

MEMORANDUM

From: Service Manager Environment

To: Head of Environment & Planning

Our Ref: P/2019/0923

Your Ref: P/2019/0923

Date: 27 February 2020

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

TOWN AND COUNTRY (GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURE) ORDER 1995

Location: O. S Grid Ref: 3250 5187 Land either side of Stansty Chain road, off A483 Trunk road and A541 Mold Road, Stansty, Wrexham

Development: Outline application for residential development and detailed means of access with all other matters reserved.

I refer to your consultation dated 19 December 2019 in respect of the above.

The application proposes a development of 455 new houses on land either side of Stansty Chain Road with access to the site being proposed off both the A541 Mold Road and also off Stansty Chain Road.

Existing Road conditions

There are long standing and well documented capacity issues in the vicinity of the site. A541 Mold Road junction with A483 at junction 5 and B&Q roundabout suffer serious traffic queueing issues at peak hours.

Stansty Chain Road is a narrow unlit road with poor pedestrian provision and forward visibility issues at it north western end where it links to the A541 Mold Road. Stansty Chain is of inadequate width to permit the simultaneous passage of vehicles and is considered to be of inadequate design and layout to cater for additional traffic.

To the south east the road gives access to a local primary school where there are already highway safety concerns due to congestion caused by parental parking.

Stansty Chain Road links to Plas Coch Road and the B5101 Stansty Road both of which have historically suffered capacity issues at peak hours at their junctions with B5125 Rhosddu Road and A541 B&Q respectively

There have been a number of transport studies undertaken in recent years at the A541 Mold Road roundabout junction with A483 at junction 5 and B& Q roundabout. Each study has revealed that the junctions are already over capacity.

Such is the concern that Welsh Government is currently undertaking their own capacity assessments to identify preferred options for junctions 4, 5 and 6 of the A483 Trunk Road.

The applicant alludes to the capacity issues on page 9 of submitted transport assessment stating that 'at the A483 junction 5 roundabout there is notable queueing on the majority of approach arms'

It continues 'Queueing at the A483 J5 currently is also observed to have a consequential impact on the nearby B&Q junction to the immediate south - queueing on the A541 approach is observed as far back as the Berse Road approach to the B&Q roundabout. In turn, this has a consequential impact upon queueing along Berse Road'

This queue extends most evening peak hours beyond the roundabout at Berse Road / Rhys Broughton Lane up to and beyond the top roundabout.

There are also concerns over the capacity of the B5101 Stansty Road junction with the B5425 Rhosddu Road (Walnut junction); a previous appeal and recent transport assessment both revealed that the junction was already at capacity during peak hours.

The addition of 455 dwellings into a network that is already known to be at capacity at peak hours is a concern.

Proposed development

The submitted plans show a proposed signalised access off the A541 Mold Road. A secondary means of access to both parcels of the development is taken off Stansty Chain Road. Given the shortcomings of Stansty Chain Road discussed earlier in this document, there is naturally significant concern over this proposal.

Transport Assessment

There are various tables presented within the report which demonstrate the predicted percentage impact on the local highway network.

Table TA8.1 shows the predicted impact in 2024. Figures for the A483 J5 are broken down into the various roads but form part of the junction and when the PM figures are added together they equate to a predicted 5.9% increase at a junction already known to be over capacity. The 2030 scenario in TA8.2 shows a percentage increase of 16.3% at the roundabout.

For Stansty Chain Road the PM figure is 65.7% in 2024 and 141.2% in 2030

The PM figure for the B5101 Plas Coch Road/ Stansty Chain Road is 34.2% in 2020 and 84.6% in 2030

The figure at the Walnut junction shows a 5.2% increase in 2024 and 13.8% in 2030.

The report states that 5% is seen by Welsh Government as being a material increase.

These junctions are already recognised to be at or near capacity and an increase of this magnitude is of some concern.

The junction assessments undertaken in part 8.4 are a theoretical measure of how each junction will perform in future years. The fact that they are theoretical is clearly shown by Para 8.4.14 showing a study of the Berse Road / Rhys Broughton Lane roundabout which shows queues of only 1 vehicle at the PM peak hour. Whereas in actuality the queue is significantly longer and is a well-known traffic congested route. If the junction operated alone it may cope with the existing

traffic but it is negatively impacted by queues starting out at A541 Mold Road, which then cause queueing at B&Q roundabout and in turn cause issues with free flow of traffic back as far as the hospital on Croesnewydd Road.

Table 8.4.5 predicts a 154.6 % degree of saturation (DoS) at Junction 5 in the am peak at year 2030, an increase of nearly 50%. The associated mean maximum queue of 148 vehicles is an increase in queue length of 117 vehicles.

TA8.4b

The PM peak show similar size increases to queue lengths in 2030.

Significantly the A541 Mold Road East queue is anticipated to increase in length from 14.1 vehicles now to 88.3 vehicles in 2030. This is the queue that the transport statement has already told us holds up all the traffic along Berse Road, Rhyd Broughton Lane and Croesnewydd Road.

Significant increases to queuing lengths and DoS are shown at every part of the A483 junction 5

The studies of the B& Q roundabout show a significant worsening of capacity.

