

Appendix DT/15

Council Highway Officer Correspondence on Transport Assessment Addendum June 2020

Environment & Transport Directorate Internal Memorandum

To: Martha Hughes

From: Mike Taylor
X4086

Date: 17/6/2020

Ref: 2016/28492

Application: Land at Peel Hall; Land South of M62 bounded by, Elm Road; Birch Avenue; Poplars Avenue; Newhaven Road; Windermere Avenue, Grasmere Avenue; Merewood Close, Osprey Close Lockerbie Close, Ballater Drive and Mill Lane, Poplars & Hulme, Warrington

APPEAL - Major Development: Outline planning application for a new mixed use neighbourhood comprising residential institution (residential care home - Use Class C2); up to 1200 dwelling houses and apartments (Use Class C3); local centre including food store up to 2000 square metres (Use Class A1); financial & professional services; restaurants and cafes; drinking establishments; hot food takeaways (Use Classes A2-A5 inclusive); units within Use Class D1 (non residential institution) of up to 600 sq m total with no single unit of more than 200 sq m; and family restaurant/ pub of up to 800 sq m (Use Classes A3/A4); employment uses (research; assembly and light manufacturing - Use Class B1); primary school; open space including sports pitches with ancillary facilities; means of access (including the demolition of 344; 346; 348; 458 and 460 Poplars Avenue) and supporting infrastructure. (All detailed matters other than access reserved for subsequent approval.) (Application is accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment).

Following the last Public Inquiry into the development at Peel Hall Highgate Transportation have produced additional information in the form of Transport Assessment Addendum (TAA) report. The following is a review of the TAA focussing on the main areas where either further additional information/clarification is required and where specific issues of disagreement are raised.

Modelling

The strategic modelling to identify the links and junctions impacted by traffic generated by the development has now been undertaken using the Council's multi-modal transport model (WMMTM16) which covers the whole of the Borough and beyond. Work has been carried out to ensure that the portion of the model representing the specific Peel Hall Study Area has been calibrated and validated in line with Department for Transport (DfT) guidance.

It is considered that the Peel Hall WMMTM16 SATURN model accurately represents conditions within the study area and that the outputs are appropriate for further more detailed modelling to assess specific junction operation and assist in understanding the development impact.

It is also considered that the junctions identified within the TAA for further detailed modelling following the use of the Peel Hall WMMTM16 SATURN model are appropriate and that the use of VISSIM is appropriate for assessing the impact of the development along the A49 Winwick Road corridor including M62 J9, A49/A574/Sandy Lane West and the A49/A50 junctions.

There are still some outstanding issues related to the VISSIM base and forecast models; these issues are detailed in *WSP Technical Note 2: A49 VISSIM Model Option Test Review* provided to Highgate Transportation on 20th April 2020 and it is understood that Highgate are re-running the VISSIM model to take account of these issues and of those raised by Highways England.

Further comment will be provided on the impacts and potential mitigation required along the A49 corridor following receipt of the latest VISSIM forecast model.

The individual capacity assessments result in a number of concerns in relation to key issues:

Myddleton Lane/Delph Lane – The TAA correctly identifies an impact at this location and suggests the implementation of traffic signals as a necessary mitigation measure. This route is currently well-utilised and concerns are regularly raised in respect of traffic volume, speeds and damage-only accidents due to the nature of the route, its limited width and the presence of sharp bends. A traffic management scheme to address these concerns is under consideration and given the additional traffic that will be using the route as a direct result of the development it is considered appropriate to seek a contribution towards the scheme.

A50/Hilden Road Roundabout – The TAA identifies an impact at this location as a result of the development but references discussions in January 2020 in relation to concern of potential changes to the existing layout (which incorporate safety and accessibility improvements) that may be detrimental to vulnerable road users. Notwithstanding this, the view was always taken that any decision on required mitigation would be led by the modelling results and it is considered that mitigation measures are required. Further discussions are required to identify appropriate mitigation.

A50/Hallfields Road – The TAA identifies an impact at this location and suggests the implementation of MOVA and to refresh road markings. The boundary constraints of this junction negate physical improvements and it is considered that the introduction of MOVA to improve the efficiency of the traffic signal operation at the junction will have a positive effect; the refreshing of road markings will highlight appropriate road space for all road users travelling through the junction and the mitigation measures are considered appropriate.

Public Transport

Discussions have been ongoing between the Council and the appellant in respect of required public transport provision to serve the site and it is considered that an appropriate level of public transport service can be provided. This will need to be secured via a S106 Agreement with the Council as Public Transport Authority.

Impact on Residential Area South of Development

It is clear from the results within the TAA that the proposed development has a significant impact on the residential roads south of the development site, however, the assessment of impact is based on reference to the now withdrawn DMRB document TA 79/99 *Traffic Capacity of Urban Roads*, the current DfT document *Manual for Streets* and the dated CIHT document *Transport in the Urban Environment*.

The methodology used is not considered appropriate as it takes no detailed account of heavy on-street parking that occurs in the area, the number of frontage accesses to dwellings, pedestrian and cycle movements or of the extensive traffic calming measures in the area. All of these issues influence movement along a route. The traffic flows referenced suggest that the area is already at capacity.

