

Highways Report

Planning Application for
Change of Use of Land to Five Pitch Caravan Site,
With New Vehicular Access, Fox & Hounds Inn,
Bangor Road, Eyton, Wrexham.
Planning Reference: P/2013/0289

For
Mrs H Tickle

Statement prepared by
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1.0. Introduction.

This statement is prepared by Andrew Gough of Woodsyde Developments, an experienced Highway Engineer, a Fellow of the Institute of Highway Incorporated Engineers and a Member of the Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation.

This Statement considers the highway issues surrounding the development proposals for the Change of Use of Land to a Five Pitch Caravan Site with a new Vehicular Access off Bangor Road, Eyton. Consideration is given to the likely traffic generated by the development in relation to A5426 Bangor Road, the surrounding area and local highway network.

This is only a small development and as such the increase in traffic numbers will be relatively low and will not have significant transport implications. Accordingly therefore in line with Government guidance it is not necessary to prepare a Transport Assessment. For small schemes such as this, it is considered that only a simple report is necessary which outlines the transport aspects of the application.

2.0. The Proposals

The proposal is for the change of use of land to a five pitch caravan site, with a new all-purpose vehicular access off the B5426.

Vehicular and pedestrian access to the site shall be derived by creating an all-purpose private access and junction off the B5426 in the village of Eyton. The access will be sited between the Fox and Hounds Inn and the staggered crossroad junction, where the southerly road leads to the Village Church.

The access to the site will be a typical T-junction type arrangement with the B5426. The initial access width will be 5.5m for the first 15m of its length and will then taper to a width of approximately 4m thereafter. The junction bellmouth will be constructed using 6m junction radii. These radii will be kerbed to provide definition and safety. Dropped crossing points will be provided to enable pedestrians to gain suitable access to the existing footway along the site road frontage.

3.0. Site Location.

The site lies on the western side of the Village of Eyton. The site has a frontage on to the B5426, which is the main road through the village and this road connects to the higher order roads of A483 to the west and A528 to the east.

The site falls within the existing 20mph speed limit in force through the centre of the village and safe zone within the vicinity of the School. The 20mph zone is well signed and provided with supporting traffic calming features, such a 4 plateau type road humps and red coloured tiles on the entry to the speed limit, which have been provided with 20mph roundels.

4.0. Highway and Access Arrangements.

The sole point off access will be from a new road junction on to the B5426. The junction bellmouth will be provided with 6m junction radii and the access shall have a minimum carriageway width of 5.5 metres for the first 15m measured from the edge of the highway carriageway. The site will be provided with suitable on-site turning facilities in order that all vehicles likely attracted to the development including the Council's refuse collection vehicles can enter and leave the site in a forward gear.

It is noted that the Council's Highway and Transport Officer has provided some commentary on the application under a Memorandum dated 26th April. This memorandum confirms that the site falls within the section of the B5426 Bangor Road which is subject to the 20mph speed limit.

Moreover the report acknowledges that the proposals will likely result in a potential highway benefit, by the loss of the traffic to the existing caravan site passing through the pub car park. This car park is also used by parents to drop off and pick up children attending the adjacent school. The car park is restricted in the spaces available and has a narrow access between existing buildings and walls.

As a part of the proposals all vehicular access to the site via the public house car park will be permanently stopped up.

With regard the proposed access appropriate level of junction visibility will be provided. This will accord with the Welsh Government Technical Advice Note (TAN) 18: Transport 2007. This document is one of a series of Technical Advice Notes (Wales) (TANs) which supplement "Planning Policy Wales".

The B5426 along the site road frontage and through this section of village including the school is subject to a maximum speed limit of 20mph. This speed limit is supported by entrance features, speed limit signs and a series of table top road humps, approximately 6m long with an approximate height of 75mm. From visual inspection these humps provided a significant deterrent and assist to lower the speed of traffic. It is further noted that immediately beyond the 20mph zone, the speed limit is 30mph and then this increases to 40/50mph up to the national speed limit of 60mph. This gradual reduction in the speed limit also seeks to reduce traffic speed in the built up areas along the B5426.

