

Technical Note No. 2

Project: Residential Development Llay New Road, Rhosrobin

Title: **P/2021/1057: Response to Planning Email dated 30th October 2023**

Date: 31 October 2023

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this technical note is to address the comments outlined in an email from Wrexham County Borough Council to SG Estates dated 30th October 2023.
- 1.2 Within the email SG Estates have been made aware of comments made by a Local Member for the ward, who has objected to the application. His comments are as follows:

'I note that the original traffic assessment performed in 2021 is still part of the Application, even though it has been highlighted how skewed that is due to Covid.

I know for a fact that SG Estates repeated the Assessment, but the very fact they have NOT included the figures makes me think that it does not fit in with their narrative about low impact on traffic movements in the area'

Cameron Rose Associates response to these comments are detailed below.

- 1.3 It should be noted that Wrexham County Councils Highways response received at the end of 2021 accepted the submitted Transport Assessment and the approach taken as robust and offered no highway objection. No comments were made with reference to the traffic surveys being 'skewed' by COVID-19, the origin of the comment made by the Local Member is therefore unknown.

2.0 Surveys include in the Original Transport Assessment

- 2.1 At the request of Wrexham County Borough Council, the study area included an analysis of the following junctions:
- Plas Acton Road/ B5425 Llay New Road – priority controlled junction (consented signal control); and
 - B5425 Llay New Road/ Rhosrobin Road/ Site Access – roundabout (proposed).

2.2 Survey data used for each junction within the assessment was recorded on:

- Plas Acton Road/ B5425 Llay New Road – surveys undertaken on Tuesday 14th September 2021.
- B5425 Llay New Road/ Rhosrobin Road – surveys Thursday 4 September 2014.

2.3 An ATC was also placed on the B5425 Llay Road in the vicinity of its junction with Rhosrobin Road, for a seven day period between 9th September 2021 and 15th September 2021.

2.4 Work undertaken in the Transport Assessment demonstrates that TEMPro growth factors applied to the 2014 survey data, resulted in higher traffic flows at the B5425 Llay New Road/ Rhosrobin Road than would have been recorded in 2021. Accordingly, the higher traffic flow data values (i.e., growthed 2014 data) were used in the operational capacity assessments for robustness.

2.5 Contrary to the objection email received, no other surveys have been commissioned by or on behalf of SG Estates in the vicinity of the application site. These surveys have therefore never been repeated as stated by the Local Member for the Ward, as there was no requirement to do so.

3.0 Validity of the Traffic Data used in the Transport Assessment

3.1 The future assessment year (agreed with the local highway authority) was 2026. In order to growth traffic from a 2021 assessment year to a 2026 assessment year, TEMPro growth factors were applied. TEMPro is the industry standard tool for estimating traffic growth, which is required when assessing the traffic impact of a development on the local highway network. The model forecasts the growth in trip origin to destination for use in transport modelling, considering *'Population; Employment; Housing; Car Ownership; and Trip Rates'*.

3.2 The Department for Transport regularly approves the datasets which are then prescribed as the latest 'definitive' datasets for use in TEMPro modelling and these are in part informed using the following traffic trends:

- Figures from the 2022 annual estimates of traffic on Great Britain's roads (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/road-traffic-estimates-in-great-britain-2022/road-traffic-estimates-in-great-britain-2022-headline-statistics>) shows that 323.8 billion vehicle miles were driven on Great Britain's roads in 2022, an increase of 8.8% compared to 2021. Traffic in 2022 was 4.4% lower when compared to 2019 pre-pandemic levels.
- Annual estimates for Wales (<https://roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk/regions/4>) show that 18.2 billion vehicle miles were driven on Great Britain's roads in 2022, an increase of 10.3% compared to 2021. Traffic in 2022 was 4.9% lower when compared to 2019 pre-pandemic levels.

- 3.3 Based on the above, it could be argued that the 2021 survey data is not representative of local traffic flows. However, it was representative of traffic conditions for that year and therefore any application of appropriate traffic growth factors would account for that years prevailing traffic conditions.
- 3.4 The data set used in the Transport Assessment (most up to date data available at the time) was TEMPRO 7 NTM AF15 Dataset, which were published before the COVID-19 pandemic occurred. The current TEMPro dataset is TEMPro version 8.1 based on the National Road Traffic Projections 2022 and considered the impact of COVID-19 on the economy.
- 3.5 Based on this a counter argument could be constructed to call into question the data in the Transport Assessment due to not accurately accounting for the COVID-19 pandemic and any subsequent spikes in traffic that could occur post 2021.
- 3.6 To test this theory a comparison of the growth factors from the two datasets have been made below.

Table 3-1: Comparison of Growth Factors

Data Set	2021 - 2026	
	AM Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour
Transport Assessment: TEMPRO 7 NTM AF15	1.0580	1.0587
Current Version: TEMPRO 8.1	1.0303	1.0274

- 3.7 It is evident from the above comparison that the growth factors used in the Transport Assessment are higher than those that would be applied if the assessments were repeated today. **Table 3-2** below compares the volume of traffic assumed to travel through each junction, for each TEMPro dataset.

Table 3-2: Comparison of Traffic Flows

Data Set	2026 Base + Committed + Development Traffic Flows			
	Plas Acton Road/ B5425 Llay New Road		B5425 Llay New Road/ Rhosrobin Road	
	AM Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour	AM Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour
TEMPRO 7 NTM AF15	1390	1422	1827	1869
TEMPRO 8.1	1356	1382	1782	1798

- 3.8 The difference between the traffic flows through the junctions, using each dataset are minimal, ranging between an additional 35 to 71 vehicles being accounted for in the Transport Assessment.
- 3.9 It can therefore be concluded that the operational capacity assessment contained in the Transport Assessment are robust and fully account for prevailing traffic conditions.
- 3.10 As such the theory that the data in the Transport Assessment does not accurately account for the COVID-19 pandemic and any subsequent spikes in traffic that could occur post 2021 is unfounded.

4.0 Conclusion

4.1 The conclusion reached by the Local Highway Officer, who offered no objection, therefore remain valid:

- *'The Transport Assessment shows that the Plas Acton Road/ B5425 Llay New Road junction would operate within capacity with traffic generated by the development traffic included, assuming it has been upgraded to signal controlled' (signal junction now implemented).*
- *'The Highway Officer notes that capacity at Llay New Road/ Rhosrobin Road would be similar with traffic generated by the development and the proposed roundabout, than would be the case if the development did not proceed and no changes to the junction were carried out. The Highway Officer therefore agrees with the TA findings that the development would not have a detrimental effect on traffic flow'.*