

Appendix I – Technical Response to Highway Matters

Project Number: A090070-410

Date: 07 October 2019

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This Note has been prepared to provide additional information on highway matters to Members of the planning committee on the proposed residential development at Harras Moor, Whitehaven (application reference 4/18/2287).
- 1.1.2 In particular, this note provides further clarity on several highway issues raised at the planning committee held on Wednesday 18th September 2019 to consider the application.

2.0 Pre-Application Engagement

- 2.1.1 The Applicant has undertaken extensive pre-application engagement with all key stakeholders, businesses and the local community in order to inform the planning proposals. Early engagement was carried out with key stakeholders including; Cumbria County Council Highways Authority, Lead Local Flood Authority and County Archaeologist, Natural England, Environment Agency and Highways England.
- 2.1.2 A pre-application public consultation session was held for key stakeholders between 2pm and 3pm prior to the open public consultation on the 15th March 2018. The public consultation exercise was undertaken following on from the stakeholder session where views of the local community were sought and fed into the preparation of the planning application.
- 2.1.3 A Statement of Community Involvement accompanies this application and details the steps undertaken.

3.0 Summary of Transport/Highway Discussions

- 3.1.1 Throughout the preparation of the transport work, WYG have extensively liaised with both Cumbria County Council as the local highway authority, and Highways England, to agree the scope of the transport work, the proposed access arrangements into and through the development, the impact of the proposed development on the highway network, highways safety, and the need for highway improvements to overcome the impact of the proposals.
- 3.1.2 These discussions started in September 2017 with correspondence between WYG and the LHA on the scope and content of a future transport assessment for any residential development on the site and on the potential access arrangements.

- 3.1.3 This led to a formal Transport Assessment scoping email and a Transport Technical Note being issued to Cumbria County Council and Highways England in January 2018. The Technical Note set out the volume of traffic forecast to be generated by the development and the distribution of the traffic around the highway network.
- 3.1.4 Comments from the Cumbria County Council and Highways England on these documents were received and incorporated into the Transport Assessment which accompanied the planning application in June 2018.
- 3.1.5 Consultation responses from the Cumbria County Council and Highways England were received in August 2018 which lead to the issue of a Transport Assessment Addendum in November 2018 which incorporated the comments received.
- 3.1.6 Following the issue of the Transport Assessment Addendum, a series of further consultation responses and WYG Technical Notes and emails were then exchanged between WYG and the Cumbria County Council and Highways England, particularly in respect to the development's impact on the Main Street/Cleator Moor Road mini roundabout junction and the Egremont Road/Homewood Road roundabout junction. Discussions continued between WYG and the Cumbria County Council and Highways England until agreement was reached in summer 2019 on the required mitigation measures.
- 3.1.7 It is worth emphasising that following the detailed liaison and discussion summarised above between the applicant and the Cumbria County Council and Highways England, the transport and highways work undertaken for the application has been agreed as being suitable for a 'recommendation for approval' in transport and highway terms by both the Cumbria County Council and Highways England, and their transport consultants, Atkins. This includes, agreement on the volume of traffic forecast to be generated by the future development, the assignment onto the highway network of the development traffic, the proposed access arrangements, the impact of the proposed development on the highway network, and the need for highway improvements to overcome the impact of the proposals on the highway network.

4.0 Transport/Highway Clarifications

Base Traffic Flows

- 4.1.1 Traffic count surveys were undertaken at the junctions which the Cumbria County Council and Highways England required capacity assessments to be undertaken at on Wednesday 21st February 2018 by an independent traffic survey company. The counts were undertaken between 07:30 and 09:30 hours in the morning and 15:45 and 18:15 hours in the afternoon/evening.
- 4.1.2 The count surveys showed that the highest level of traffic on the highway network occurred between 08:00-09:00 hours during the weekday morning peak and between 16:15-17:15 hours during the weekday evening peak.
- 4.1.3 This peak hour was used in the junction capacity assessments.

Volume of Development Traffic

- 4.1.4 The Transport Assessment prepared for the application estimated that 225 vehicular movements will be generated by the proposed development during the weekday AM peak hour and 220 vehicular movements during the weekday PM peak hour. This traffic is split 56.3%/43.7% between the two proposed site access junctions on Harras Road and Caldbeck Road respectively. This split was agreed with Cumbria County Council.
- 4.1.5 The forecast level of development traffic and agreed traffic distribution between the two access junctions, results in a maximum of 127 vehicle movements during the peak hour at the Harras Road access (equivalent to just over 2 vehicle movements per minute) and 98 vehicle movements during the peak hour at the Caldbeck Road access (equivalent to under 2 vehicle movements per minute).
- 4.1.6 It should be remembered that the level of traffic quoted above is during the highest peak period only and will be significantly less at other times of the day.
- 4.1.7 Once away from the site access junctions, the development traffic will then be dissipated over the wider highway network meaning that the impact of the development on individual roads around the network will be much less than the figures quoted above.
- 4.1.8 As explained in more detail below, the Cumbria County Council and Highways England have both confirmed that the forecast level of traffic generated by the proposed development can be accommodated at the two site access junctions, on local roads, and at key junctions in the area in the future subject to some improvements at two junctions.

