

From: Sharon Holman
Sent: 24 September 2021 08:47
To: planning_admin
Subject: P/2021/0560 - Canal & River Trust Planning Application - Trevor Basin
Attachments: image003.emz; Infographic%20Option%20B2%20Final_English%20(002).pdf; Trevor%20Basin%20Area%20Preferred%20Masterplan%202021103%20(002).pdf; 1938 27 V3 Site Access Feasibility Study.pdf

[Civ – 'add info web' below and attached](#)

From: Nick Wild <Nick.Wild@canalrivertrust.org.uk>
Sent: 21 September 2021 09:46 AM
To: Sharon Holman <Sharon.Holman@wrexham.gov.uk>
Subject: FW: Canal & River Trust Planning Application - Trevor Basin

Hello Sharon,

Further to our recent correspondence, in particular with regard to the consultation response from the Council's Highway Officer (and comments from the Rural Community Council), I thought it would be sensible to provide you with an update on progress that the Trust is making in trying to look at the scope of the scheme changes required to address the technical measures raised in those comments.

Vehicular Access

The current vehicular access to the site runs from Tower Hill and is parallel with the main car park area. Due to physical barriers (a stone wall to one side and a palisade fence to the other) we initially proposed that this access was to be 5 metres wide including a shared surface between vehicles and pedestrians, which is the maximum distance available between the stone wall and the palisade fence. The Highway Officer has requested that this access needs to be 5.5m metres wide for vehicles and a further 2.0m wide for a designated pedestrian access.

The Trust has been reviewing whether the existing 5 metre width can be extended beyond the two physical constraints but unfortunately we are experiencing significant issues. There is a level change between the existing access road and land within the car park, which sits at a lower level. The access is over 200m from the Tower Hill junction to the sites gated entrance - increasing the width of the access road aside of the large car park would require a retaining wall and appropriate surface drainage requirements to control water runoff into the car park area, which are not likely to be possible in practical terms and are expected to make delivery of the scheme unfeasible. Furthermore, extending the access width to the opposite side where there is a stone wall is not possible due to the topography of the land and significant tree removal.

Additionally, extending the remaining vehicular access route, which is adjacent to the parking area, proposed building and basin water space, to 7.5 metres (5.5 metres for vehicles and 2.0 metres for pedestrians) would require more tree removal, which is clearly against the advice we received on-site from the Council's Ecology and Tree Officers. Also, it is physically not possible to extent the vehicular access width any further towards the canal basin due to the vehicle loading impact it would have upon the canal wall meaning that it would be structurally unsafe. At a push, an engineering solution could be investigated for wall/land strengthening purposes but this would be an unsightly structure within the existing landscape, which we would strongly like to avoid.

Additionally, the setting of the site should be considered. We have aimed to avoid excessively wide surfaced roads and pavements to protect the quality of the destinations character and amenity value. The suggestion of a 5.5m road, to accommodation two lorries (HGV's) to be able to pass is excessive for the sited context and the nature of the proposals. There will never be a scenario of two 'lorries' passing – in terms of HGV movements at this site, it is

only the one refuse vehicle (10.4m x 2.9m in size) used by the private operator that will visit the site. All other vehicles will be customers and staff who will arrive and leave by car.

With regard to the pattern of vehicular movement. Vehicular activity on site will mostly take place on two certain days within any given week. Customers only hire out boats on two fixed days, which is either Monday or Friday. Hires can be for a weekend, midweek, or a full 7 days. Therefore, Mondays and Fridays are always the 'change over' days. On that basis customers will either be leaving the site on a Monday or Friday morning or arriving on site on a Monday or Friday afternoon. Outside of those days vehicular movement will be limited to a very small number of staff members arriving and leaving in the morning and evening, which is limited activity.

Potential solution

In light of the unavoidable constraints, we could provide a 5.0 metre wide vehicular road width along the current access road, which would involve utilising the existing 5.0 wide width available and relocating pedestrian access from this section. Pedestrian access would then be provided in parallel on the opposite side of the palisade fence along the existing designated 1.5m pedestrian route, which is shown in the image below. The rights to use this section of land for pedestrian access across the car park is currently can be provided in perpetuity as part of an access (easement) agreement with the landowner. A planning condition could be imposed so that the use of the site is tied in to the ongoing provision of this pedestrian access in perpetuity. If the designated pedestrian access route could no longer be provided at any point in the future it would invalidate the planning permission by way of a breach of condition and the use of the site could not continue in planning terms. This is considered to be a clearly enforceable condition. Also, the Trust can ensure that this condition is complied with as part of its forthcoming strategic masterplan work across the wider area (more details set out below and attached).

