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Aisled Barn, Downham: Transport Technical Note

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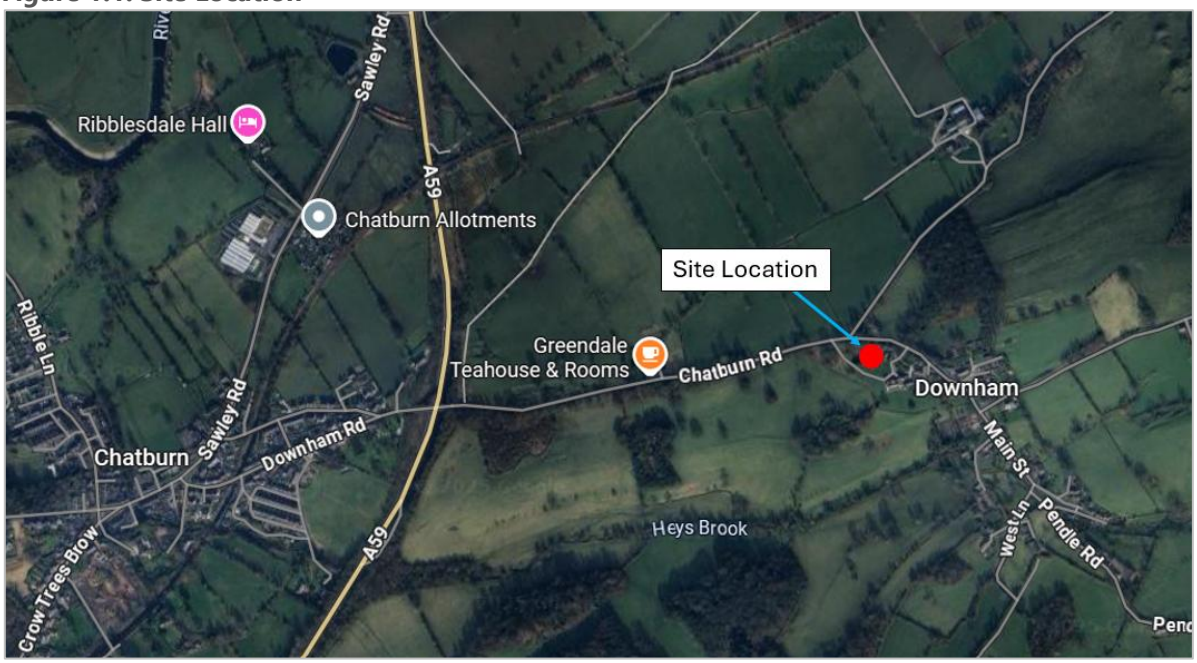
SECTION 1 Introduction

1.1.1 i-Transport has been appointed by The Trustees of the Hon. R. C. Assheton's Settlement to provide transport and movement advice with respect to the submission of an application for the conversion of the existing Aisled Barn in Downham.

1.1.2 The site is located immediately to the south of Chatburn Road in the village of Downham, which is c.1.5km east of the village of Chatburn and c.5.0km northeast of Clitheroe. It lies within the Ribble Valley Borough Council (RBVC) administrative area as the Local Planning Authority, and within the Lancashire County Council (LCC) area as the Local Highway Authority.

1.1.3 The site forms part of the wider Downham Estate, with Downham Hall located immediately adjacent. It has previously been used for agricultural purposes, consisting of a farm yard and associated barns and outbuildings. A site location plan is provided below as **Figure 1.1**.

Figure 1.1: Site Location



1.1.4 The site has ceased agricultural operations and has become largely redundant within the Estate.

1.1.5 As such, the development proposals seek restore and rejuvenate the historic assets within the site by converting the existing barns and outbuildings to create a commercial office space and conference room. A short length of new access track within the site is proposed as part of the access strategy, with amendments to parts of the external boundary wall to maximise sightlines at an existing access on Chatburn Road.

1.1.6 The project is led by a sensitive and strictly conservation-based conversion of the buildings, to ensure the retention of the historic importance, aesthetic appeal, appropriate scale and detail.