The figures showing a queue of just 2.6 cars at the B5101 Berse Road approach to the roundabout is highly questionable as it has already been stated to be queueing back to Rhyd Broughton roundabout within this same document.

Table TA8.8b show traffic predictions for the B5425 New Road junction with Stansty Road.

This is another area notorious for traffic capacity queueing issues at peak hours. It is questionable therefore how the surveyed queue in 2019 is for less than 1 car turning right out of Stansty Road and just two turning left. Experience will show that there is far greater queuing at peak hours.

The addition of 27% of vehicular traffic from the proposed development will only make the junction operation worse. Particular concern should be raised over the impact it has on Prices Lane traffic which already queues way back from the New Road junction.

The proposed development will inevitably lead to significant additional traffic on the highway network in the vicinity of the site. There are known issues at Mold Road junction 5, B&Q roundabout, Stansty Chain Road and the B5425 junction with Stansty Road.

It is rather surprising given the significant capacity issues that the report itself raises, that the highway consultant feels that there 'is no justification for the provision of any additional mitigation'

The report does however then suggest some minor amendments to road markings at Junction 5 and the B&Q roundabout. The road markings amendments are of concern as I understand that they simply take the markings back to what they were 10 years ago when it caused issues with vehicles queuing back to the A483. As a result of those issues the road markings were amended in accordance with a scheme agreed by Welsh Government trunk roads agency.

There will be an inevitable increase in traffic generation approaching junction 5 particularly along the A483 slip roads. These slip roads are traffic light controlled and are controlled by MOVA which allows for extended green times when called on to do so. The more traffic using the slip roads may increase the green light phasing thereby reducing green light times for other approaches to the junction. The impact of this is longer queueing on the Mold Road approaches to the roundabout. It will potentially become a similar issue to junction 4 where traffic signal times on the trunk roads are given priority over the county roads; leading to significant queueing on the county roads.

Additional queueing on the Mold Road East approach to junction 5 will only exacerbate the existing queueing problems and congestion at B&Q roundabout, Berse Road roundabout and Rhyd Broughton Lane roundabout.

Stage 2 of the mitigation plans suggests the use of signals on the A541 Mold Road East approach to junction 5. As indicated above the green light times here may be affected by extra green light times needed to get traffic off the A483 slip roads. I have serious doubts whether this would provide benefit to highway capacity.

In order to minimise the apparent impact on the percentage traffic growth at each junction, the transport assessment has compared theoretical Tempro adjusted 2030 figures with the 2030 tempo plus development figures.

The tempo growth figures appear to show 801 additional potential households in the area. There are already 410 units committed at the Glyndwr site and 455 potentially at the Stansty site. Therefore the tempo growth has already been taken account of and there is an element of double counting. This double counting therefore leads to the apparent impact of the development being significantly reduced. The 2030 figures with development should perhaps be compared to the 2019 base figures to understand the actual impact of the development.

In conclusion, I would raise concerns over the following issues.

Stansty Chain Road is unlit, suffers poor visibility and has inadequate footway provision. It has been identified as a potential active travel route. The addition significant additional traffic is of some concern.

It has recently come to light that Stansty Lodge Lane is actually still adopted highway and if this site is to come forward for development it may be worth the developer considering the feasibility of reopening Stansty Lodge Lane one way out on to Mold Road so enabling Stansty Chain Road to be made a partial one way with an upgrade to include street lighting and pedestrian cycle provision.

Stansty Chain road suffers serious congestion at school peak hours and the addition of significantly more traffic is a concern. Whilst the TA indicated that there are no known personal injury accidents nearby, the extra traffic with no mitigation has to be a concern for children's safety

Stansty Road Walnut junction

There appears to be a significant increase in traffic generation at this junction as a result of the proposals. Although these issues had not been picked up previously there is some concern that so much extra traffic approaching a junction already at capacity is only going to exacerbate existing issues.

Junction 5 - significant increases in traffic on a483 slip roads means traffic signals will have to ensure that they are taken off the road quicker therefore potentially meaning less green times for the other approaches – particularly less time for Mold Road east to get out.

I have noted that Welsh Government have accepted the proposals but the fact is that the A483 won't be affected by the proposals – the impact will be felt on the county roads in just the same way that trunk roads are not affected by traffic at junction 4. The lights are set to ensure no traffic queues on the A483 therefore meaning significant queueing issue stake place at peak hours on the county roads. It is the WCBC roads that are affected by these proposals.

The increased traffic at junction 5 is likely to have a detrimental impact on queueing traffic issues approaching Mold Road roundabout on the county roads. Queueing at the Mold Road East

approach already causes significant issues at peak hours leading to queuing along Berse Road Rhyd Broughton Lane and Croesnewydd Road.

I therefore raise concerns over the suitability of the site for a development of this size. It has been suggested to the developer on a few occasions that they should remove any proposed access on Stansty Chain Road; this would mean deleting the site east of Stansty Chain Road. The benefit of this would be reducing the development impact on Stansty Chain Road and the B5425 New Road/ Stansty Road junction which would in turn eliminate some of the highway concerns.

In its current format I must raise concern over the highway safety and capacity issues. I would recommend the applicant addresses the points raised.



Service Manager Environment