This approach would require an extension of the red line boundary to include land that runs parallel with the site access on the opposite side of the existing palisade fence, which is within the existing car park as shown in the image below.



With regard to vehicular access width and highway safety. The width of the site vehicular access route would be 5m wide. [Manual for Streets](#); Section 7 (Page 79), this shows some various dimensions for carriage ways, 4.8 being cited as typical lane for two cars to pass. At 5m, this shouldn't feel uncomfortable for two cars to get past one another.

The [Welsh Buildings Regulations Part M](#), access to and the use of buildings, section M1, paragraph 1.11 (P24) states ‘ A surface width of 1800mm can accommodate any amount of non-vehicular traffic without the need for passing places. A surface width of 1200mm may be acceptable on restricted sites.

Additionally, there is also a further section of vehicular access, leading to the car parking area, proposed building and the basin. Again, due to the physical constraints on site, it proposed to add a 1.5 metre section of designated pedestrian access to the existing 5.0 metre wide vehicular access width, which will provide physical demarcation for vehicles and pedestrians in the interest of safety. The 1.5 metres of pedestrian access can be easily added on the basis that it is not required to take the heavy loading capacity associated with vehicles therefore meaning it is structurally safe to do so in engineering terms.

This overall solution would provide a physically defined vehicular access route and pedestrian route with a robust division between the two, as requested. Additionally, it prevents any further impact on trees or ecological value across the site as well as unacceptable loading pressure on the canal wall. I have attached an indicative plan drawing that has been prepared (Site Access Feasibility Study) to illustrate this suggested approach.

Parking

The scheme currently provides 21 car parking spaces associated with the proposed building. By way of general information, I can confirm that parking bay dimensions are 2.4m x 4.8m as requested. It is envisaged that the 21 spaces will be utilised by the hire boat business customers, and some staff parking. It is intended that the café is an improved facility for the wider site users, for example, people who are visiting the wider Trevor Basin site/area and will have already parked in Trevor Basin’s main car park area. It is not expected that visitor to the café will arrive at the site and require parking adjacent to the café itself. However, the Highway Officer has stated that the proposed café facility must also be considered in the parking requirements, therefore indicating an under-provision of parking if no more than 21 spaces are required. To compound matters we are currently being restricted from utilising Trevor Basin’s main car parking area on site due to the temporary lease arrangement in place, despite a permanent planning permission having been granted. Additionally, there is a difference of opinion with the Tree and Ecology Officers who have requested a further reduction in car parking from 21 to reduce tree/habit loss (however we are proposing to further mitigate this position on the current 21 spaces).

The Trust has tried to take a pragmatic approach through the design process to satisfy the comments made from various consultees from different disciplines. However, we seem to be in a difficult situation here. We need to balance the opinion of two different consultees who are asking for opposing scheme changes. With regard to existing car parking provision. The Trust has been working over recent years to address the parking situation across the wider Trevor Basin site and currently operates a suitable parking offer for all users. A permanent planning permission was recently approved for a large car park to the north of Trevor Basin, which now operates as the main

site car park and has allowed the former on-site car park to be provided exclusively for restricted mobility users only. The Trust is also working on wider site master planning work across Trevor Basin, which will result in a comprehensive

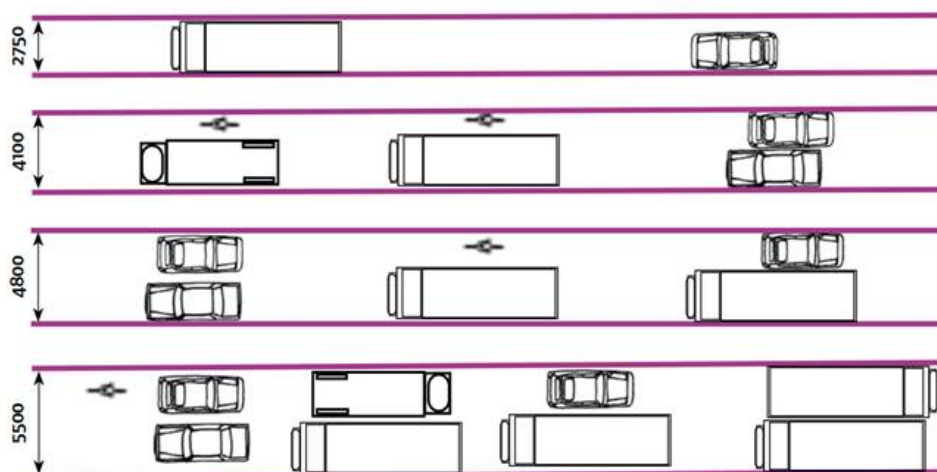


Figure 7.1 Illustrates what various carriageway widths can accommodate. They are not necessarily recommendations.

development/improvements across the site (no final plans confirmed at this stage – current stage progress information attached). Any master planning work and redevelopment proposals will retain visitor car parking across the site in perpetuity – visitor car parking provision will never be lost as it is too valuable for how the site operates. There will always be land provided for the current level (if not more) of visitor car parking.