1.1.7 A tenant has been secured for the office space and has been integral to the design input of the proposal. The proposed tenant is a long-established local firm who have managed the Downham Estate for 70 years.

1.1.8 Formal discussions have been coordinated with officers at RVBC, with the Council providing their written response in July 2025.

1.1.9 The pre-application submission highlighted the intention to provide access from an existing point on the network, with improvements to maximise visibility in either direction. The Council agreed with the overarching principles of the development, and requested that additional detail regarding the access strategy and opportunities to travel by sustainable modes are presented within future submissions.

1.1.10 This Technical Note considers the existing local network characteristics, site accessibility by sustainable modes, any change in the volume or type of trip movements and a judgement as to whether any changes in demand would change the existing network characteristics in terms of operation or safety. The structure of the report is as follows:

- **Section 2** – outlines the local context in regard to active travel, shared travel and the existing highway conditions;
- **Section 3 –** presents the development proposals and access strategy; and
- **Section 4** – summarises and concludes the report.

SECTION 2 Local Context

2.1 Active Travel

2.1.1 The site is located in Downham, with Clitheroe serving as the nearest major settlement to the site in the southwest.

2.1.2 The site consists of a number of historic farm buildings, which forms part of the wider Downham Estate, including the adjacent Downham Hall.

2.1.3 Access to the site is currently taken from the northern boundary onto Chatburn Road at two points, both of which are gated accesses with walled boundaries on either side. There is a direct access into the existing yard, and a secondary access that provides access to the yard via Downham Hall. The location of the existing access points are presented in **Figure 2.1**.

Figure 2.1: Existing Access Points

2.1.1 The boundary wall and vegetation currently restrict sightlines at both existing access points to less than 10m.

2.1.2 Chatburn Road provides a width of approximately 6m in the vicinity of the site. It is subject to a 60mph speed limit with curves in the carriageway alignment observed to provide a control on vehicle speeds. There are no formal footways or street lighting, with these characteristics continuing throughout the village of Downham.

2.1.3 Observations suggest that active travel users do use the carriageway in the vicinity of the site with road users positioning themselves so as to see one another and accommodate accordingly.

2.1.4 There are Public Rights of Way routes that can be accessed in the vicinity of the site, with the nearest being Footpath 0314001 which connects between Twiston Lane next to Assheton Arms and runs north towards the River Ribble.

2.1.5 An extract showing the Public Rights of Way around the site is shown below in **Figure 2.2**.

Figure 2.2: Public Rights of Way

Source: Lancashire County Council with i-Transport addition of concessionary bridleway

2.1.6 In addition to the rights of way, there is a concessionary bridleway (shown as a green dashed line in **Figure 2.2**) that was constructed by the Estate to create a new multi-use link between the villages of Downham and Chatburn, to the north of Chatburn Road.

2.2 Shared Travel Opportunities

2.2.1 The nearest bus stops to the site are c.250m to the east of the site in Downham. These bus services that can be accessed from these stops are summarised below in **Table 2.2**.

Table 2.2: Summary of Bus Services

Bus Service	Route	Frequency		
		Mon – Fri	Saturday	Sunday
66(S) / 67	Nelson – Downham – Chatburn – Clitheroe	7 services per day between 08:14 and 19:04	7 services per day between 08:54 and 18:54	N/A
659 (School Bus)	Worston – Downham – Chatburn – Bowland county High School	One service at 08:40, return service at 15:42	N/A	N/A

Source: Preston Bus

2.2.2 The nearest railway station to the site is Clitheroe which is located c.5km to the west and can accessed via a 21-minute cycle journey or a 31-minute bus journey via bus service 66. The station provides regular services along the Ribble Valley line, offering direct connections to Rochdale via Blackburn, Bolton and Manchester Victoria.

