclists around the site.

### **Access arrangements**

21. In **para 2.22** Stantec notes that a previous right-turn lane is proposed to be reinstated/re-lined.

22. The drone photograph below, taken in April 2024 shows the residual markings of the right-turn lane.



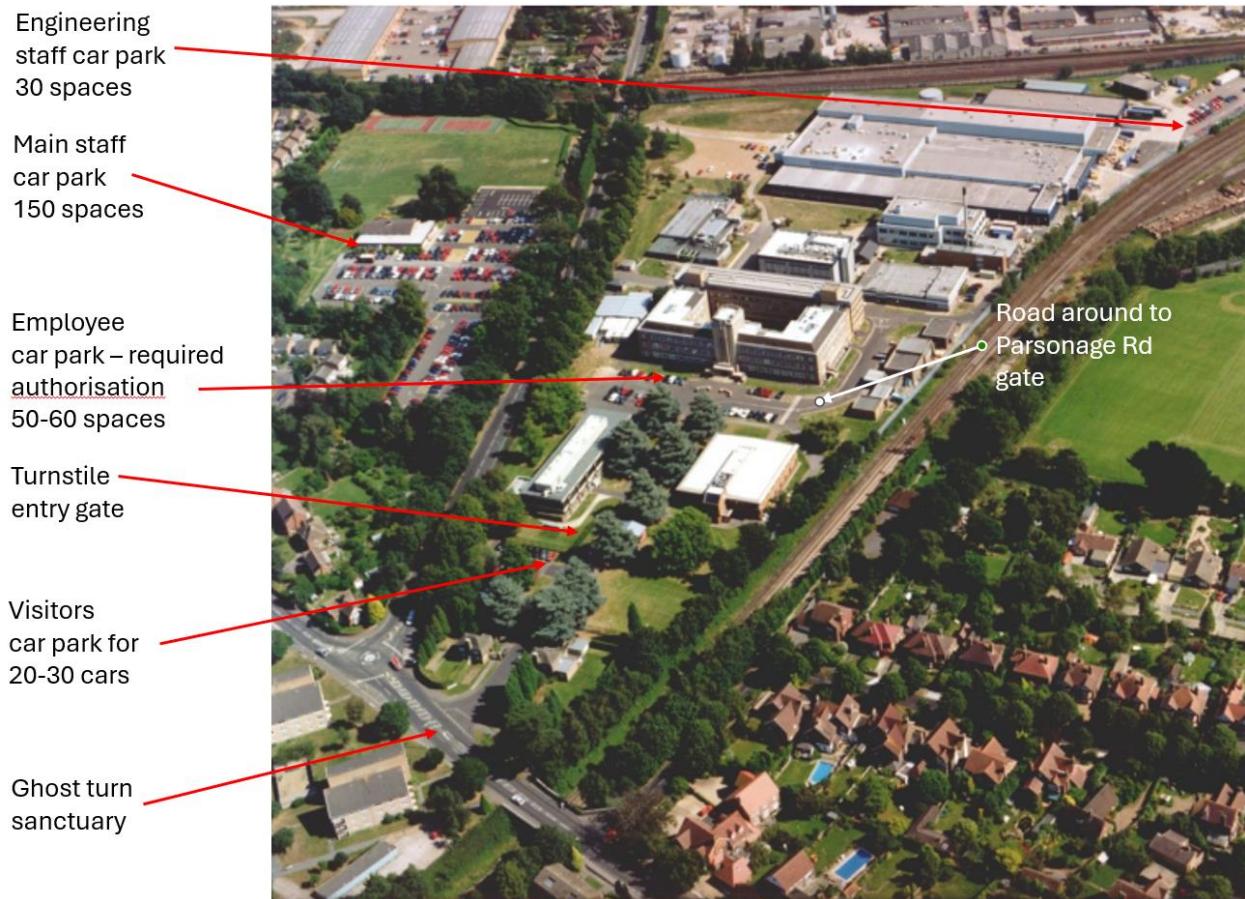
23. In the 2018 Application DC/18/2687 much was made that the access in Wimblehurst Road had been in use for some time and so presented no issues in being incorporated into the Application without any analysis and justification.

24. It is important to understand the chronology of the use of the Wimblehurst Road access as confirmed by the following Planning Applications.

