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Ribble Valley Borough Council
Council Offices
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D3/10/0719

Dear Sir

**Planning Applications, Ribble Valley District
D3-10-0719 land off Henthorn Road, Clitheroe**

I refer to your letter of 20 August 2010 concerning the above application

I have no objections in principle to this proposal on highway grounds. However, a number of highway improvements will be required to address my concerns regarding aspects of the proposed development that could prove detrimental to residents and the operation of the local highway network. These matters should be resolved and formal agreements reached prior to permission being granted.

However, the sustainability of the development is a particular concern, to the extent that I am advised by colleagues that a recommendation for refusal is warranted unless improvements in accessibility by public transport and non-car travel modes are addressed. In considering these and the other highway implications of this proposed development I would recommend and support the comments provided by my colleague Dave Watson, a copy of which are attached

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There are a number of items that require clarification or resolution following an examination of the Transport Assessment (TA) and supporting documentation provided by the Applicant.

It would be beneficial to have access to information that would address the following matters:-

- a It was difficult to validate the base data as there is no access to survey material or printouts of modelling results.
- b The TA did not include details of queue lengths within junction surveys, as previously requested.
- c The available results do not indicate any unacceptable impacts in terms of capacity calculations, sufficient to trigger a demand for highway improvements. I would suggest that this is, in part due to optimistic base modelling results, given the level of queuing observed on site at some of the junctions being assessed. However, I have identified a number of locations where I have concern that the impact of the proposal has been understated and mitigation measures could be reasonably applied.
- d The application provides a residential development heavily dependent on the private car. Additional action would be appropriate to further improve the accessibility of the site. In this respect, the Travel Plan is a useful tool, but it is not a route to ameliorate inherent weaknesses in the long-term sustainability of the site.

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I have identified a number of specific locations and other general areas of concern, where further measures may be needed to address the impact of the traffic generated by the site:-

A. Henthorn Road - There are concerns over the volume of traffic, congestion, the potential detrimental impact on highway safety and pedestrian movements

a. Increased peak hour movements on Henthorn Road have been shown at 158 vehicles in the am and 179 in the pm. The TA has distribution of these movements at 15% to Lancaster Drive, 24 vehicles am and 27 pm, with the remaining 85% passing Eshton Terrace, 134 in the am and 152 in the pm. At 40%, this will have a clear and dynamic impact on vehicle movements to and from Henthorn Road and the adjacent residential roads.

b. In view of the increase in vehicle movements and the subsequent reduction in pedestrian amenity along Henthorn Road, a pedestrian priority crossing should be provided in the vicinity of Henthorn Park. This would address my concerns regarding pedestrian safety, would be of specific benefit to Vulnerable Road Users, both elderly and school children, and would also provide an appropriate means of managing and maintaining low vehicle speeds

c. There was consultation and discussion in 2009 concerning a proposal to introduce a 20mph Speed Limit Zone across the Henthorn Road area. Following a period of public consultation and objections received from residents, this proposal is being held in abeyance subject to an assessment of a number of sign-only pilot schemes that have been introduced in the County. The introduction of this lower Speed Limit would have direct highway safety benefits for the safe movement of vehicles and pedestrians from the proposed development. In these circumstances, it would be reasonable to ask for a commitment to contribute to the cost of implementing such a scheme. A detailed breakdown of costs would be made available by Lancashire County Council. Any contribution would be subject to a future scheme being considered for implementation

B. Henthorn Road at Eshton Terrace – the 40% increase in peak hour movements, as detailed in the TA, will be focused at this junction. As indicated above in Point 1.b, I would welcome additional information on queue lengths during peak hours in order to assess the level of congestion that could be anticipated

I am concerned that in order to avoid this congestion point, motorists from the new development may choose to take an alternative route through residential streets in order to access either Bawdlands or Edisford Road in order to enter Eshton Terrace via Corporation Street.

C. Clitheroe Town Centre – The nature of the existing road layout within the town, and in particular the system of one way streets, means that the alternative route for traffic leaving the site heading north east towards the A59 is via Clitheroe town centre. The additional traffic would have a detrimental impact on existing traffic movements.

D. Eshton Terrace

a – The impact of the level crossing and the frequency of its operation has been noted in the TA. I understand that Castle Cement is looking to increase its use of the rail system for bulk haulage of materials and that this will increase the frequency of closure. I do not have details of an anticipated schedule of use at this time, but I am

conscious that this could have the effect of introducing additional periods of vehicular inactivity and the potential to make this a less attractive route to motorists.

b – There is extensive on street parking along the north side of Eshton Terrace. The majority of residents in this vicinity do not have access to off street parking associated with their properties, although some pay and display parking is available on Mitchell Street. The anticipated increase in vehicular movements will result in additional turning movements, fewer crossing opportunities for pedestrians and an increased focus on pinch points along this length, either from parked vehicles or vehicles manoeuvring to/from side streets. The introduction of relevant traffic engineering measures to address this potential detriment will be considered where appropriate and justified.