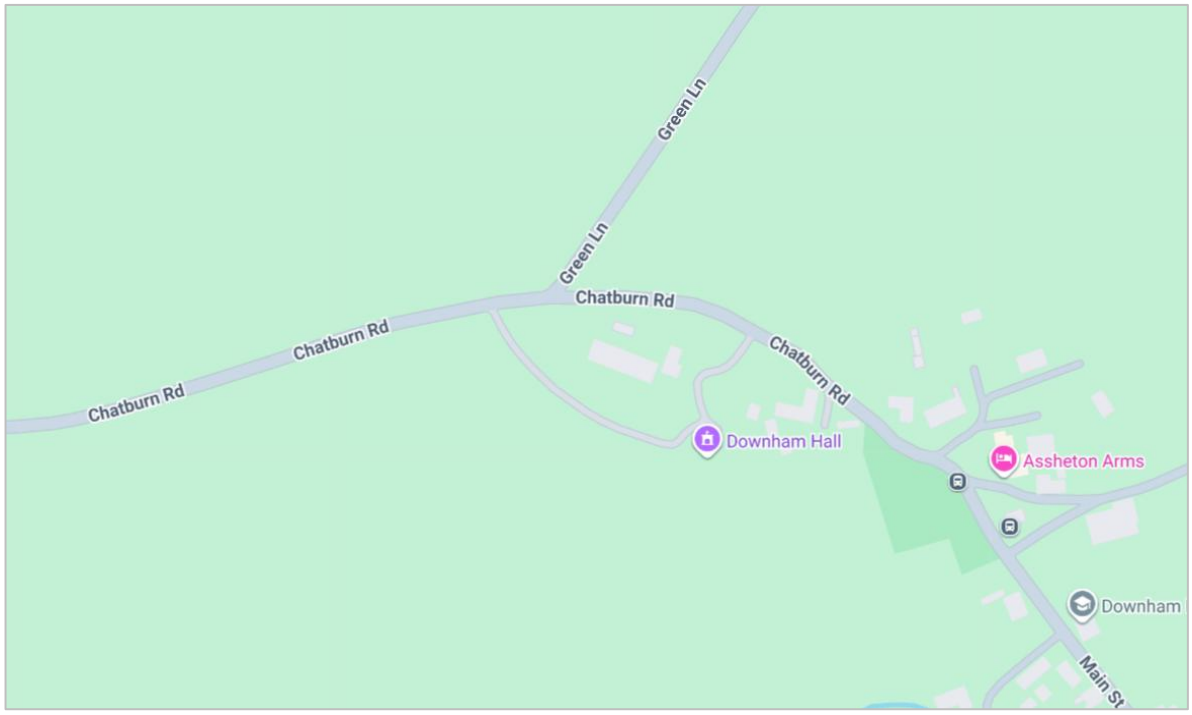
2.2.3 The site is located in a rural area where there are appropriate opportunities to travel by sustainable modes.

2.3 Network Safety Characteristics

2.3.1 Collision data has been obtained from CrashMap for the latest five-year period available between 2019 and 2023, during which no injury accidents were recorded around the immediate vicinity of the site, along the site frontage or at either of the points of access.

2.3.2 The spatial extent of the study area is illustrated in **Figure 2.3**.

Figure 2.3: Accident Data



Source: CrashMap

2.3.3 To further explore existing network safety characteristics, Automatic Traffic Counts (ATCs) were undertaken by the Estate on Chatburn Road during a continuous 7-day period between Friday 7th April 2023 and Thursday 13th April 2023. The ATC surveys recorded the total number of vehicles in each hour by category. Traffic speeds were also recorded.

