

Project Title: Natural History Museum

Project No/ Document Reference: A418-R006/A

Date: 27 November 2024

Author: Ben Taylor

Planning Condition 9 – Construction Signage Strategy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Abley Letchford Partnership (ALP) has been commissioned by the Natural History Museum to provide transport and highways support in respect of promotion of the new Natural History Museum facility on land to the east of Cutbush Lane at Thames Valley Science Park (WBC Ref : 232833).
- 1.2. A resolution to grant planning consent for the proposals was decided by Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) at its March 2024 planning committee and the permission was formalised following completion of the S106 Agreement in September 2024.
- 1.3. This Transport Technical Note has been prepared to assist in discharging Condition 9 of the planning permission, the detail of which is below:

Notwithstanding the details as set out within the approved Construction Environmental Management Plan, the applicant shall in consultation with the Highway Authority and University of Reading, undertake an audit of existing and proposed signage to the site. This shall include the entire Eastern Relief Road corridor and through the Science Park / Cutbush Lane East to the site to inform an access strategy for construction vehicles / contractors. The access strategy shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval prior to commencement of development and the approved measures implemented in accordance with an agreed timetable prior to any construction access for the main site. Any proposed directional signs shall be fixed permanently to the ground for the duration of the build process until occupation and not be temporary A frame forms of signage unless otherwise agreed in writing. The strategy shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details and held under review for the entire construction process.

2. Existing Signage and Background

- 2.1. Construction has been undertaken on various plots at Thames Valley Science Park (TVSP) for a number of years, including the ongoing work at Shinfield Studios. Work to date has been supported by construction traffic strategies and these have been refined following observations and feedback from various parties including Wokingham Borough Council and local residents.



- 2.2. ALP undertook a site visit on 4 March 2024 to catalogue and audit the existing signage relating to Thames Valley Science Park and associated construction, along the Shinfield Eastern Relief Road (SERR) corridor between the Black Boy signalised junction in the north and the roundabout junction with the A327 Arborfield Road in the south.
- 2.3. ALP Drawing No. HD065/003/P1, attaches as **Annex A**, shows the relevant signage observed during the site visit, as well as the locations of the signage.
- 2.4. It is understood that the primary issue relating to construction vehicle traffic to date has been the use of Cutbush Lane East. Formerly a link extending between Hollow Lane and a pedestrian and cycle bridge over the M4, Cutbush Lane was bisected by the SERR in recent years. Cutbush Lane East is accessed directly from the SERR and serves several homes and businesses. The vehicle link along Cutbush Lane East has now also been severed by a c.40m section now designated for pedestrian and cyclist use only, and a separate bollard controlled emergency access. The homes and businesses are located on the part of the road south of the ped/cycle section.
- 2.5. Residents and businesses on the southern section of Cutbush Lane East have advised on several occasions that construction traffic associated with Thames Valley Science Park and Shinfield Studios has used the road as an access. This has impacted on the amenity of these occupiers as well as users of the quiet walking and cycling route. It is understood that on occasion this has resulted in construction traffic running over the kerbed island which segregates Cutbush Lane East from the internal spine road within Thames Valley Science Park.
- 2.6. From a navigation perspective, it is noted that Google Maps now includes the pedestrian/cycle only section of Cutbush Lane East and routes traffic travelling to Thames Valley Science Park from either the north or the south via South Avenue and then the internal spine road.
- 2.7. Additionally, following previous concerns that temporary and semi-permanent signage was ambiguous and directing construction traffic along Cutbush Lane East, a review of signage in the area in 2023 recommended the removal of certain signs and the provision of replacement signage more clearly affirming the appropriate construction route. These measures included those below, with the number in brackets designating the respective inset on Drawing No. HD065/003/P1, attached as **Annex B**.
 - Provision of a “Works Traffic” directional sign on the northern arm of the TVSP access roundabout on the SERR (13).
 - Provision of a “Works Traffic” directional sign on the southern arm of the TVSP access roundabout on the SERR (not pictured).
 - Removal of a “Cutbush Lane East” directional sign on the SERR and replacement with a “Works Traffic Ahead Only” sign (17).
 - Addition of a “No Works Traffic” sign to advanced signage for Cutbush Lane East on the northbound SERR (18).

- A-frame signage at the entrance of Cutbush Lane East has also been removed, as shown on photo 1 below taken during the site visit on 4 March 2024.

Photo 1: Signage at Cutbush Lane East (March 2024)



3. Discussion with Wokingham Borough Council

- 3.1. ALP met with highway officers of Wokingham Borough Council on 26 March 2024 to discuss the effectiveness of the current signage and any adjustments which may be required to the strategy. It was agreed that the changes to the signage in 2023 as well as the updating of navigation systems to avoid Cutbush Lane East has been beneficial and has materially decreased the volume of issues raised regarding construction traffic routing.
- 3.2. At present, construction works signage is present from the Black Boy Roundabout at the northern extent, to just south of the Cutbush Lane East junction. It was felt that there was no benefit to providing signage for a wider area, as there had been limited, if any, instances of construction vehicles using inappropriate roads elsewhere.
- 3.3. Wokingham Borough Council considered that the one improvement which could be made was the provision of a fixed “No Works Traffic” sign immediately south of the Cutbush Lane East junction, and which faces both northbound and southbound traffic, to provide further confirmation that the road is not for construction traffic.