E. Woone Lane, north of Eshton Terrace – There is parking to both sides of Woone Lane for much of its length between Moor Lane and Eshton Terrace, resulting in delays for all through traffic and a reduction in the amenity for pedestrians where vehicles park on the footway. There have been previous attempts to introduce additional lengths of prohibition of waiting to address the issues of pedestrian safety and to assist the safe movement of through traffic. However, following objections to the TRO consultation the proposals were rejected by the Lancashire Local Ribble Valley in March 2007.

Subsequently, in February 2008, consideration was given to the possible one way operation of Woone Lane in which it was noted that "experience has shown that vehicle speeds tend to increase with one-way working, as there is no opposing traffic to take into account. This potential hazard is made more acute by the close proximity of St James' Primary School with high numbers of young pedestrians moving around this area". These points remain true and appropriate traffic management features would have to be implemented with the introduction of any future one way operation. This would have to be achieved through a process that recognised the priority of highway safety.

The lack of queue length data is a particular concern at the Henthorn Road junction with Eshton Terrace and the junction of Eshton Road with Woone Lane.

F. Woone Lane, south of Eshton Terrace – Once again there is the prospect of additional through traffic on a residential road where there is extensive on street parking to both sides, resulting in less amenity for pedestrians and residents.

G. Greenacre Street, Woone Lane and Moor Lane "triangle" – There is an opportunity to examine the movement of traffic within this area, taking into account the direct impact of those movements generated by the proposed development and to pursue alterations to the layout of the immediate highway layout that would benefit the safe and efficient movement of vehicles in this vicinity.

To this end, the following measures could be considered:-

- a. The reversal of the one way operation of Greenacre Street,
- b. The introduction of one way operation (north to south) on Woone Lane,
- c. The provision of traffic signals at the junction of Greenacre Street with Whalley Road. The existing pelican crossing at the junction of Turner Street and Whalley Road would become redundant with the provision of an "all-red" pedestrian phase at the new location.
- d. The introduction of associated Traffic Regulation Orders required to address the management of on street parking and the safe movement of traffic, pedestrians and other road users.

These changes could achieve a balanced range of vehicle and pedestrian movements through junctions 13 to 17 (as detailed in the TA), with measures available to secure the safe and efficient redistribution of existing route preferences.

However, these changes would be dependent on some particular movements being achievable, notably access at the north of Woone Lane for left turning traffic. This would be the only available route to a number of commercial and leisure operations and as such would need to accommodate a range of vehicles, such as a 16.5m articulated lorry, a cars towing a caravan and a vehicle transporter.

If the required manoeuvres cannot be achieved at the Woone Lane junction with Moor Lane, then consider:-

e. The provision of traffic signals at the junction of Greenacre Street with Whalley Road, with two way movements restored. The existing pelican crossing at the junction of Turner Street and Whalley Road would become redundant with the provision of an "all-red" pedestrian phase at the new location

f. The introduction of associated Traffic Regulation Orders required to address the management of on street parking and the safe movement of traffic, pedestrians and other road users on Greenacre Street

H. Primrose Road at Whalley Road – Demand on this route would be reduced if there was a direct access onto Whalley Road for eastbound traffic from Eshton Terrace. In view of the committed development at Primrose Mill, measures to minimise additional movements on this route would be welcomed.

I. Access to the site – It is proposed that access is achieved through a priority junction, with priority given to the residential site. The layout provided on the site plan re is no reason to anticipate any difficulties in achieving a suitable junction design, sufficient to accommodate all existing and anticipated movements to both the proposed site and for the other users of Henthorn Road, commercial, agricultural and residential

The means of access is acceptable, as shown in Drawing No. 1222/03 Revision A. However, the detailed design will be subject to a S278 agreement with Lancashire County Council as the relevant Highway Authority.

J. The present Accessibility Score for the site is 10 and this has been increased to only 20 as a result of the measures contained in the TA. Given the location of the site on the immediate edge of the main settlement boundary, a development of this scale and impact should be providing appropriate measures to improve its long term sustainability by accommodating non-car journeys and alternative travel modes. I would acknowledge that the investment required will be considerable, in terms of both finance and use of land, but without such a commitment the development will continue to be isolated rather than forming an extension of an established residential area.

