

MEMORANDUM

To: - Martin Nugent
Your Ref: - Planning Application No.
3/2010/0719

From: - David Watson
Tel: - 01772 533734
Date: - 08 October 2010

LAND OFF HENTHORN ROAD (On the North Side) COMMENTS ON THE TRANSPORT ASSESSMENT (DATED AUGUST 2010) SUBMITTED AS PART OF AN OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION

APPLICATION: OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION PROPOSAL: PLANNING APPLICATION FOR UP TO 270 RESIDENTIAL UNITS ON LAND OFF THE NORTH SIDE OF HENTHORN ROAD, CLITHEROE

The following comments relate to the Transport Assessment and associated Travel Plan (both dated August 2010) prepared by Ashley Helme Associates Ltd on behalf of Gladman Associates for a proposed residential development off Henthorn Road, Clitheroe.

Lancashire County Council is responsible for providing and maintaining a safe and reliable highway network. With this in mind the present and proposed traffic systems have been considered in and around the area of the proposed development.

Development

The Transport Assessment outlines the proposal for a residential development of up to 270 dwellings. The proposed development site lies immediately to the west of the existing settlement edge of Clitheroe, with Henthorn Road running east/west on its southern boundary. The current land use of the proposed site is agricultural. To the west of the site there is the Clitheroe Caravan and Camping Club Site and the River Ribble.

Access Strategy

In the Travel Plan it states that the access strategy for the development is based on the fundamental principle of encouraging travel by residents of the site to be made by sustainable travel mode choices.

There will be a single vehicular access to the residential development site. The access will lead directly from Henthorn Road which will be realigned to give priority to vehicular traffic to and from the site. As such, all of the development site traffic including servicing and delivery vehicles, public transport and emergency vehicles will be distributed onto Henthorn Road via this one access.

I have strong concerns that the constraints of the site, its location, the proposed single vehicular access, the limited connectivity with the existing adjacent residential area, the lack of a through public transport route and distance to key community facilities will result in a development whose residents have a high dependence on the private car.

An Interim Framework Travel Plan (IFTP) has been produced and comments on this will be provided in more detail below under the heading 'Travel Plan'. However, it is clear that a Travel Plan should not be used to cover up inherent weaknesses of a development site. Sustainable transport links can be incorporated but if they do not lead to key community facilities or they are indirect and distances excessive (anything over 5 minutes walking time or >400m) then usage is likely to reduce.

Site Access – Henthorn Road Priority Junction

The proposed site access is presented in the Transport Assessment (TA) drawing No. 1222/03 (Rev. A). The layout shows a priority junction with realignment and change of priority to Henthorn Road. Priority is given to the residential development.

There are a number of existing land uses on the section of Henthorn Road (now proposed to become the minor arm off the realigned site access). These include a number of farms, a sewage works and a household waste disposal centre (HWDC).

The existing Henthorn Road in the location of the access is narrow and has no footways. It is, approximately, a 5m wide lane - rural in nature and has a speed limit of 30mph. The developer has proposed a change of priority to Henthorn Road at the access. This change to priority does not seem unreasonable given the increased flows from the proposed development, the potential for a bus service into the site and the wider carriageway standard of the new section.

The Design and Access Statement indicates that the design for the development will adopt the principles of Manual for Streets and this is reflected in the geometrics of the proposed access junction. At the proposed access there will be a number of heavy vehicle movements associated with the farms, sewage works and the household waste disposal centre (HWDC) on the section of Henthorn Road that would lose priority. A swept path analysis has been provided that shows the track of a 16.5m articulated HGV. The track demonstrates that large vehicles will need to swing out onto the opposite side of the carriageway to complete certain manoeuvres. The layout proposed will result in potential conflict between the SITA HGV lorries, members of the public using the HWDC and the development traffic. As stated in the TA the design of the access junction will be subject to a S278 agreement and approval by LCC. While a manual for streets approach may be appropriate in this location it is essential to ensure safe operation of all users (motorised and non-motorised). To demonstrate that safe operation can be provided at the proposed access a stage 1 safety audit would have been beneficial.

It is a concern of the highway authority that the single access makes this large residential development, in effect, a large cul-de-sac. All development traffic is therefore dispersed onto Henthorn Road east of the proposed access junction resulting in adverse impact on the local amenity. The narrow carriageway (particularly in the vicinity of White House) and potential for further constriction by parked vehicles mean that any incident (accident, vehicle breakdown or highway maintenance) along this section could restrict access in and out for all vehicles including emergency services.