- 3.4. The suitability of the construction signage strategy will continue to be monitored and could continue to evolve should Wokingham Borough Council and the applicant agree that revision is necessary.

4. Strategy

- 4.1. Based on the audit of existing signage and the discussions with Wokingham Borough Council set out above, it is proposed to retain existing signage as it is shown on Drawing No. HD065/003/P1 (**Annex A**) and to provide one additional permanent double facing “No Works Traffic” sign to the south of the Cutbush Lane East junction, on the eastern side of the SERR carriageway. The precise location of the sign can be discussed and confirmed with Wokingham Borough Council once this amendment to the existing strategy is agreed.
- 4.2. All other aspects related to construction traffic will remain as per the agreed Construction Environmental Management Plan.

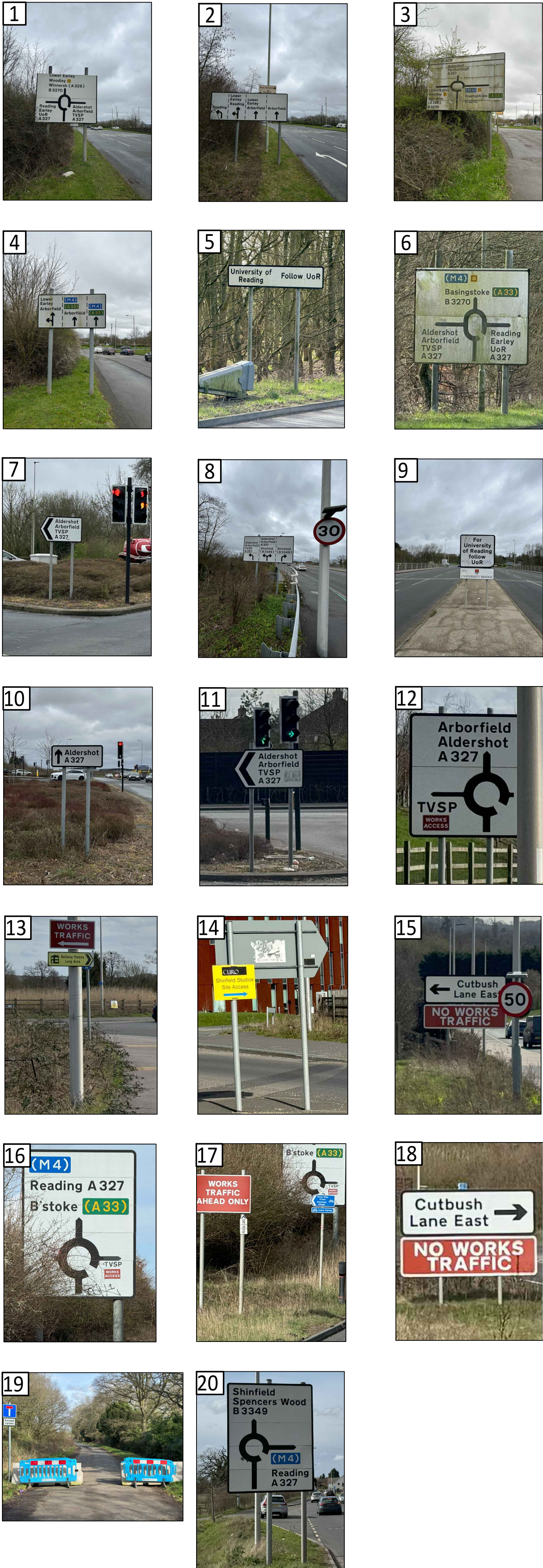
5. Timetable

- 5.1. The proposed amendments to the construction signage need to be implemented prior to commencement of construction activities at the Natural History Museum site. Accordingly, the measures will be implemented anytime within a four week period before the construction works are programmed to commence.



Annex A

Drawing No. HD065-003/P1 : Sign Location Plan



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Note: Arrows extending from numbered
squares indicate position of the signage

P1	Mar 24	Initial Drawings			LJ	BT
Rev	Date	Description			Drawn	Checked
A L P ABLEY LETCHFORD PARTNERSHIP Consulting Engineers 3 Tealgate, Charnham Park Hungerford, Berkshire RG17 0YT www.alpce.co.uk Tel: 01488 684390						
Client						
UNIVERSITY OF READING						
Project						
NHM ACCESS ROAD, SHINFIELD						
Title						
EXISTING ROAD SIGNAGE						
Status						
FOR INFORMATION						
Scale	Date	Drawn	Checked			
See Scale	MARCH 2024	LJ	BT			
Drawing No				Revision		
HD065-003				P1		

Transport
Development Planning
Sustainable
Deliver
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Highways
Civil Engineering
Successful
Travel Planning
Support
Drainage
Dynamic
Masterplanning
Flood Risk Assessment
Infrastructure Design

Abley Letchford Partnership Ltd (Hungerford)
3 Tealgate, Charnham Park,
Hungerford RG17 0YT
T: 01488 684 390
E: contact@alpce.co.uk

Abley Letchford Partnership Ltd (Reading)
40 Caversham Rd,
Reading RG1 7EB
T: 0118 237 1736
E: contact@alpce.co.uk

W: www.alpce.co.uk