

## **Response to queries raised by Andy Aylott (AA) at the Gateway 14 Stakeholder Meeting 28/02/24.**

AA comments are in bold and italics, with Gateway 14 responses below.

### **Clamps Farm Bend**

#### ***Corner not fit for purpose with regular incidents.***

The new bend has been constructed in accordance with the approved plans and highway standards. Vehicle tracking has been carried out and the design works as intended.

However, it is evident that vehicles keep cutting the bend which is something we cannot control.

To alleviate this, we are planning to reshape the curve to give even more width than required.

We'll provide further information on this once the design is finalised. We are planning for works to be undertaken in March subject to any necessary approvals. We do not anticipate the need to close the road but there will be traffic management requirements whilst works are on-going. We will notify residents and provide advance warning should the road need to be closed.

#### ***Problems intensified when A14 closed.***

This is outside of the control of Gateway 14. Closure of the A14 would have impacted residents prior to the delivery of Gateway 14 as it does with many areas of Suffolk when this major highway is closed.

#### ***Damage to road because of increased volume of HGV's.***

This is a long-standing issue with SCC Highway owned land, evidenced by the photographs below. Damage to the same area was evident well before Gateway 14 commenced.

Image below from 2009 where you can clearly see the area has been 'patched'.



Image below from 2022, prior to the development, where the same damage can be seen.



Image below of the same area taken 28 Feb 2024



Gateway 14 has raised the condition of this road with the highways department as an issue. It would be helpful for residents to also raise this as a concern directly with SCC Highways department.

## **Bund Landscaping**

***Originally, we had a concrete path along length of bund as shown on G14 approved masterplan on hearsay website.***

The temporary path was originally tarmac rather than concrete.

The tarmac path was incorrectly aligned when first constructed by the infrastructure contractor and needed to be reconstructed. This path is non-adoptable and should have been in Hoggin to match the pathway down to the River Gipping.

As previously advised, the section of path at the base of the bund adjacent to the substation is due to be replaced to improve drainage. The plan is to create more of a straight line and install additional drainage alongside.

The path remains usable at this time but works to realign and provide additional drainage are planned to commence this March. Details of the design and specification of hoggin paths are set out in the Recreational Paths section below.

***Range landscaping works had the fences thrown onto the bund damaging further trees.***

To clarify there are no 'trees' at the base of the bund. These are canopy mix plants and shrubs as shown on the approved landscape plans.

During one of the many unprecedented storms that the UK was battered by during early 2024, the security fencing was blown over on a couple of occasions.

This was raised with the principal contractor for that plot and the fencing swiftly pulled back into the car park to prevent this happening again.

Any canopy plants or shrubs impacted by this will be replaced.

***25th Jan 2018 landscaping commenced at Suffolk business park. Is this the protection we should expect after 6 years?***

The image shared by Andy Aylott shows the landscaping to the rear of the Weert's Unit at Suffolk Park. The landscape to this bund was commenced in Nov 2021 and completed in January 2022, that is at +2 years and not +6 years and is misleading.

Whilst Suffolk Park is being delivered by Gateway 14's development partner it is not a Gateway 14 development.

## **Pedestrian Paving Slabs**

***Initially raised at previous residents meeting that the mats were dangerous, and attempts made to glue down throughout the spring/summer but clearly not fit for purpose.***

The plastic tactile slabs were specifically requested by SCC Highways as part of the approved scheme.

Subsequently following a review, these have been replaced on Gateway Boulevard for concrete tactile paving due to an issue with the adhesive.