Comments on the Transport Assessment

Traffic Flows

Existing AM and PM peak period traffic flows are presented in the TA Figure E1. While I don't have the observed traffic count data the flows do not seem unreasonable.

Traffic Growth

Base opening year 2016 and design year 2021 traffic flows are presented in TA Figures E6 and E7. The Base flows include the estimated committed development traffic and count data factored to the future years using National Road Traffic Forecasts (low growth) adjusted using TEMPRO. This approach is acceptable.

Trip Generation

The trip rates used to derive the proposed development flows are considered acceptable.

Trip Distribution

Distribution of all site traffic from the single access results in an increase in two-way vehicular movements on Henthorn Road of 158 vehicles in the AM and 179 vehicles in the PM. The distribution assumptions suggest that 15% of the development traffic is then predicted to travel via Henthorn Road and Lancaster Drive to Edisford Road.

The approach assumed in distributing the proposed development traffic onto the wider highway network is not unreasonable.

Committed and Other Proposed Developments

Planning permission has been granted for a 170 dwelling residential scheme for land off Primrose Road. The development has been included in the Transport Assessment.

LCC Highways have also had early discussions on a pre-application inquiry for development on the south side off Henthorn Road (also Gladman Associates). At this stage no agreements have been made.

It is clear that any development in this location would require significant additional improvements to public transport (services and infrastructure) pedestrian and cycle infrastructure as well as highway improvements to deliver sustainable development and minimise the dependence on the private car.

Should further applications emerge in this location it would be necessary for an assessment to be carried out of the cumulative impact of all proposals so that LHA could evaluate the potential highway impact.

Impact on Junctions and Junction Modelling

The model output (table of results only) was presented in the TA. In our comments with regard to the scoping study report we requested that queue length observations were recorded with all junctions to be surveyed and modelled.

At the Eshton Terrace Level crossing the forecast increase in traffic, as a result of the development, is likely to equate to less than 1 vehicle a minute and should not significantly add to the queuing observed when the crossing barriers are closed.

Pedestrians and Cyclists Access

The cycleway, marked as No. 6 on the Illustrative Masterplan appears to run between the proposed development and the car park opposite the Roefield Leisure Centre (passing along the edge of the sports fields). This is indicated by No.10 on the Illustrative Masterplan and is described as the proposed route to Edisford Road and riverside recreation. The link between the development and Edisford Road should be provided to cycleway standard and suitable signing and routing would need to be provided through the car park to Edisford Road.

The link to the Ribble Way Long Distance Footpath (No.7 on the Illustrative Masterplan) should ideally be constructed as a shared footway/cycleway. I also believe that a pedestrian/cycle link would have been desirable via Fairfield Close for more direct access to Clitheroe Edisford Primary School. This would also have improved connectivity with the surrounding residential area. However, I understand that there may be a land issue that has led to this option not being considered further by the applicant.

There is no footway on the south side of Henthorn Road east of the site access. The existing footpath on the northern side of Henthorn Road (in the location of the White House) is narrow and overgrown and would need to be upgraded in order to encourage sustainable transport choices to and from this development. Parked vehicles were observed on carriageway and also part on carriageway/part on footway in this location. There are no TRO waiting restrictions in this area. The existing carriageway is narrow (between 5 and 5.5m) therefore any widening to the footway on the north side would create a pinch point for vehicular movements.

At Henthorn Road/Garnett Road, Garnett Road/Fairfield Drive priority junctions there are some minor pedestrian improvements proposed. These include reduced corner radii and dropped kerb crossings on pedestrian desire lines. At the Garnett Road/Lancaster Drive/Ennerdale Road roundabout it is proposed that 2.0m wide pedestrian refuges are provided on each of the four arms with associated dropped kerbs. It is acknowledged that these improvements will provide some benefit.

The Henthorn Road route represents the main pedestrian and cycle access to the proposed development. Overall, with consideration for the above, I do not believe that the proposed level of provision for pedestrians and cyclists to and from this development is adequate to significantly encourage sustainable development and reduce dependence on the private car.

Public Transport

Access to high quality public transport services will be key to reducing dependence on the private car for users of this development.

