

MEMORANDUM

From:	Service Manager - Environment	To:	Head of Community Well-being and Development
Our Ref:	TH/DC/PP/2011/0884	Your Ref:	KH/P/2011/0884
Date:	1 st February 2012		

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

TOWN AND COUNTRY (GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURE) ORDER 1995

Location: O. S Grid Ref: 328 507 Site of former Jacques Yard, Regent Street, Wrexham.

Development: Erection of Hotel (Use Class C1), creation of new access road, associated car parking, landscaping, improvement works to Wats Dyke and other associated works.

I refer to your consultation dated 07/12/2011 in respect of the above.

The proposed development site is located on Regent Street which is a busy, classified road subject to a 30mph speed limit. Mold Road / Regent Street is a major route into the town centre from the A483 Wrexham Bypass and A541 Mold Road located to the north west of the development site

Regent Street is subject to a traffic regulation order in the form of double yellow lines along both sides of the road.

Any proposed / existing access would normally be required to provide visibility splays of 2.4 x 56m in both directions measured to the nearside edge of the adjoining highway in accordance with Manual for Streets.

The site is currently served by a 12.5m wide dropped kerb vehicular access. Visibility from this existing access is inadequate in both directions providing splays of approximately 2.4 x 26m to the south east and 2.4 x 30m to the north west measured to the nearside edge of the adjoining highway. Visibility is impeded in both directions by the existing bridge parapets on the crossings of the railway lines either side of the development site.

Given the inadequate level of visibility from the proposed / existing access and the existing high traffic volumes along this route during peak hour periods, it is considered that any proposed development of this nature would require a signal controlled junction to facilitate the safe flow of both traffic and pedestrians accessing and egressing the site.

It has previously been agreed that vehicles approaching the site from the north west along Mold Road will not be permitted to turn right into the proposed development site but will need to continue into town utilizing the gyratory system along Central Road to access the site. This arrangement was proposed to minimize any possible queuing caused by those vehicles wishing to turn right into the site. However, this was a requirement in relation to the previous planning consent (ref: P/2006/0756) for the construction of 228 two bedroomed apartments.

The submitted Transport Assessment indicates that the proposed development is only likely to generate approximately 5 and 6 vehicles turning right into the site during the peak hour periods (am & pm) respectively. It is therefore considered that this low number of vehicles turning right into the site will not have any significant detrimental impact on traffic flows along Regent Street as they will be able to turn right via gaps in traffic movements along this section.

It is proposed to install a controlled pedestrian crossing as part of the signalized junction on its eastern arm which will provide a safe pedestrian route for pedestrians wishing to cross to the opposite side of Regent Street from the development site to access either the railway station or Wrexham Town Centre.

I understand that Network Rail currently have an existing "Right of Way" providing access to their land off the existing scrapyard access. It was recently stated in a pre-application meeting held with the applicant and the Planning Department that Network Rail would require access on a regular basis by both light vehicles and articulated HGVs. Based on this information, maintaining this proposed "Right of Way" in such a location as part of the signalised junction would be considered inappropriate and would increase the likelihood of danger to both road users and pedestrians. I would therefore recommend that an alternative access point is provided for Network Rail from within the proposed car park away from the signalized junction. I would recommend that the existing Network Rail access / right of way on the corner of the proposed signalized junction is permanently closed up and is indicated as such on a revised layout plan.

The submitted layout plan (Drg. No. 3240 – 000) appears to indicate 2 no. potential access points for Rail Track which is considered unacceptable. The access (for Rail Track) indicated within the hotel car park would be the preferred option. However, I would recommend that the applicant provides a swept path analysis of a 16.5m articulated wagon (using Autotrack or similar software) indicating how turning movements will be accommodated within the site. I would recommend that the applicant also provides a swept path analysis of a 16.5m articulated wagon entering and exiting the site from / onto the junction with Regent Street. The Transport Assessment only includes the swept path analysis of a 14.6m articulated vehicle.

In terms of adoption of the proposed access road, I comment as follows:-

As the proposed access road is only currently proposed to serve the hotel as part of this application, the proposed access road would not be considered suitable for adoption. The proposed access road including parking / turning areas would therefore need to be privately maintained. However, should a future planning application be submitted for residential dwellings to the rear of the site, then further consideration could be given to the adoption of any proposed access road.

Parking at the proposed development site appears adequate providing 1 space per bedroom which complies with the requirements of LPGN 16 - Class C1 (Hotels). However, there would only appear to be 5 no. spaces provided to mobility standards. I would recommend that at least 10% (ie/ 8 no. spaces) of the proposed spaces are provided to mobility standards as required by LPGN 16.

Transport Assessment

The submitted Transport Assessment estimates a daily trip rate of 268 movements (ie/ just over 3 daily movements per bedroom) based on a selected set of TRICS surveys relating to similar sites around the country. Although these figures would appear relatively low, such movements are considered likely given that the site is in a sustainable location being in close proximity to both the Wrexham General Railway Station and Wrexham Bus Station offering alternative means of transport to and from the development site.

It is estimated that the proposed hotel will generate a total of 46 vehicle movements per day during peak hours (ie/ 08:00 - 09:00 & 17:00 - 18:00). Current estimated traffic flows along this section of Regent Street indicates a two-way flow of 3232 movements during the peak hours. Therefore, the above estimated traffic generation at the site could not really be considered as a significant increase in movements in relation to existing flows along Mold Road / Regent Street.