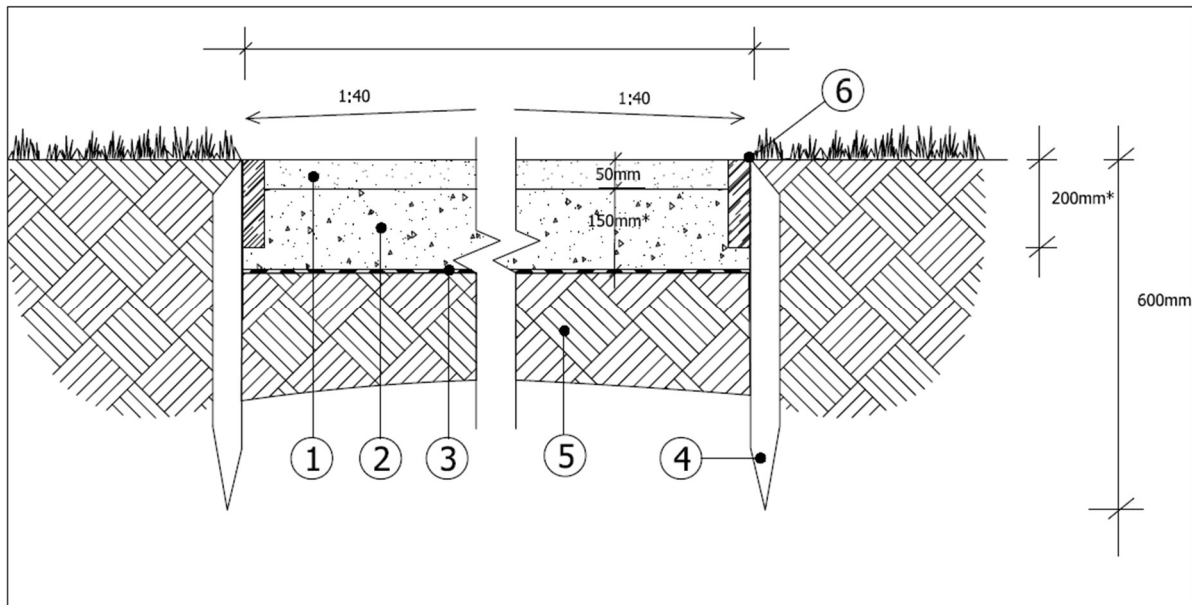
The plastic tactiles on Gateway Road and Gateway Drive have been remediated and will remain as laid. The images shared by Andy Aylott are now historic and were taken before our contractor repaired them.

## Recreational Paths

***The sand paths delivered for Mid Suffolk’s community that is already washing away, has weeds taking over, and is subject to flooding.***

The paths are made from a traditional Hoggin build up not just sand, as per the detail below. It is a mixture of gravel, sand and clay on a bed of hardcore.

These pathways were agreed and approved by SCC as in-keeping with the local landscaping which will blend in over time. The pathway along the bund and down towards the meadow eventually links up with the new path along the River Gipping. The entire stretch from the A1120 flyover to the corner of Clamps Farm bend will be Hoggin as designed.



## NOTES

- ① WEARING COURSE 50mm DEPTH OF WELL CONSOLIDATED HOGGIN. HOGGIN TO BE OF A SUITABLE MIX OF GRAVEL, SAND AND CLAY TO GIVE A SMOOTH AND DURABLE SURFACE WITH A MIN OF 85% BY WEIGHT PASSING A 10mm BS SIEVE. A SAMPLE OF HOGGIN MUST BE SUBMITTED PRIOR TO LAYING FOR INSPECTION AND APPROVAL BY THE LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT AND LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY. AVAILABLE FROM CED LTD TEL. 01708 867 237 OR SIMILAR AND APPROVED
- ② MOT TYPE 2 GRANULAR SUB BASE WELL COMPACTED TO 150mm\*, DEPTH DEPENDANT ON LOCAL GROUND CONDITIONS.
- ③ BLINDING OF HY-TEX 18 "GROUND COVER" OR SIMILAR AND APPROVED. AVAILABLE FROM HYTEX UK LTD TEL (01233) 720097. SHEETS TO BE OVERLAPPED BY 100mm AND PEGGED INTO SUB-BASE.
- ④ SAWN SOFTWOOD GRAVEL BOARD 38mm x 150mm, ATTACHED WITH GALVANISED NAILS TO 50mm 50mm x 600mm LONG SOFTWOOD STAKES AT 1.5m CENTRES OR CLOSER AS REQUIRED AT JUNCTIONS. GRAVEL BOARD TO BE REDUCED TO 100mm DEPTH SOAKED AND SAWN VERTICALLY ALONG THE BACK TO BEND ROUND CURVES.
- ⑤ SUB GRADE TO BE PREPARED, CONSOLIDATED AND SHAPED TO THE REQUIRED FORMATION.
- ⑥ SOIL LEVELS OF GRASS SURFACES ADJACENT TO PATHS SHALL BE FLUSH BUT NOT PROUD OF TIMBER EDGING BOARDS (TOLERANCE TO BE A MAXIMUM OF 5mm BELOW EDGING BOARD), WHERE PLANTING BEDS ARE ADJACENT TO BOARDS THEN SOIL LEVELS SHALL BE 25mm BELOW EDGING BOARDS.