The comments below have been provided by LCC Public Transport.

In relation to Public Transport I would refer to IHT " Guidelines for Public Transport in Developments" – with particular reference to pp 149/150 Annex B: "Public & Sustainable Transport Assessment".

Key requirements of major housing developments are;

- Provision of through route for buses to serve the development
- All housing to be within 400m walking distance of a regular / frequent bus service.

Based on IHT guidelines – Annex B – the development fails on Form ST7. As a single access point it will not be practical to provide a bus service "In Perpetuity ".

The nearest stops are on Henthorn Road which is in excess of 400m of north/western end of the development. The level of service from these stops is limited to daytime only – with no evening services and just 4 buses on a Sunday. The layout will simply not encourage use of public transport. This means this development will end up reliant on use of private transport – increasing traffic levels on local network and failing to meet LCC objectives to encourage sustainability and good accessibility. It would be difficult for any residents to obtain employment or access any facilities other than local during middle of day.

It is proposed by the developer to divert the existing C1 service into the site to serve the development. In addition new bus stops will be provided in a suitable location within the site. The IFTP states that Census data shows low PT use from this Ward (particularly for travel to work – 2.6%, compared with 6.3% for Lancashire and 7.4% for England and Wales). The existing use of the C1 service is not presented in the TA but I would not be surprised if it were low. Diverting the C1 service in and back out of the proposed development will make this service less attractive to new and existing users and as such cannot be considered to contribute to ensuring this development reduces dependence on the private car. It is essential that the development is designed to ensure a through link for any diverted bus service.

The bus service to the new development service will need funding to ensure delivery of the service. One of the key concerns is that once the funding ceases, a bus service into a development, with only one access point, may not be commercially sustainable. This would leave the development without a permanent bus service. A service that is unlikely to be maintained at the end of the funding period would fail to address sustainable transport needs

It is, therefore, essential that further consideration is given to supporting public transport into and through this development. Public Transport proposals should also seek to provide a frequent service throughout the day and at weekends to a range of destinations. In order to secure the long term sustainability of the site any service provided needs to be viable once any initial funding period has past.

Road Safety

I have reviewed the latest accident data on the immediate highway network surrounding the development and in particularly on Henthorn Road which will provide access to the proposed site. On the 400m section of Henthorn Road between Garnett Road and Millthorne Avenue there have been 6 No. injury accidents since May 2008.

While there does not appear to be a pattern in terms of the cause of each incident, there is a pattern in that 5 of the 6 accidents involved vulnerable road users (pedestrians, cyclist or motorcyclists). Two of the accidents involved children.

The proposed development will increase traffic flows on Henthorn Road in the vicinity of Garnett Road by 158 vehicles in the AM peak and 179 vehicles in the PM peak. This equates to around a 40% increase in peak period flow on this section of Henthorn Road. Henthorn Road will provide the primary route for pedestrians and cyclists from this development. However, the only works proposed as part of the development to improve the existing route for vulnerable road users are dropped kerbs and amended corner radii at Garnett Road.

Parking Standards

The TA suggests that the parking provision for the development will be in line with relevant standards. The detail of the internal residential development layout is to be dealt with at reserved matters and therefore has not been addressed in detail within the Transport Assessment.

While I acknowledge the outline nature of the application I would note the need to ensure the development provides appropriate levels of secure cycle and motorcycle parking provision as well a parking for private cars.

Travel Plan

An Interim Framework Travel Plan (IFTP) has been produced as part of this planning application to improve accessibility of the site by sustainable modes. In section 10.3 of the TA it refers to the Accessibility Questionnaire which LCC requested be completed for the development proposal. The questionnaire provides an indication of accessibility for both the existing and proposed site. The existing location was shown to have low accessibility with a score of 10. The TA then suggests that a score of 20 is achieved when improvements are introduced through the development. This score lies at the very bottom of the medium accessibility range (20 – 35). However, I consider some of the distances quoted in the TA and used in the assessment (for example from the centre of the site to the local food shop) do not reflect the true distance using the far form direct pedestrian/cyclist network proposed (and as indicated on the illustrative Masterplan). Therefore, I would contest that even with the improvements proposed the site could be considered to have a low accessibility level with a score of at most 19.