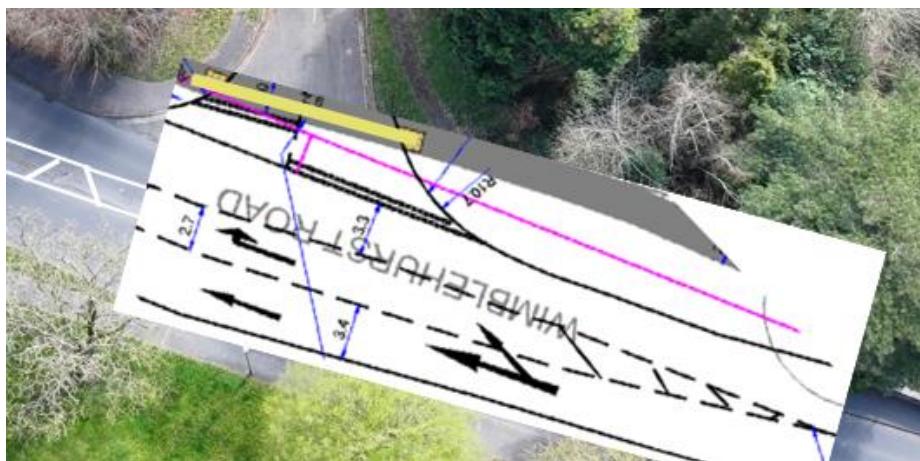
- NH/38/93 and NH/52/93 set out the requirements for a gatehouse and turnstyle gates to restrict access to the site without prior authorization. There were to be a maximum of 40 spaces.
- NH/164/00 set out a programme of site alterations to facilitate the expansion of the manufacturing facilities on the site. These alterations included moving the staff car park to a site on the opposite side of Parsonage Road to land being used as the Novartis sports centre.
- NH/84/01 set out requirements for a more secure fence and entry gates so that the car park could only be used by Novartis staff
- NH/174/01 set out the requirements for lighting for the staff car park as the company introduced two, and at times, three shift working

25. The staff car park went into operation in 2001. All commercial traffic had to use the Parsonage Road access. Only visitors were able to make use of the car park immediately to the left of the Wimblehurst Road access. There were a limited number of places in a staff car park just in front of the main building, but use of these had to be authorized in advance. Because of the turnstyle visitor access gates on the Wimblehurst Road access this car park was only accessible by driving into the Parsonage Road entrance and then around the office building to its front entrance.

26. From 2001 only a comparatively few cars would have used the Wimblehurst Road access, and the majority of these would have done so outside of peak times. Rarely do meetings with visitors start at the beginning of the working day!



27. The volume and chronological pattern of use of this access from 2001 onwards until the site was closed bears absolutely no relationship to the use that is now being proposed of providing access to 206 dwellings.

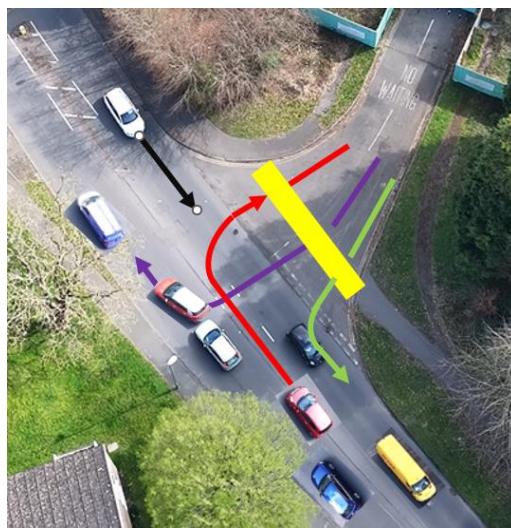


To refer back to the proposed reinstatement of the turn-right lane, this three-car length lane was adequate when only occasional visitor cars needed to gain access to the site.

28. Moreover there will also be light commercial traffic (e.g. supermarket deliveries) into the site which will take more space in the lane.

29. There is no narrative in the TA or ATA about whether the length of the turn-right lane is adequate for the level of traffic anticipated in the Lovell development. Of crucial importance is what options a driver has to turn right if the lane is already full. The immediate option would be to proceed to the mini-roundabout and undertake a U-turn and an immediate left turn into the site.

30. As with the junction on Parsonage Road, traffic turning right into the Wimblehurst Road access has to drive across the path of traffic leaving the site and turning right. In addition (as with the Parsonage Road junction) pedestrians are walking across the exit (the yellow bar in the photomontage) and cyclists are travelling southbound across both traffic flows.



31. Analysis of Department for Transport data from traffic collisions between 2012 and 2021 reveals 186,009 were recorded as being caused while car drivers were turning right, making it the **most statistically dangerous manoeuvre on Britain's roads**. [My emphasis]

32. The Lovell and Muse developments both have right-turn against right-turn access, and yet there is no discussion by either the developers, WSCC Highways or Stantec about the potential dangers that these junctions represent to both drivers and near-by pedestrians.