As previously advised the pathways will be made good and replaced where needed, once UKPN have completed their Electrical works along the railway boundary. We have not yet had a date from UKPN for these works.

- The image below of the new Hoggin path laid along Muntons River Gipping Path. This was undertaken in May 2022 and is a good example of how the path performs over time.



## Flooding

Rainfall levels in the UK are changing dramatically and we are seeing unprecedented weather events which may become even more common going forward.

For context, within Suffolk the Met Office data shows that February 2024 witnessed the highest level of rainfall since records began.

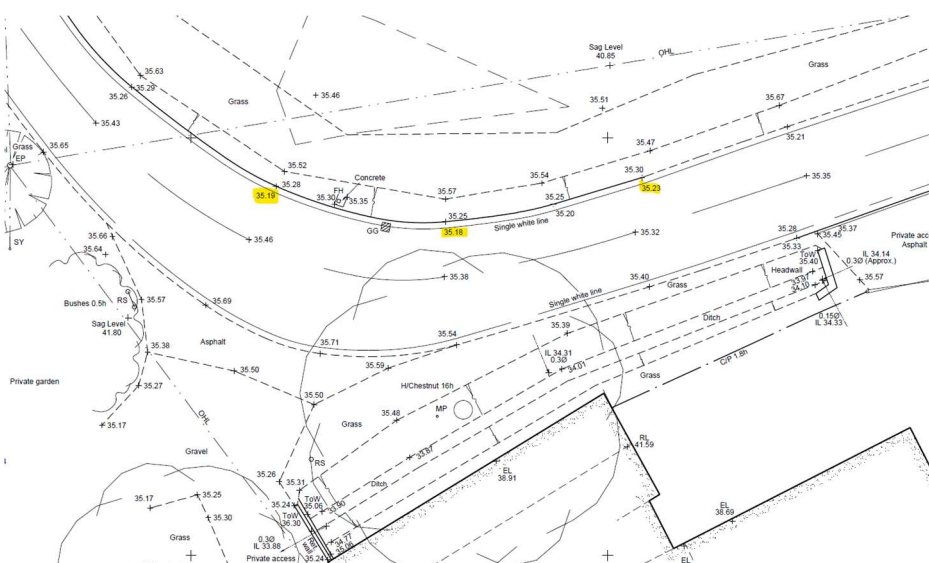
94.2mm of rain fell in February 2024, compared to an average level of 43.36mm based on the previous 30 years.

It is also important to review the national flood risk assessment which highlights areas at risk of flooding. The data available highlights the area on the bend as a ‘high risk’ for Surface Water flooding. In periods of heavy rain, surface water is always going to find its way to the areas of dark blue.



- *Surface water flood risk*

This area is the lowest point of the land so surface water from farmland, existing roads and undeveloped plot areas within the vicinity will inevitably find its way here during periods of torrential downfall.