This continuing reliance on the private car has detrimental implications for the amenity of residents in the immediate area and highway safety elsewhere in Clitheroe.

K. Planning Obligations – In previous comments I had estimated a contribution of £418,500 for the development, based on achieving an Accessibility Score of 25, which I considered possible with additional highway improvements. However, the present score has been calculated at 20 and on this basis, a sum of £1,800 should

be identified for each unit. Therefore, for 270 properties a highway contribution in the region of £486,000 would be sought.

L. Public Transport – Further to the comments provided by my colleague Dave Watson, the operator of the C1 service, which it was suggested could be re-routed into the residential site, has ceased operating and is now being run directly by Lancashire County Council. This reinforces the view that plans need to be agreed to secure a long term, viable PT service to ensure that this development is sustainable.

The issue of accessibility by sustainable public transport must be addressed. I refer to IHT "Guidelines for Public Transport in Developments" – with particular reference to pp 149/150 Annex B: " Public & Sustainable Transport Assessment ".

This development features a single access point for highway traffic, removing the possibility of operating a through bus service that would provide the conditions required for its long term sustainability.

The key Public Transport requirements of a major housing developments are the provision of a through route for buses to serve the development and that all housing should be within 400m walking distance of a regular and 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 provision of three points of access would be recommended for a site of this size.

The nearest stops are on Henthorn Road which is in excess of 400m of the north and western end of development. The level of service from these stops is limited to daytime only, with no evening services and only 4 buses on a Sunday.

Furthermore, the layout of the site does not encourage use of public transport, with the result that this development will end up entirely reliant on the use of private transport, increasing traffic levels on local network and failing to meet Lancashire County Council's well established obligations to encourage sustainability and good accessibility. The present arrangements would make it difficult for residents to access employment or other facilities outside of the immediate locality at anything other than peak travel times.

M. Cycle Provisions – There are a number of questions outstanding in relation to this aspect of the development

a. The provision of a cycle path linking the development to the adjacent caravan site access is to be welcomed. This provides a pedestrian and cycle route to the Leisure Centre and Edisford Lane. Further detail on the surface materials and construction will be required.

b. There is an opportunity to make one of the paths through the community park to the riverside picnic site a cycle path. This would encourage activity on what is likely to be a popular local route for pedestrians and cyclists.

c. There is no direct link from the development to Fairfield Close. This would reduce the walking distance to the primary school and encourage cycle use.

d. There is a cycle route through Castle Park. The path through the park is also lit and provides a safe access through to Parson Lane. The introduction of a zebra

crossing on Parson Lane by the park entrance or on Bawdlands would enhance these links to the town centre

e. Further to point "G c", could consideration be given to including a Toucan link as part of any signal proposals on Whalley Road?

f. The footpath through Henthorn Park should be upgraded to a cycle path to link to the footbridge over the railway.

g. As a means of improving the utility of public transport, cycle parking and lockers should be provided at the Interchange, providing a central location for cycle users and commuters from the new development, who could chose to cycle to the station.

3. Standard Conditions

A. No part of the development hereby approved shall commence until a scheme for the construction of the site access and the off-site works of highway improvement has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in consultation with the Highway Authority. This is in order to satisfy the Local Planning Authority and Highway Authority that the final details of the highway scheme/works are acceptable before work commences on site.

B. The grant of planning permission will require the applicant to enter into an appropriate Legal Agreement, with the County Council as Highway Authority. The Highway Authority hereby reserved the right to provide the highway works within the highway associated with this proposal. Provision of the highway works includes design, procurement of the work by contract and supervision of the works. The applicant should be advised to contact the Executive Director at PO Box 9, Guild House, Cross Street, Preston PR1 8RD in the first instance to ascertain the details of such an agreement and the information o be provided

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In conclusion, the anticipated traffic generated by the proposed development would have a significant impact on the operation of the local highway network in the immediate vicinity of Henthorn Road and on the main road links serving the south of Clitheroe.

In my response, I have highlighted the main areas of concern with regards to the safe movement of pedestrians, cyclists and motorists and the residential amenity enjoyed by residents. I am also aware of the commercial demands for a local highway network that allows the town to retain its vibrancy and enhance its role as an important service hub within Ribble Valley District. The improvements to the highway infrastructure that have been requested offer the opportunity to address these areas of concern and reduce the immediate detriment

However, the long term sustainability of the site remains a particular concern and further measures are required as a matter of urgency in order to address these deficiencies.

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Public Realm, Ribble Valley