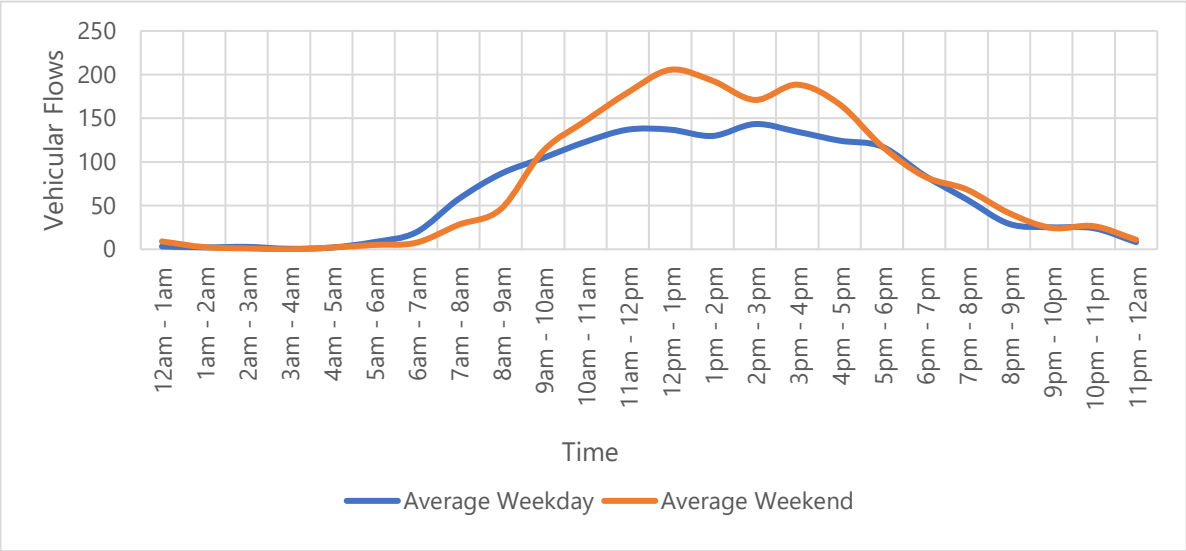
2.3.4 **Table 2.3** summarises the recorded speeds from the ATC and presents the 7-day average.

Table 2.3: Recorded Speeds along Chatburn Road

7-Day Average	Eastbound	Westbound
Average	29.1mph	26.8mph
85th Percentile	36.5mph	34.6mph

2.3.5 The average daily traffic profile is illustrated in **Figure 2.4**. Across the day there are on average 1,600 vehicle movements across both directions in an average weekday and c.1,800 movements in an average weekend day.

Figure 2.4: Average Daily Traffic Flows on Chatburn Road



Source: Traffic Survey Data

2.3.6 The traffic flows along Chatburn Road have also been summarised in **Table 2.4** for the morning and evening weekday hours (08:00–09:00 and 17:00–18:00).

Table 2.4: Chatburn Road Two-Way Traffic Flows

	Average Weekday	Average Weekend
0800-0900hrs	86	46
1200-1300hrs	137	206
1700-1800hrs	118	118

Source: Traffic Survey Data

2.3.7 As summarised in **Table 2.4**, there are between circa 85-120 two-way vehicle movements in the morning and evening peak hours, which equates to roughly 1-2 vehicles per minute in both peak hours respectively in an average weekday and average weekend. This increases on a weekend day to around 3-4 vehicles per minute suggesting a more leisure-focussed pattern of movement on this part of the network.