The most appropriate means to accurately reflect link capacity and movement throughout the area would be via a micro-simulation model.

Mitigation is proposed in the form of removal of on-street parking by providing verge parking areas and an extension to the existing 20mph speed limit on Poplars Avenue as well as a range of traffic calming/traffic management measures. Notwithstanding the potential benefits of the measures proposed they also raise specific issues; for example, the verge parking is intended to free up road space to improve traffic movement but there is the concern that verge parking may mask pedestrian movement which when combined with likely higher speeds has safety implications. In respect of the extension of the 20mph limit this currently highlights the main residential route for movements through the estate and assists through the provision of terminal signing in the effectiveness of the existing 20mph routes; as a mitigation measure the 20mph extension is not supported.

It is considered that the additional vehicle movements imposed on the residential area to the south as a direct result of the development will change their nature and function so that the primary purpose is movement and this will subsequently alter the character of the area with potential impacts on public safety, residential amenity and the movement of vulnerable road users.

Accident Analysis

It is noted that the accident results indicate a high proportion of vulnerable road user accidents in the overall accident figures, particularly in the residential area south of the development site. Despite the conclusions within the TAA there is no comparison to anticipated accident rates within the study area.

Proposed Mitigation

Whilst there is no expectation that a development should mitigate existing issues it is reasonable and expected that any proposal should not exacerbate an existing issue and that where capacity issues are already experienced the development should mitigate its own impact. A pragmatic approach is taken where small over capacity increases to one arm are outweighed by larger decreases to other congested arms or where there is no readily acceptable solution.

Issues of potential mitigation along the A49 corridor and associated junctions will be dependent on the results of the latest VISSIM forecast model and further comment will be provided then.

A Travel Plan and bus mitigation strategy are appropriate and can be secured via condition and Section 106 Agreement respectively.

The proposed mitigation measures at A50 Orford Green/Hallfields Road, A49 Newton Road/Golborne Road and Myddleton Lane/Delph Lane are considered appropriate and can be secured by condition.

It is considered that the development will have a detrimental impact along Delph Lane with an increase in movement along an existing rural route and a contribution is sought towards traffic management measures to influence vehicle movement and speeds.

It is considered that the development will have a detrimental impact on the junction of A50 Orford Green/Hilden Road roundabout and further discussions are required to identify appropriate mitigation.

Whilst mitigation proposals to the residential roads south of the development are not considered appropriate to mitigate the overall impacts of the development they will be required should planning consent be granted; the exception being the extension of the 20mph speed limit.

Phasing of Development

The Council's *Design Guide Residential and Industrial Estate Roads* provides the requirements in respect of number of dwellings that can be served from an individual access point and also the practical issue in respect of the adoption process in that the Council will not adopt roads until all future construction served from them has been completed. The phasing of development will be influenced by this

The Council's Design Guide provides guidance on the number of dwellings served from a cul-de-sac and when a secondary emergency access point is needed dependent on the type and nature of the road involved.

Whilst these issues can be controlled by condition and are subject to reserved matters the current overall control of land allows for individual plots to be inter-connected the longer term delivery of the development site can cause issues as individual plots are sold off and developers construct dwellings to maximise their individual site potential.

The phasing also needs to consider the requirement to deliver mitigation measures and who may be responsible for key off-site infrastructure delivery.

The parcel sizes indicated on the Indicative Phasing Plan are considered appropriate but the build-out within suggests a pepper-pot approach of smaller plots within the parcels throughout the site minimising impact on individual access points. The actual phasing is more likely to be in keeping with the build-out of the larger parcels indicated and this may place more strain on one particular part of the existing highway network at an earlier point than that modelled; meaning that the 600 dwelling trigger proposed for some of the mitigation works is not reflective of actual impact.

It is considered that the mitigation trigger needs to be revisited particularly given that the modelling undertaken identifies that the junctions of Myddleton Lane/Delph Lane and A50 Orford Green/Hilden Road already experience capacity issues.

Alternative Access Strategy

Access Strategy Option B (forming a new all-movements junction at A49 Winwick Road/Poplars Avenue) formed part of the appellant's original appeal submission with the conclusion that the development could be accommodated without impacting on the existing road network and specifically without impacting on the operation of M62 J9.

It is clear that the latest appropriate modelling highlights particular issues with this access strategy, as was always suggested by the Council, but no further work has been undertaken to assess whether alternative junction designs or development access strategies (e.g. allowing only part of the development to be accessed here) suggest that a solution is feasible. No work has ever been undertaken on other alternative access strategies.

As highlighted above it is considered that the impact on the residential roads south of the development is such that alternative access strategies must be explored.

Summary

Further information is still awaited in the form of updated VISSIM modelling reports but the conclusions of the Transport Assessment Addendum are not accepted. It is considered that the current proposal will have a severe impact on the existing transport network that has not been adequately mitigated.

Furthermore it is considered that the additional vehicle movements imposed on the residential area to the south as a direct result of the development will change their nature and function so that the primary purpose is movement and this will subsequently alter the character of the area with potential impacts on public safety, residential amenity and the movement of vulnerable road users. It is considered that these effects cannot adequately be mitigated.

The Highway Authority maintain an objection to the proposal.

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