With regard to car parking implications. The proposal is to relocate the existing hire boat business from its current central location to a more suitable location towards the rear. This proposed relocation exercise will result in the existing hire boat base becoming vacant, which removes its current vehicular access (off Station Road) and car parking requirements from this part of the site too. Clearly, given the intentions to remove the current business to a more suitable location, we are not then seeking to reinstate the same use/s (hire boat business and/or a café) via a different operator back in that location, which would result in duplication of the same land uses across two areas of the site. The future use of this part of the site is currently unknown but it is land that is included within the wider master planning work for the area (more information on the masterplan included below and attached) therefore any new proposals here will be subject to further assessment/scrutiny as part of a separate planning application/s in the future.

Potential Solution

The Trust is of the opinion that adding more than 21 spaces to this proposal would be an over-supply of parking in this location, which will have a negative impact on ecology, trees and visual amenity. It is suggested that a planning condition could be included that requires the café to be operated with an agreed minimum number of car parking spaces that are to be provided within the wider Trevor Basin area. Therefore, in line with any future master planning work across the wider site in the future these spaces must be retained. In the worst case scenario, if the agreed number of parking spaces can no longer be provided at any point in the future it would similarly invalidate the planning permission on the basis of a breach of condition and the use of the site cannot continue, which again is a clearly enforceable condition. However, the Trust can ensure that this condition is complied with as part of its forthcoming masterplan works across the wider area (more details set out below and attached).

As a side issue on parking provision – we are able to provide confirmation in writing from the landowner that the lease agreement for use of this land for car parking provision will be extended beyond the current period, if necessary.

Pathway past Rose Cottage

As part of the scheme, the Trust intend to install a more formal and safe route from the new hire base, South under the road bridge and in to the main Basin. The route has historically been used for access but was more recently gated for unknown reasons. At present there is one gate on the Southern side of the road bridge. We understand that an informal query has been raised to the path on grounds of loss of residential amenity to the cottage, which is understood to be used as a holiday home by the owner. The owner has requested further information from us directly, which has been provided, but as far as we're aware there isn't a formal objection.

The alternative is to remove the path/new gate from the scheme, but the access will still be used by the operator (using a trodden grass path as existing). As landowner we have a right to use the land for access/walking to/from the main Basin, which will pass to the new Tenant/operator. Our plans are simply to improve the condition of the route for the benefit of the site as a whole, rather than create a new access route.

Potential Solution

The Trust will improve security by installing a second gate on the North entrance to the bridge hole, and provide operating parameters to ensure the gates are locked out of operating hours for the hire base. We have also suggested sowing a wildflower meadow either side of the path to improve the amenity value.

Clearly, the Trust is trying to address the comments that have been received as part of the application. However, some comments have led to opposing scheme changes and some comments simply cannot be fully addressed due to physical constraints across the site but we have tried to put forward a compromise that will provide an acceptable solution. The Trust is keen to come and meet Officers to discuss the scheme in more detail, if necessary.

It could be useful to have the Highway, Tree and Ecology Officer together to look at the ways in which we have tried to address everything in the round.

Masterplan Context

The Trust's planning application for relocation of the Hire Boat base, is the first critical step in delivering the Technical Masterplan for Trevor Basin and the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct & Canal WHS - a key visitor destination for Wrexham and North-East Wales. The Masterplan (attached) created in partnership with Wrexham CC and adjoining landowners, provides a sustainable framework to safeguard the WHS via improvements in access, quality of land use, improved views and economic investment.

Trevor Basin itself is highlighted as an opportunity to create a high-quality public realm with flexible space to bring long-lasting public benefit. Currently, the main Basin area struggles with over-crowding, poor pedestrian access (via stepped bridge or road), and an operational yard for pumping out waste from boats, cleaning boats, and ad-hoc parking of customer cars. The vehicular access for which all currently runs through homes in Trevor village itself.

The re-location of the Hire Boat Base from the main Basin into the Arm will benefit the village by relieving vehicular traffic, and removing Health & Safety issues associated with operating a boat hire base inter-mingled with members of the public. The secondary benefit is the subsequently created open/free space for delivery of the Masterplan objectives, in line with the vision created jointly between Wrexham CC, C&RT, other landowners, and the local village residents (via consultation).

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regard

Nick Wild MA MRTPI

Senior Delivery Planner (north and north wales)

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