

To Mr Leslie Smith,
L.S.Planning

DAVE ROBERTS
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24 January 2012

Dear Mr Smith

CHANGE OF USE OF LAND FROM USE IN CONNECTION WITH
COMMERCIAL HORSE LIVERY, TO USE OF PREMISES FOR AN EQUINE
VETERINARY SERVICE.

I refer to your initial approach to me in early December 2011 regarding the above Planning application, especially with regards to highway related matters raised by the Infrastructure manager in his response to a consultation by the Planning officer. These matters were in an internal memoranda dated 6 December and which you subsequently copied to me. The main issues of concern related to 1. The speed of traffic in Francis Lane near the application site, and 2. The substandard visibility at the site access.

I visited the site and reported back to you that I did not think that the visibility splay to the left at the site access i.e. towards the B5130 and Holt was a particular problem as your client had it totally within his control to improve this, which he has subsequently done by cutting back the existing overgrowing hedgerow. I also reported to you that the lack of visibility to the right was a more serious problem as the offending overgrown hedge was in another ownership and therefore outside of your clients control. I suggested to you that I would be surprised that if when planning consent was given for the new house now known as "Ashiana", there was not a planning condition relating to an improved visibility splay. You said that you would investigate this matter, and subsequently found that there was a condition which provided for a visibility splay set along the face of the property fenceline which was at least 1 metre back behind the line of the offending overgrown hedge.

You then arranged a site meeting with the planning officer dealing with the case, the planning enforcement officer and Mr Phil Palmer from the office of the Infrastructure Manager i.e. highways. This meeting was arranged for Thursday 5 January and was also attended by you and I. In the meantime, I carried out an initial speed survey on 21 December, this being the only day I felt was appropriate due to my own personal commitments and the forthcoming Xmas/New year holidays, which might impact on the findings of any survey during the period prior to the meeting of 5 January.

At the site meeting several items were discussed including the particular highway related items I was involved in. The planning enforcement officer inspected the offending hedge relative to the condition in the planning consent and promised he would contact the owner of Ashiana. I also indicated the very low traffic volumes and

relative speed of vehicles to Mr Palmer and he asked for the survey to be extended to enable a reasonable sample to be assessed.

SPEED SURVEY

I undertook a further survey over 4 days and subsequently had a telephone conversation with Mr Palmer during which he asked me to undertake a further survey between the hours of 5 pm and 6 pm, this I did and these figures are included in the results of the survey which are attached to this letter. The results of the survey indicate that the visibility splays now available at the site entrance are to a standard which the Highways Officer should find acceptable.

I did notice that although the traffic volumes between 5pm and 6pm were similar to some of the other periods tested, there was a slight increase in speed by some of the drivers. My own guess is that these are drivers who are currently using Francis Lane as a "rat run", as suspected by Mr Palmer. I suspect that the speeds are higher in darkness because drivers have a much earlier warning of approaching vehicles due to the effect of the approaching headlights, whereas in daylight hours forward visibility on this section of Francis Lane is restricted due to the alignment of the road on both approaches to the site. There is a spin off advantage, especially in the direction of Hugmore Lane in hours of darkness and that is that the headlights of approaching traffic from that direction can be seen from the site access for up to 10 seconds or more before they come into view in the visibility splay, thus making any use of the access in hours of darkness even safer. Similarly, the headlights of any vehicle wanting to leave the access can also be seen well in advance of the available visibility splays.

There is of course another factor which will undoubtedly impact on both volumes and speeds of traffic on this Lane. The new link road to Wrexham Industrial Estate is now at a very advanced stage and the opening of this is scheduled for June 2012 and will result in the closing of the existing route to the Estate along Hugmore Lane which should dramatically reduce even further the volume of traffic on Francis Lane, and cut out the so called "rat Running". I would also be surprised therefore that if planning consent is given for the proposed change of use, it would become effective before that time.

VISIBILITY SPLAYS

I mentioned earlier that the planning enforcement officer was to write to the owner of Ashiana regarding the reinstatement of the approved visibility splay. I assume that this has been done, because sometime between my survey visits on 13 January and 16 January the offending hedge had been cut back, and although it has not been cut back to the extent required in the planning condition it has now improved visibility from the site access to provide a 2.4 metre X 75 metre splay towards Hugmore Lane direction and opens up to 2 metres X 90 metres as one moves slightly forwards at the access. I have measured these splays by the use of a marker post set back 2.4 metres from the edge of carriageway in the centre of the site access to a point coincidental with the centre of the carriageway in each direction as advised by Mr Palmer. The distances along Francis Lane were measured using a TRUMETER measuring wheel.

