

Environment & Transport Directorate Internal Memorandum

To: Alison Gough

From: Mike Taylor
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Application: Land to the west of Junction 20 of the M6 Motorway, and Junction 9 of the M56 Motorway and to the south of, Grappenhall Lane/Cliff Lane (known as Six:56 Warrington) Grappenhall, Warrington

Outline Planning (Major) - Outline application (all matters reserved except for access) comprising the construction of up to 287,909m² (gross internal) of employment floorspace (Use Class B8 and B1(a) offices) including change of use of Bradley Hall Farmhouse to B1 (a) office use (335m²) and associated servicing and infrastructure including car parking and vehicle and pedestrian circulation, alteration of existing access road into site including works to the M6 J20 dumbbell roundabouts and realignment of the existing A50 junction, noise mitigation, earthworks to create development platforms and bunds, landscaping including buffers, creation of drainage features, electrical substation, pumping station, and ecological works, accompanied by an Environmental Statement.

I refer to your memo requesting highway comments.

Response:

Objection raised. The application is not supported by sufficient information to demonstrate that the proposed development will not be prejudicial to the satisfactory functioning of the highway network within Warrington. This is contrary to Policies CS1, MP1, MP5 and MP7 of Warrington's Local Plan Core Strategy and the aims and principles of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Comments:

The application is outline with all matters reserved except for access for the provision of 287,909sq.m. of B8 floorspace; access is to be taken from the B5356 Grappenhall Lane.

The application is accompanied by a comprehensive Transport Assessment (TA) but it is considered that there are a number of issues that require further clarification together with additional information that should be provided before a satisfactory assessment of the impact of the proposal on the highway network can be provided.

Accessibility

The TA correctly identifies that there are issues in respect of accessibility by sustainable means and whilst the provision of a footway/cycleway along Grappenhall Lane offers benefit further information is needed in respect of how this will link into

existing facilities to improve travel choice to the site. As part of this it is likely that a designated pedestrian/cycle link into the east of the site as well as a designated crossing facility is required. The TA also correctly identifies the opportunity to improve the Public Right of Way network through the site and further information is required in terms of what is proposed.

Similarly the TA highlights the lack of public transport provision for the site and further detail is required in respect of proposals to improve the public transport offer. A contribution will be required to secure appropriate provision to connect the site with the wider area.

Traffic Forecasting

The trip generation forecasts are based on traffic surveys undertaken at Omega North and are considered appropriate. The inclusion of the committed development sites is also considered appropriate. However, there is a query in respect of the growth factors used to derive future traffic flows from the base 2017 traffic flows. Neither the proposed Six:56 development nor the Liberty development (Stobart) were included in Warrington's current Local Plan forecasts; they both depend on very special circumstances being demonstrated to allow development in Green Belt. Clarification is required as to whether the deduction in predicted traffic growth as proposed should be applied.

Whilst the distribution of staff-related trips being based on 2011 census data is acceptable in principle further information is required to justify the routes assigned given the results of the Warrington Multi-modal Transport Model (WMMTM) assessment (discussed further below) and an analysis of the census data which appears to highlight a proportion of movements to Wards within Warrington to the north and west (e.g. Grappenhall, Appleton, Fairfield & Howley, Latchford and Bewsey & Whitecross) which may utilise routes such as Broad Lane and Witherwin Avenue.

The HGV traffic distribution assumptions are considered appropriate. It is noted that all HGV movements are assigned towards the M6 J20 which may mean that some localised movements to/from Warrington via the A50 are excluded; this is not considered material given the limited number of HGV movements that currently follow this routing and also allows for a more robust assessment of the locally critical junctions.

The even distribution of HGV movements between the two access points may not be realistic and will very much depend on the final internal layout, however, given that the modelling results of each access point highlights a free flow level of service and significant spare capacity it is considered that the access principles are appropriate.

WMMTM Assessments

Further clarification is required in respect of the analysis of the potential impact of the development using the WMMTM. Tables 7.1 and 7.2 in the TA highlight the impacts of development traffic on the wider area in the AM and PM peaks. However, the accompanying text suggests that only six junctions were identified as being impacted whereas both tables highlight that a seventh junction, the Cat & Lion junction of A49/B5356, would also be impacted; further details in respect of the potential impact here is required.

Clarification is required as to why a 5% increase has been used as the determining factor for impact when the TA has been prepared in accordance with the Department for Transport document *Guidance on Transport Assessment*. It is suggested that any junction subject to an increase of 30 or more two-way peak hour trips would be a more

appropriate determining factor and this would add a number of other junctions to the assessment.

As suggested within the TA, it is accepted that the omission of movement restrictions, the location of the loading point and the lack of mitigation at the M6 J20 within the version of the WMMTM used for the assessment will affect the distribution of traffic through the area. This notwithstanding it is considered that the output from the WMMTM is valid and given the comments in relation to staff movements highlighted in the Traffic Forecasting section above further information is required to clarify potential issues to the north and west of the site.

Capacity Assessments

The tables showing the results summary of the capacity assessments undertaken should include the Practical Reserve Capacity figures and the values for Average Delay per Vehicle.

Table 8.14 has been incorrectly annotated in respect of the Degree of Saturation and Queue figures.

Paragraph 8.3.4 dismisses the potential impacts of 70 vehicles which, as highlighted above, would benefit from further analysis in line with *Guidance on Transport Assessment*.

As highlighted above it is considered that additional capacity analysis is necessary.

Further detailed comments on the capacity assessments will follow.

Mitigation Proposals

The roundabout access points will cater for the movements associated with the development and provide an additional benefit in regulating the speed and flow of traffic along B5356 and the access principles are considered appropriate; subject to additional information.

All of the mitigation proposals affect routes that are strategically important and require Stage 1 Road Safety Audits. The Council offer this service and further details on the protocol are attached; it should be noted that even if a third party auditor is chosen the Council should be contacted prior to any audit taking place.

Although the mitigation proposals appear to have been designed in accordance with Design Manual for Roads and Bridges standards all proposals should be accompanied by tracking diagrams showing all HGV movements through the junctions.

The submitted plans show localised 30mph speed limits through the roundabouts which would not be appropriate. A review of the speed limit along the B5356 Grappenhall Lane will be required but can be addressed at detailed design stage.

The detailed drawings lack scale details.

As highlighted above the footway/cycleway along Grappenhall Lane offers benefit but further detail is required as to how the facility will link into existing infrastructure; it is likely that the facility needs to be extended and that crossing facilities need to be considered at key points.

Pre-application discussions highlighted the emerging Local Plan and the aspiration to accommodate future transport infrastructure to cater for long-term highway demands and support high quality public transport, walking and cycling provision; a 25m wide

protected corridor along Grappenhall Lane was identified to address this. Further details should be provided in respect of this required parameter.

The proposed mitigation scheme at the A50 Cliff Lane/B5356 Grappenhall Lane roundabout and the linkage to the associated mitigation at the M6 J20 maximises the available adopted highway. This leaves little or no verge along the southern carriageway of Cliff Lane and inadequate footway provision along the northern carriageway. This raises concerns not only in respect of pedestrian and cycle movement but also the ability to accommodate street furniture such as direction or warning signing and street lighting. It also reduces visibility at the existing vehicular access point to Bradley View/Bradley Hall Cottages which also serves as the access to the Public Right of Way through the site. Further detail is required to address these concerns.

Until the above issues are addressed there is no Highways support for the proposal and an objection is raised.

Mike Taylor
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