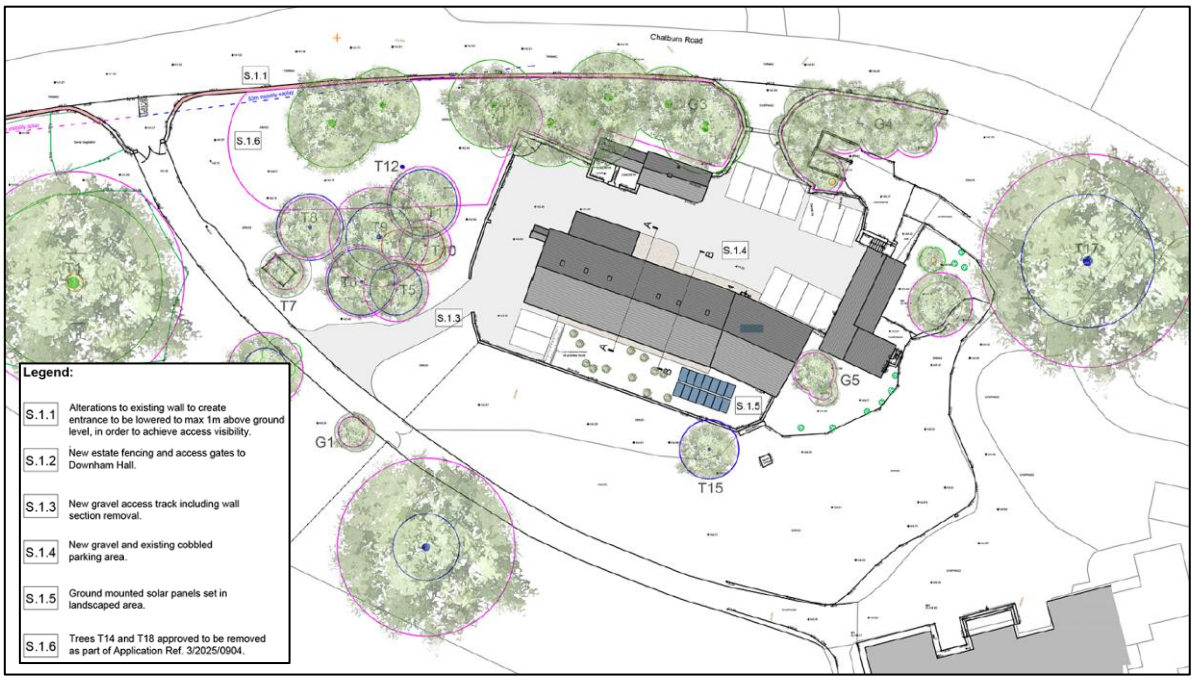
2.3.8 The evidence presented leads to the conclusion that traffic flows and speeds are low in the vicinity of the site with all road users able to accommodate one another accordingly.

SECTION 3 Development Proposals and Access Strategy

3.1.1 The development proposals seek to restore and rejuvenate the historic assets within the site by converting the existing barns and outbuildings to create a commercial office space and conference room.

3.1.2 **Figure 3.1** below presents an extract from the proposed site layout, with further details presented in in **Appendix A**.