Visibility towards Holt is now at 2.4 metres X 105 metres which is quite considerably in excess of the splays required under the relevant 85th percentile reading.

CONCLUSIONS

It is my belief that the findings of the survey and the improved visibility now available at the site access is sufficient to overcome the previously stated concerns of the Infrastructure Manager in his memorandum dated 6 December

IMPORTANT NOTE

Although the owner of Ashiana has cut back the offending hedge to a standard which now allows a reasonable visibility splay, It is my view that this splay should be reinstated in line with the boundary fence, otherwise if the cutting back of the hedge is neglected in the future it could once again impair visibility from both the site access and the private access to Ashiana. It would also defeat the objects of the Highways Officers in requesting such conditions, in the interests of highway safety, if they are not complied with.

You asked me to send this report to you for you to pass on the contents to both Mr Palmer in Highways and the Planning Officer. I suggest you also send a copy to the Planning Enforcement Officer with the above NOTE highlighted.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dave Roberts". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'D' and a stylized 'R'.

Dave Roberts

CORNISH FARM, FRANCIS LANE, HOLT, WREXHAM

Speed survey taken in each direction from existing Livery access

From direction of B5130 and HOLT

From direction of Hugmore Lane

21 Dec 2011

8am to 9am

33, 27, 36, 35, 26

9am to 10am

31, 34, 30, 28

3pm to 4pm

30, 25, 25, 22, 28, 27

4pm to 5pm

26

34, 25

25

34, 26, 26, 29, 36

34, 31, 24, 36, 35, 40, 23

9 Jan 2012

8am to 9am

29, 27, 29, 36, 29

9am to 10am

None

3pm to 4pm

31, 22, 27

4pm to 5pm

30, 30

24, 32

23, 22

28, 32

39

10 Jan 2012

8am to 9am

30, 27, 42, 31

9am to 10am

32, 26, 35

3pm to 4pm

24, 27

4pm to 5pm

29, 28, 24

27, 33

28, 26

17 (Ag Tractor) 27, 35, 23, 35, 21

34, 25, 36, 27, 27

11 Jan 2012

8am to 9am

34, 22, 39

9am to 10am

33

3pm to 4pm

33, 29, 31, 27

4pm to 5pm

33, 28

28, 29

27, 29

31, 38, 28, 32, 26

22, 31, 28, 33, 33, 27

CORNISH FARM SPEED SURVEY CONTINUED

From direction of B5130 and HOLT

From direction of Hugmore Lane

13 Jan 2012

8am to 9am

32, 29, 31, 41, 33

9am to 10am

31, 29, 34

3pm to 4pm

31, 22 (Ag Tractor)

4pm to 5pm

33, 34

31, 27, 28

29, 27, 29

33, 22, 19 (Ag Tractor)

24, 35, 29

16 Jan 2012

5pm to 6pm

27, 29

41, 26, 29, 36, 27, 32, 30

17 Jan 2012

5pm to 6pm

29, 34

26, 28, 39, 42, 29, 33, 35, 40

Total Vehicles :- 64

Total Vehicles :- 79

85th percentile deduction is 9.6 (10)

85th percentile is 11.85 (12)

85th percentile speed is 34

85th percentile speed is 35

SUMMARY

Maximum hourly rate from Holt direction is 6 vph or average 1 every 10 mins.

Maximum hourly rate from Hugmore Lane is 8vph or average 1 every 7.5 mins.

Maximum hourly 2 way flow is 10 vph or average of 1 every 6 mins.

The only vehicles not included in this survey are a few in each survey period which were exclude from the figures due to them either entering or leaving one or other of the four accesses within the survey splay areas and where the speeds were low due to them not being in free flow conditions.

Survey carried out on the dates indicated. On all days the road conditions were fine and dry, although the surveys between 5pm and 6 pm were in hours of darkness.

The Radar Speed Gun used was a Bushnell Speed Gun as recommended to me by Cheshire Constabulary and as used by that Authority in Community Road Watch schemes in Cheshire. The equipment was purchased just over a year ago and has only been used twice since bought. It is guaranteed to be accurate to plus or minus 1 mph. I have recently carried out tests on the gun and am satisfied that it is performing accurately.

Dave Roberts, Highway Planning, 76 Newtown, Gresford, Wrexham LL12 8NN