

Mr David Owen
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ASB/872/2

21st December 2011

Dear Mr Owen,

**PROPOSED DWELLING and ANNEXE TO REAR OF
CHURCH VIEW, CHURCH LANE, WORTHENBURY**

I am in receipt of the Highway Authority's consultation memorandum to the Planning Department dated 10th February 2011 on which you have asked me to comment.

It appears from the memorandum that the highway authority raises four points on which they base their recommendation of refusal and I will deal with these in the following order:

- Lack of visibility to the south east.
- Inappropriate use of a 2m set back for visibility measurement.
- Forward visibility on Church Lane
- Lack of communal turning facilities.

LACK OF VISIBILITY TO THE SOUTH EAST

Visibility to the south east is 33m x 2.0m if the bow window on the frontage of Church View is removed as stated in Traffic Statement. It therefore meets the standard in TAN 18 for 25 mph speeds on a lightly trafficked road.

There can be no doubt that the measurement of visibility from 2m back into the access, as set out in Table B paragraph B6 of TAN18, can be used here as I clearly demonstrated in the Traffic Statement that that Church Lane could be considered as a lightly trafficked road. Indeed, for much of the time there are no moving vehicles to be seen.

INAPPOPRIATE USE OF A 2m SET BACK FOR VISIBILITY MEASUREMENT

The highway authority say that a vehicle exiting the site access with visibility minor road distance of 2.0m will protrude 0.4 m into the carriageway and this will cause problems for vehicles travelling along Church Road.

Manual for Streets indicates in Paragraph 6.6 that a lorry is 3m wide including mirrors, so if this and the 0.4m protrusion is subtracted from the carriageway width of 4.2m it leaves $(4.2 - 3.0 - 0.4)$ there is still 0.6m of clearance. For a car at 2m wide, there will be $(4.2 - 2.0 - 0.4)$ 1.6m clearance.

In relation to this, it is worthwhile examining the current situation to show that there will be significant improvements in highway safety if this application is approved.

Visibility of 33m along Church Lane from the current access can only be achieved from 18m to the south east and 2m to the south west as opposed the proposed 2m and 2.4m respectively. This means that any vehicle currently exiting the site has to protrude 0.6m into the carriageway as opposed to the 0.4m proposed. While the existing access requires any exiting vehicle to encroach onto the carriageway before obtaining full visibility in either direction, the proposed access improvements allow a driver to see to the right (the driving side) without encroaching before then easing out to see to the left (the none driving side) to obtain full visibility.

It is strange that the highway authority agreed to a new dwelling on the site, using the same substandard access, as recently as 2006, yet now considers the access to be unsuitable for residential use. It can only be assumed that they now consider that permission was wrongly given, but it has. If that is the case, it wouldn't it be better to approve this new application with the benefits of better visibility in both directions, less encroachment into the highway for exiting vehicles and a widened access to allow two vehicles or a pedestrian and a vehicle to pass?. The highway safety benefits of this course of action are clear to see.

FORWARD VISIBILITY ON CHURCH LANE

The highway authority suggests that the forward visibility for vehicles travelling south east will be compromised by vehicles exiting the site encroaching into the carriageway by 0.4m from the kerb. As has been pointed out above, the existing access requires vehicles to encroach 0.6m into the highway which means that south east bound vehicles currently move further over to pass any vehicle waiting to exit the access.

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I should be pointed out that the 2.4m set back for visibility takes account of all vehicles, but cars are becoming smaller and the encroachment in these cases, which is probably the majority, will be minimal.

As the bend in Church Lane is at the site access, the line of travel for vehicles travelling south east is already well out into the carriageway as they will tend to cut the corner. This means that vehicle encroachment by exiting vehicle will have little adverse effect on through traffic. Also, if there are vehicles parked in front of the houses on Church Lane, which can often happen, vehicles travelling south east have to cross to the opposite side of the road with restricted forward visibility anyway without appearing to cause any problems.

COMMUNAL TURNING AREA

A communal turning area can be provided on site where the existing and proposed properties divide to their own private drives. If 3m radii are used it will allow casual visitors, such as the postman and small delivery vehicles, to turn. This has now been shown on your plan reference W11/2130/02.

CONCLUSION

I have examined the proposal again following the highway authority's recommendation of refusal and I still believe that the proposed access meets the standards set out in TAN 18 for a road serving only 18 dwellings with very little traffic.

As this application is for a single dwelling and annexe and is to replace the extant permission P/2006/0258 then the site essentially will only serve the same numbers as previously approved in 2006 albeit it with significant improvements on the original approved access i.e. wider access and the creation of an informal turning head within the communal area.

Yours sincerely,

A.S.BOOTH