Figure 3.1: Proposed Site Plan



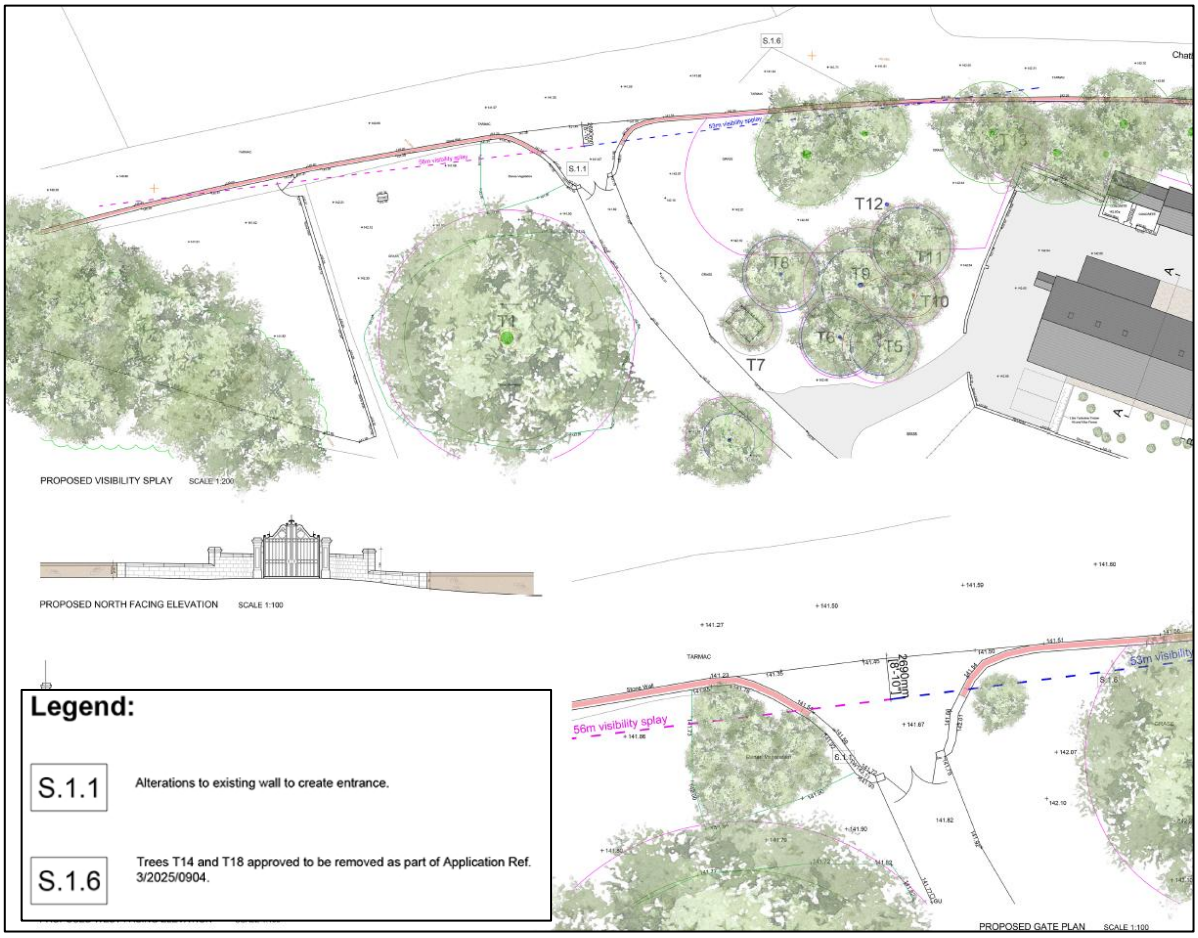
Source: Sunderland Peacock and Associates

3.1.3 The proposed site plan illustrates that the existing western access is intended to become the primary vehicular access to the site directly onto Chatburn Road.

3.1.4 As previously noted, the existing western access visibility is restricted in part by the adjacent wall. It is proposed to reduce the height of the boundary wall to maximise sightlines at the existing access.

3.1.5 It will be possible to provide sightlines of 2.4m x 56m to the west, and 2.4m x 53m to the east referencing recorded vehicle speeds in the vicinity of the site. The site access details are presented in **Figure 3.2**.

Figure 3.2: Site Access



Source: Sunderland Peacock and Associates

3.1.6 The amendments to the existing boundary wall provide significant betterment to sightlines at the existing access which is to be used as the primary access for the development.

3.1.7 There is space available at the existing access to allow a car to turn off Chatburn Road whilst there is another car waiting to exit. In practice, this occurrence is unlikely given the small scale of development and tidal nature of arrivals and departures associated with employment development (i.e. arrivals in the morning and departures in the afternoon/evening).