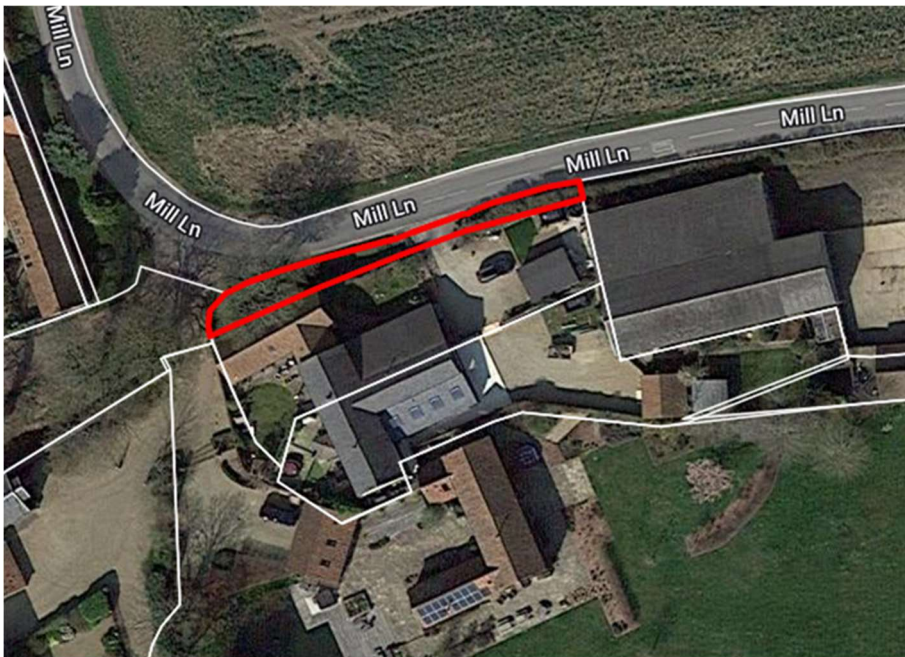
- *Low points*

To compound this further the drainage systems are also blocked and damaged which results in water dispersing across the area on a 'plane' rather than in the dedicated underground systems and irrigation ditches.

From our survey on Wednesday 28 February 2024, the ditch opposite the bend looks like it's never been maintained and is clearly silted up with leaves and debris. The section adjacent to the retaining wall looks completely blocked and impassable for water.

We are aware Mex Homes Ltd owns the absolute freehold title of this strip land including the ditch and access road. Shown red below for clarity. There may be responsibilities within the titles of the adjacent properties with regard to the maintenance of this ditch- it would be helpful if residents could check their title documents.

Is there a regular maintenance regime for this ditch and if so, what is the regularity of the maintenance? How many times has this been cleaned out? Subject to residents' title investigations have you approached Mex Homes or the other residents with responsibilities?



- area owned by Mex

Homes Ltd





- ditch blocked



- ditch blocked

The other major factor is the poor quality of road and surface water drainage. It's clear the gullies are damaged and blocked as they are not controlling water which bypassed the underground systems and runs over the road finding its way to the lowest point – which is the ditch but that is blocked!

Gateway 14 has raised this issue with SCC highways, but it would be helpful if residents could also address this directly with SCC Highways.



- damage



- gulley blocked / not working

Many of the photos shared by Andy Aylott at the Stakeholder event are now historic having been taken in October 2023 before Gateway 14 completed the land drain across old Mill Lane.

Since the additional land drains were installed during October and November 2023, the surface water run off has improved and water finds its way into the irrigation ditch as planned.



- Land drain on mill lane

The situation would be far worse had we not constructed the new road and temporary land drains across the undeveloped plots. Surface water hitting the new road is controlled by the new Storm Water drainage systems. The new system of underground SUDS drainage diverts the rainwater away from the site to eventually outfall into the River Gipping in the southwest zone of the site.

## **Clamp Landscaping Protection**

***The tree providing protection from site and concrete works is smallest planted and huge difference to those at front of site. Why are those most impacted by development not given the largest tree's***

The landscaping is being planted in accordance with the approved landscape scheme with different trees, shrubs and plants specified for areas where they are more suited. The tree in question on your slide show is specified as a Quercus Robur 'feathered tree'. We will check the size of this on site and if found to be smaller than specified we'll raise this with our landscape specialist to replant and relocate.

***The one Tree of any substance on bund that provided protection from site and concrete works failed. Why has this not been prioritised for replacement? Will we get a replacement of size it now should be?***

The report we had commissioned by the landscape consultant was highly complimentary on the landscaping planted to date and it confirmed we have far less than the usual 10% of failures expected.

We have also had numerous meetings on site with the local Suffolk Tree Warden and Councillors for Stowmarket who again were very complimentary on how the scheme is looking after only 1 year.

As you are aware, any of the trees that do not survive the first season will be replaced. The tree replacements will be sized accordingly to how they should have been had they not failed.

The tree cannot be planted out of season so couldn't be replaced until now for risk of a second failure.