Annex B of TAN 18 advises that the 'x' and 'y' distances that should be applied to junctions from Table A and B. I understand that the implementation of the current speed limits and particularly the 20mph with the traffic calming features were installed in the last 2-3 years. Furthermore I am advised that traffic counters were laid by the Local Highway Authority to assess the speed of traffic along the road prior to these works. I would assume that further counters may have been laid post implementation to check and monitor the appropriateness and effectiveness of the speed limits and traffic calming. However from visual site observation it is noted that the road humps are very effective, with cars and vehicles almost stopping to a halt to traverse them.

I would estimate that the likely speed of traffic passing the site road frontage is between 15 -25mph, with vehicles approaching from the west entering the 20mph speed limit braking to pass over the speed humps and those from the easterly direction accelerating slightly to enter the 30mph speed limit.

In this regard from site measurement and based on the speed limit in force the following junction visibility splays have been provided to the proposed access. 2.4m x 33m in a easterly direction (traffic side) to the nearside edge of highway carriageway and 2.4m x 25m in a westerly direction (non-traffic side) to the nearside edge of highway carriageway. It is noted that if visibility in the western direction was to be measured to the centre of the highway carriageway this would exceed 100m. It is considered that it is highly unlikely that vehicles will be making overtaking manoeuvres along this section of road as it falls within the 20/30mph speed limits.

It is considered that these visibility splays are appropriate to the speed of traffic passing along the site road frontage and accord with the principles of Manual for Streets from which Table A and B are sourced. Moreover these figures allow for the stopping sight distances being adjusted for bonnet lengths.

It is noted that a reduction in the 'x' distance may be considered in slow speed situations, which this location is considered to be. In this regard the 'y' distances will exceed 45m in either direction. These figures have been indicated on Drawing EY-LP-100: Access Arrangements Plan in Appendix 1.

With regard to pedestrians along the B4526, it is noted that a narrow footway is available along the site road frontage. This extends to the junction of the B5426 and side road leading to the Church in a westerly direction, being approximately 90m long from the centre point of the proposed access. The footway in an easterly direction extends approximately 33m from the centre point of the proposed access. This footway is typically 1m wide. Details of the access arrangements and the footway lengths are indicated in Appendix 1- Drawing EA-LP-100 - Access Arrangements Plan.

I understand that the footway is used by parents and their children, who use the parking at the church to walk the short distance to school, rather than parking on the highway carriageway. The side road off the B5426 has no pedestrian facilities from its junction with the B5426 up to the Church and beyond. It is considered that the creation of the junction bellmouth will not affect the safety of the pedestrians along the frontage. The bellmouth will likely provide a wider tarmac area for pedestrians to pass, without having to step onto the highway carriageway (B5426). Moreover the junction bellmouth will be provided with dropped kerbs so that all users of the footway are unhindered. It is noted that there is no footway provision along the frontage of the public house to the school.

With regard to surface water drainage, an ACO type slotted drain will be provided to the access along the rear of the existing highway boundary to collect and prevent surface water running on to the B5426 highway. This will connect to the proposed site drainage.

5.0. Conclusion.

It is considered that the proposals for a development of five caravan pitches and the associated traffic this will generate will have no significant demonstrable harm to the safe movement and free flow of traffic on B5426. The site access falls within the traffic calmed 20mph zone, which extends through the centre of the village. From visual observation traffic speeds are low, given the need to negotiate the road humps in this section of the road.

The proposed access will allow simultaneous entry and exit of vehicles, with the access width being 5.5m for the first 15m and the bellmouth being provided with 6m radii. This arrangement will enable vehicles to pull off the highway without interrupting free flow along the B5426.

Pedestrian safety will be maintained and the bellmouth will enable pedestrians to pass without stepping into the highway carriageway and the speed limit in force.

It is considered that suitable junction visibility has been provided to accord with visually assessed speed of traffic passing the site road frontage.

It is considered that given the relatively small development there will not likely be a material increase in traffic movements on A5426. In this regard the proposed development and likely traffic associated with it will have no significant demonstrable harm to the safe movement and free flow of traffic on the A5426 or the wider highway network.

It is considered that a safe and satisfactory access can be provided to serve this development and the Highway and Planning Officers are invited to share this view.