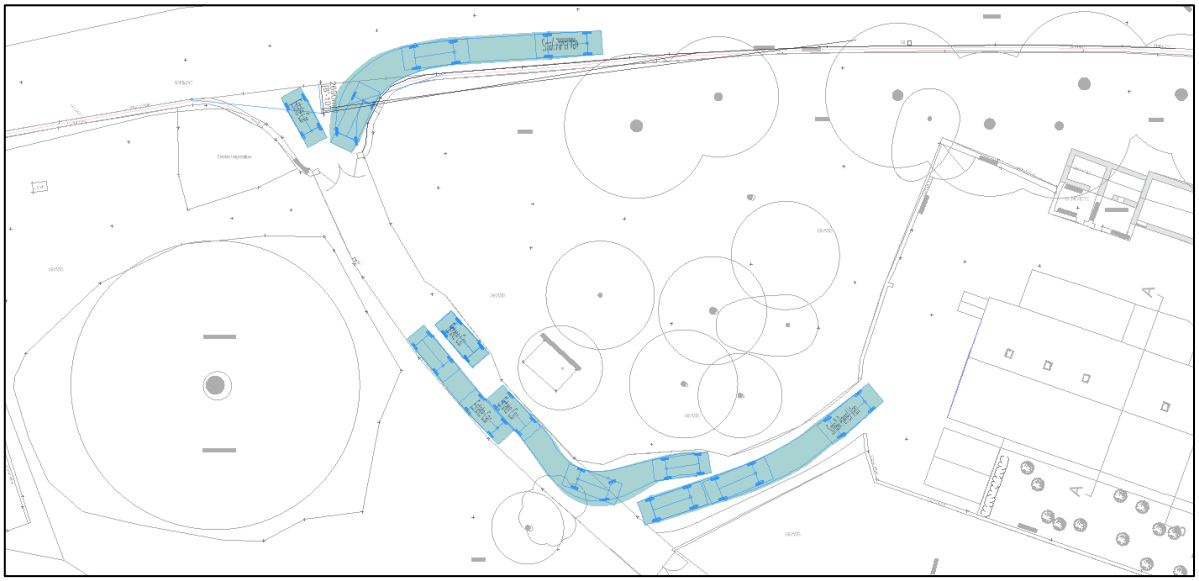
3.1.8 It should be noted that as part of the development proposals, the other existing direct access from Chatburn Road into the courtyard would be closed for motor vehicle traffic, thereby removing a point of vehicular conflict from the network.

3.1.9 Within the site, use is to be made of the existing track which serves Downham Hall with a short length of new track to provide a more direct access to the courtyard and parking area.

3.1.10 Given the nature of development, it is not considered to be necessary to provide an internal track width that accommodates two-way movement along its whole length. Instead, localised additional width is proposed at two locations to allow vehicles to see one another and accommodate accordingly.

3.1.11 An indicative tracking assessment for a car and small panel van using the localised additional width is presented in **Figure 3.3**.

Figure 3.3: Indicative Vehicle Tracking - Access



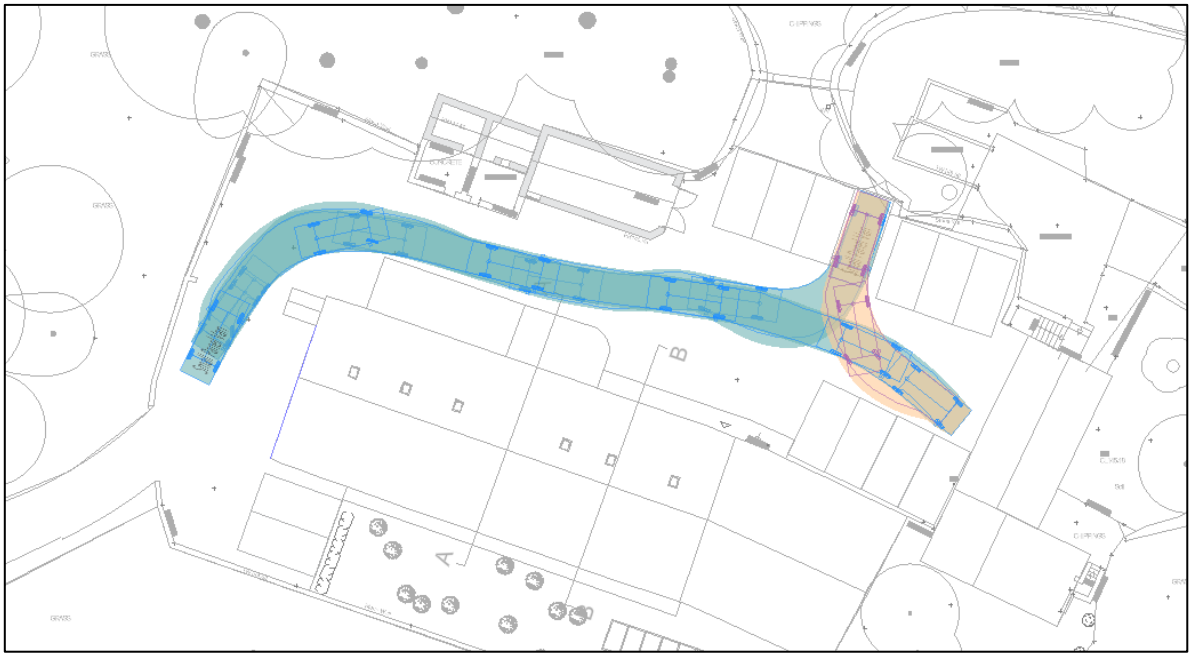
3.1.12 Within the courtyard, parking is proposed with space for 13 vehicles. This provides flexibility to accommodate staff and any visitors. One of the spaces will be designated as a disabled space, located close to the main building entrance. Electric vehicle charging infrastructure is to be provided for some spaces, with flexibility to add charging infrastructure in the future should demands warrant it.