Committed Development

- 4.1.9 The Transport Assessment took into account the development to the north of Harras Road which has been approved including the future traffic flows likely to be generated by the development and the proposed access and highway improvements proposed as part of the approval.

Highway Capacity

- 4.1.10 The Transport Assessment and Transport Assessment Addendum reviewed the impact of the traffic estimated to be generated by the proposed development at a total of 15 junctions. This included the two site access junctions onto Harras Road and Caldbeck Road:

- J1: Harras Road/Site Access Priority Junction
- J2: Harras Road/Red Lonning Priority Junction
- J3: Red Lonning/Caldbeck Road Priority Junction
- J4: Red Lonning/Moresby Road Roundabout
- J5: Moreby Road/Cleator Moor Road/Main Street Mini-Roundabout
- J6: Main Street/Thornton Road Priority Junction
- J7: A595/B5295 Ribton Moorside Signal Junction
- J8: A595/Highlands Priority Junction
- J9: A595/B5295 Egremont Road / Homewood Road Roundabout
- J10: A595/Rosehill Priority Junction
- J11: A595/Victoria Road (Sunny Hill Pub) Priority Junction
- J12: Moresby Road/Unnamed Road Priority Junction
- J13: B5295/Main Street Mini-Roundabout
- J14: A595/Inkerman Terrace Signal Junction
- J15: Solway View/Oakbank Road/Park View Priority Junction

- 4.1.11 The junction assessments undertaken showed that all but two of the junctions had the capacity to accommodate the additional traffic forecast to be generated by the proposed development in the future assessment year 2028. This included the two site access junctions which were forecast to operate well within their capacity in the future. The two junctions which were the exception to this were:

- J5: Moreby Road/Cleator Moor Road/Main Street Mini-Roundabout.
- J9: A595/B5295 Egremont Road / Homewood Road Roundabout.

- 4.1.12 For these two junctions, improvement options which mitigate for the impact of the additional development traffic have been agreed with the LHA and Highways England. The Applicant has agreed to fund these junction improvements.

4.1.13 In summary, the final junction capacity assessments were approved by the Cumbria County Council, and where located on the trunk road, by Highways England and their transport consultant's Atkins, as being 'fit for purpose'.

4.1.14 With the improvements proposed at the two junctions, the highway network has been shown to be more than adequate to accommodate the additional traffic forecast to be generated by the proposed development. This conclusion has also been confirmed by the Cumbria County Council and Highway England where the junction is on the trunk road network.

Safety Concerns

Proposed Site Access

4.1.15 The proposed site access junction on Harras Road has been approved by the LHA as being a safe and suitable access to the development. Visibility splays for vehicles entering and exiting the site are above the standard required for the observed speed of vehicles currently travelling along this section of Harras Road.

4.1.16 It must also be pointed out that a similar form of site access junction on the northern side of Harras Road, around 70m to the west of this proposed site access junction, has been approved as part of the adjacent consented development. If the access was deemed to be safe and acceptable for that development, then there should be no reason why this proposed site access should be any different.

4.1.17 Furthermore, the provision of the proposed development together with the already approved adjacent residential development on the northern side of Harras Road will result in a more 'urban' feel to Harras Road in this location. This in turn is likely to reduce vehicle speeds and increase road safety.

A595 Bridge under Park View

4.1.18 A review of accident data in the vicinity of Park View on the approaches to the A595 does not indicate any safety issue. The volume of traffic generated by the development proposals that is forecast to travel under the bridge is forecast to be only around one vehicle per minute during peak hours. This level of traffic will be significantly less at other times of the day.

4.1.19 This level of additional traffic will not impact on the safety of this section of the highway.

Connection on to Highlands

4.1.20 Access to the site will be provided via Harras Road and Caldbeck Road which will connect to form a primary spinal road serving the site as a whole. There will also be pedestrian connections

to Loop Road South, Highlands and to other residential streets to the east and west. This is the proposal that is the subject of this planning application.

- 4.1.21 The proposals have been shaped by an in depth technical and creative design process. This has ensured all technical considerations are mapped and that creativity and design evolution has led to the final proposals. Public consultation was also undertaken to shape the final proposals.
- 4.1.22 Part of the optioneering process included investigation of a connection onto Highlands to provide an additional access/egress into the site. This was considered early in the development of the proposals, however, the access point did not form the final design. The proposed access via HARRAS Road and Caldbeck Road has been confirmed and agreed with the Cumbria County Council, and a third connection point is not required to make the access arrangements into the development acceptable.
- 4.1.23 It is also worth noting that during the consultation event residents living on the Highlands estate broadly welcomed the pedestrian only link into the scheme from the top of Highlands.

Travel Plan

- 4.1.24 The applicant is committed to minimising the impact of the development on the external highway network and encouraging future residents to use sustainable transport modes wherever possible. As a result, as part of the application a Framework Travel Plan was submitted. The Travel Plan will be developed further as the development progresses, something that will be the subject of a condition.