The level of accessibility to the site suggests the need for much greater consideration of additional sustainable measures to minimise reliance on the use of the private car. Any proposals should be supported by a strong Travel Plan

LCC's Travel Plan team have looked at the IFTP and consider it to contain all the necessary components of an acceptable Framework Travel Plan. They also provided the following comments:

- In sections 5.9.4, 5.11.2 & 5.11.8 the document refers to 300 dwellings not 270.
- There is currently only one target 'reduction of 6.8% in the AM peak hour and 17.6% in the PM peak hour' which is probably realistic. With our support we would hope the full plan would identify other targets i.e. around publicity and awareness.

- The proposed public transport, cycling and pedestrian 'improvements' suggested within the IFTP are very limited. The IFTP focuses more on soft measures than hard
- The provision of Resident Travel Welcome Packs for each household has been proposed in the IFTP. This is an effective way of making residents aware of all their travel options but there needs to be appropriate funding for this

LCC would suggest that the developer provides free/subsidised travel tickets, as part of the Travel Plan, for use on local bus services to encourage greater use of public transport.

As a condition of planning we would request that a Full Travel Plan be prepared by a named travel plan co-ordinator with the support and advice from LCC's Travel Plan team within 3 months of the 'peak hours vehicle traffic count survey' (The IFTP states that this survey will take place within 3 months of occupation of 80 houses).

Internal Site Layout

It is proposed as part of this outline application that the internal road layout will be the subject of reserved matters applications. The preliminary internal layout has been developed following a Manual for Streets approach for all internal links resulting in narrow (4 to 4.5m) carriageways.

Servicing, Delivery, Waste Collection, Emergency Access and Routing

While the internal layout is not the subject of this application I would note the following, at this stage. In many areas of this large residential development the narrow lanes and general layout, shown on the illustrative Masterplan, may present difficulties for servicing, delivery and waste collection. It would be expected that a Service, Delivery, Waste Collection and Routing Strategy would be developed and agreed with Lancashire County Council and RVBC to ensure that all deliveries, servicing and waste collection can be undertaken safely without creating conflict with other vehicles, pedestrians or cyclists

Construction Period

The impact from construction traffic for any development in this location will be significant. Careful consideration would need to be given to the routing of construction traffic were development to be permitted.

Planning Obligations

Should the LPA be minded to approve this development, the County Council would seek planning obligation contributions from this development to fund measures that support sustainable transport. It is acknowledged that a number of measures provided under proposed s278 highway works support sustainable development. However, further sustainable measures are considered necessary to promote and support sustainable developments and communities, particularly in respect of public transport.

£18,000 requested as a contribution for advice and assistance with the Travel Plan

Planning Conditions

Given the current level of concern over the accessibility of the development for public transport and other sustainable modes, appropriate planning conditions are yet to be

produced by LCC. However, should your Council be minded to approve the application I would be pleased to offer highway conditions at that stage.

Conclusion

The proposals will have a negative impact on the local amenity, including increased flows on the existing residential network. There will be increased vehicle turning movements and impacts on pedestrian movements at junctions in vicinity of the development and at a number of junctions to the east of Clitheroe town centre.

Access to public transport services and sustainable links will, therefore, be key to reducing the impact from traffic generated by this development. A viable public transport service will be essential to reduce dependence on the private car and deliver sustainable development.

I consider that this development can not be considered sustainable. It is my opinion that the inadequate level of provision for sustainable modes means the development fails to meet a number of the policy requirements with respect to transport as contained in the Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan, Saved Policy T1, in particular:

- the availability and adequacy of public transport to serve those moving to and from the development;
- provision made for access to the development by pedestrians, cyclists and those with reduced mobility; and
- proposals which locate developments in areas which maintain and improve choice for people to walk, cycle or catch public transport rather than drive between homes and facilities which they need to visit regularly.

I would recommend that the LPA does not support this application unless accessibility by sustainable transport and access issues are addressed.

I could not support the proposed development until all issues have been resolved, including assurances that a viable Public Transport service, satisfying the full needs of the development (including sufficient frequency of service weekday, weekend and evening with suitable destinations), can be provided and maintained.

Further consideration should also be given to accessibility for pedestrians and cyclist, as the current proposals are not considered adequate to support sustainable development and reduce reliance on the private car from this development.

It is strongly recommended that further discussions between LCC, your council and the developer are held in order to consider further options that could address the concerns detailed above.