3.1.13 Secure covered cycle parking will be provided along with lockers for the use of staff. Space is also available within the yard to accommodate motorcycles in a secure location.

3.1.14 The internal courtyard provides a flexible space which accommodates pedestrians, parking and also deliveries which are anticipated to be in smaller light goods vehicles. It is anticipated that deliveries in these smaller vehicles will enter the site, park using the spaces available, complete their delivery, then exit in forward gear.

3.1.15 An indicative tracking assessment for a small panel van is presented in **Figure 3.4**.

Figure 3.4: Indicative Vehicle Tracking - Courtyard



3.1.16 In terms of the refuse collection strategy, as per existing arrangements for Downham Hall and properties in Downham, the refuse vehicle will wait momentarily on Chatburn Road with bins able to be dragged a short distance from the courtyard directly to the back of the vehicle.

3.1.17 In terms of potential trip impacts, a review of the TRICS database has found that there are no directly comparable sites, particularly in terms of the rural location, limited floor area, and the conversion of an existing barn. However, based on the fact that there is a tenant identified who will use the space on behalf of the Downham Estate, it is possible to derive an indicative trip assessment.

3.1.18 The tenant currently employs 12 staff. Not all staff will be required to use the proposed development daily with many attending appointments throughout the day. There are also 2 members of staff who are residents on the Downham Estate and do not need to travel.

3.1.19 With this in mind, a first principles scenario has been conducted which assumes that 8 staff could use the site on a typical day with arrivals in the morning, and departures in the afternoon/evening. This could result in 8 vehicular arrivals in the morning between 0730-0900hrs and 8 vehicular departures between 1600-1730hrs).

3.1.20 In practice, the daily trip movements may well be lower than presented depending on the number of appointments on any one day, and the potential for some staff to car share.

3.1.21 It is considered that the trip movements generated by the proposed development are not of a scale that would significantly adversely change the characteristics of the local highway network in the vicinity of the site.

3.1.22 It should be noted that the indicative assessment presented does not account for the removal of historic farm vehicle traffic, and therefore, compared to historic use of the site, the net trip impact may therefore be lower than presented.

SECTION 4 Conclusion

4.1.1 Overall, it can be concluded that the site is located where there is an appropriate choice to travel by sustainable travel modes and, based on the available evidence and data collection, the existing characteristics of the local network do not give immediate cause for concern in terms of operation or safety.

4.1.2 Use is to be made of an existing access with sightlines maximised in either direction. Another existing access is to be closed for motor vehicles thereby reducing the number of vehicular access points on the network in the vicinity of the site.

4.1.3 Appropriate levels of parking can be provided which is considered to be sufficient for the development demands. This includes provision for disabled parking, electric vehicle charging infrastructure and secure cycle and motorcycle parking.

4.1.4 The proposed conversion of the existing barn to a small office use is expected to result in a minimal level of trip generation that reflects the modest scale of the development. Therefore, the associated trip demand will not materially alter the existing characteristics of the network in the vicinity of the site.

APPENDIX A. PROPOSED SITE PLAN