33. Given these 'right-turn against right-turn' traffic moves it is very surprising that the RSA did not make any comments on the geometry and safety of the junction, only on a possible flooding issue with a drain cover.

34. Stantec does comment that "*An RSA does not sift through the options but comments on the option presented*". Given that Stantec was asked to critique the Transport Assessment (which included the RSA outcome) it is very surprising that it did not list out which junctions it felt should be included in the RSA.

*"It is noted that the access will be slightly reduced compared to existing/previous access"* and in **para 2.28** *"This chapter presents an access arrangement which is similar to the existing layout".*

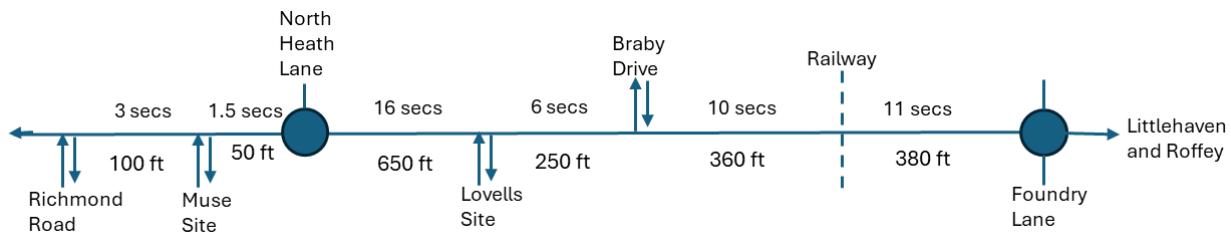
35. It may be similar in geography to the existing layout but most certainly not in the volume of traffic using these junctions. Based on Novartis visitor parking spaces the Muse development has an almost order of magnitude increase in the number of cars using the Wimblehurst Road access.

### Junction capacity modelling

36. In **para 2.31** Stantec comments that *the Level Crossing has not been explicitly referenced as being removed from the list of junctions. However, this is presumed to be a typographical error and its exclusion is due to the greater distance from the site access than DC/25/0415.*

37. This statement is made in the revised July 2025 report from Stantec, and I am very surprised that Stantec had not checked with Muse as to whether it was a typographical error or a deliberate omission.

38. This brings up the key issue about a lack of modelling for the overall journey of a vehicle from the Foundry Lane roundabout until the North Heath Lane roundabout.



In business-process terms this is a 'close-coupled' scenario. This scenario is the basis for situations such as the manufacture of a product until delivery to a customer. It is very difficult to model these close-coupled scenarios because each element has an impact not only on the next step in the process but also the extent to which the previous element can in fact be completed. In manufacturing use is made of stores all along the process to manage a commitment to deliver in an acceptable time.

39. In the case of the level crossing element, Stantec has already commented that it is not possible to take into account an element that is not driven by demand (traffic flow density) but only by an external input of needed to provide a safe path for a train.

40. The situation is therefore that Stantec is recommending a combined-site scenario whilst also accepting that it cannot be modelled because the level crossing is not under direct influence of the developers.

### In conclusion

41. The following documents have now been presented by Muse and Stantec

- a. The Transport Assessment and Travel Plan submitted in January 2025 as a component of Planning Application DC/25/0415.
- b. Stantec Technical Note TN02 dated May 2025
- c. The Amended Transport Assessment and revised Travel Plan submitted by Paul Basham on behalf of Lovells, which may or may not respond to all the comments made by Stantec in TN02 and the notes of a meeting on 21 May.
- d. The Response to Consultation submitted by Nexus Planning on 30 June 2025 which addressed comments made by Statutory Organisations and by members of the public. Highways-related matters are covered in Pages 27-37.
- e. A response is provided on behalf of the applicant by Paul Basham Associates (Transportation Consultant) to a comment made by the WSCC Highways (Stantec) team on 19th May 2025. There is no indication of what the WSCC comment referred to.
- f. The revision to TN02 submitted to Horsham District Council in July

42. This situation makes it impossible to know the definitive status of the information that has been provided by Muse on transport and travel issues. Without a defined 'single value of the truth' Members may make a decision on the Applications which could be a) challenged on appeal and/or b) result in unanticipated traffic management issues from (say) 2028/2029 onwards as residents move into the houses. By this time there will be no remedial options available.

(Ends)