Base traffic flows have been calculated using 2006 traffic counts which have been adjusted using the industry standard NRTF Low Growth Rate (TEMPRO adjusted) to ensure the flows are reflective of those on the local network. However, the original traffic counts are now 5 years old and the adjusted figures may not be reflective of current traffic flows along this section of the highway network. I would recommend that the applicant carries out a traffic count once traffic movements have settled down after the Christmas period (ie/ February 2012 onwards) with these values being used to carry out a revised LinSig assessment.

In terms of the traffic analysis (LinSig) relating to the Mold Road / Maesgwyn Road junction, I comment as follows:-

Although the junction analysis has taken into account the proposed development of 43 apartments relating to planning consent ref: P/2007/1201 as well as the existing properties served off Maesgwyn Road, no account has been made of existing planning consents ref: P/2007/1201 - Proposed 8 no. apartments and ref: P/2008/0090 - Proposed 24 dwellings. I would recommend that the LinSig analysis of this junction is re-calculated taking into account these proposed developments.

In terms of the traffic analysis (LinSig) relating to the Regent Street / New Access Road junction, I comment as follows:-

The LinSig modelling has been produced using the proposed signal controlled access to the proposed hotel run on a 90 second cycle. It is proposed that the pedestrian phase is only called every 3 cycles due to the amount of pedestrians likely to use the crossing facilities. The worse case scenario is that pedestrians wishing to cross this section of Regent Street would need to wait up to 270 seconds (4.5 minutes) which is considered unacceptable. This is likely to result in pedestrians becoming frustrated and crossing Regent Street without the benefit of the pedestrian crossing.

The LinSig analysis of this junction with the signal controlled junction in place appears to indicate that vehicles travelling along Mold Road from the north west into town will experience a queue length of 18 vehicles (Weekday AM) and a queue length of 31 vehicles (Weekday PM) for vehicles travelling along Regent Street out of town. This would involve inbound vehicles queuing back along Mold Road across both the Crispin Lane and Maesgwyn Road junctions which would be considered unacceptable. Vehicles coming out of town along Regent Street would also experience queuing across the Station Approach junction. Measures to protect junctions affected by queuing traffic as a result of the proposed signals should be considered eg/ yellow box markings.

In terms of the traffic analysis (LinSig) relating to the Mold Road / New Access Road and Maesgwyn Road Signals, I comment as follows:-

The LinSig modelling has been run on a 90 second cycle. It is proposed that the pedestrian phase is only called every 3 cycles due to the amount of pedestrians likely to use the crossing facilities. The worse case scenario is that pedestrians wishing to cross this section of Regent Street would need to wait up to 270 seconds (4.5 minutes) which is considered unacceptable. This is likely to result in pedestrians becoming frustrated and crossing Regent Street without the benefit of the pedestrian crossing.

The LinSig analysis of this junction with the signal controlled junction in place appears to indicate that vehicles travelling along Mold Road from the north west into town will experience a queue length of 11 vehicles (Weekday AM) and a queue length of 30 vehicles (Weekday PM) for vehicles travelling along Regent Street out of town. Vehicles coming out of town along Regent Street would therefore experience queuing across both the Crispin Lane junction and the proposed access road

serving the development site. Measures to protect junctions affected by queuing traffic as a result of the proposed signals should be considered eg/ yellow box markings.

The submitted LinSig modelling appears to treat the 2 no. junctions (ie/ Maesgwyn Road / Mold Road junction and Regent Street / Development Site junction) separately and does not give a combined analysis of the 2 no. junctions operating together under signalized conditions.

I would therefore consider the proposed LinSig modelling for the signalized junctions to be inadequate and incompatible with through traffic interests. I would recommend that the applicant provides a revised LinSig model which overcomes any excessive queuing issues and allows pedestrians to cross Regent Street using the proposed pedestrian crossing facility within an acceptable timescale.

A Stage 1 – Safety Audit considering the feasibility and preliminary design of the proposed scheme has not been submitted with this application. I would recommend that a Stage 1 – Safety Audit is submitted for further approval.

In terms of the proposed construction period, I comment as follows:-

It may be considered beneficial to have any proposed signalized junction in operation prior to the construction of the hotel in order to avoid any issues arising from construction traffic entering and egressing the site. However, it is proposed to delay the implementation of the signals until the hotel is constructed and provide / implement an appropriate Construction Traffic Management Plan to mitigate any issues arising from construction vehicles accessing the site during the construction phase. I would therefore recommend that a Construction Traffic Management Plan is submitted for further approval.

Travel Plan

The submitted Framework Travel Plan is generally considered acceptable. However, I understand that the applicant is proposing to remove the existing bus stop / layby on Regent Street directly opposite the site entrance but has no plans to replace this bus stop in an alternative nearby location along Regent Street. The loss of this existing bus stop without the provision of an alternative bus stop is considered unacceptable.

I would recommend that the applicant discusses this issue with our Transportation Section to agree an acceptable alternative location for this bus stop and includes this detail in a revised Framework Travel Plan.

I would normally therefore recommend that the application be **REFUSED** for the following reasons:-

1. **A recent traffic count along Mold Road / Regent Street has not been submitted with the application.**
2. **The submitted LinSig modelling for the signalized junction is considered to be inadequate and incompatible with through traffic interests.**
3. **The loss of the existing bus stop/ layby along Regent Street with no alternative provision for such a facility is considered unacceptable.**
4. **A Stage 1 – Safety Audit has not been submitted with the application.**
5. **A swept path analysis indicating the turning movements of a 16.5m articulated HGV accessing the proposed junction and the internal Network Rail access has not been submitted with this application.**

However, if the applicant were to satisfactorily address the above issues then further consideration could be given to this application.

Supplementary Notes

The applicant's attention should be drawn to item nos. 1,2, 3, 4 & 5 of the supplementary notes.

Peter Douthwaite

P.P. Service Manager - Environment

