

J000069-TN03b
December 2020

Ref: P/2019/0923 - Land Either Side of
Stansty Chain Road, Wrexham - Outline
Application for Residential
Development and Details Means of
Access

Technical Note - Response to WCBC Highways Consultation

Prepared on behalf of:



Russell Homes Ltd.



Suite 3, Pentland House,
Village Way, Wilmslow,
SK9 2GH
Company no: 11465973

0161 8264631
www.focustp.co.uk

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

- 1.1.1 This Technical Note has been prepared by Focus Transport Planning Ltd. (Focus TP) on behalf of Russell Homes Ltd. to respond to highway related post-submission consultation comments received from Wrexham County Borough Council's (WCBC) framework highways consultants Mott MacDonald (MMD) in respect of planning application submissions for the development of land either side of Stansty Chain Road, for residential purposes.
- 1.1.2 An outline planning application for up to 455 dwellings, with highway access in detail, was submitted in December 2019 (Ref: P/2019/0923). Prior to submission of the planning application, highway and transport related matters pertaining to the development proposals had been discussed extensively with WCBC Highways, including via several pre-application meetings. An extensive response to the formal Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) process stated that ***"In principle, the Council does not have any significant objections based upon the proposals submitted"***. Crucially, the PAC response from WCBC Highways raised no issues with the findings of the submitted Transport Assessment produced by FTP, and therefore there was no material objection to the development proposals.
- 1.1.3 However, following submission of the application and despite the largely positive WCBC Highways response to the PAC, the formal consultation response to the outline planning application (produced in February 2020) provided a completely contradictory and negative position. An extensive response to those comments, in the form of a Technical Note (Ref J000069-TN02c) was subsequently produced and submitted. That TN provided a lengthy and detailed rebuttal to those initial highways consultation response comments.
- 1.1.4 Subsequent to the above, a further response has been received to the application from WCBC's framework highways consultants Mott MacDonald. This was published in September 2020 to the planning portal. It is these comments that this Technical Note 3 responds to.

- 1.1.5 In addition to comments received from WCBC Highways, it should also be noted that the Welsh Government has formally responded to the planning application, raising no objections to the proposals, and supporting the proposed scheme of mitigation at the roundabout Junction 5 of the A483 with the A541 Mold Road.
- 1.1.6 This TN responds to each of the issues raised by WCBC's highway consultants in their consultation response, in turn. This document has been produced following discussions with WCBC and their consultants Mott MacDonald, and is cognisant of those discussions. This TN provides some additional information requested by Mott MacDonald, further clarifications on certain aspects, and finally demonstrates that there should be no requirement for any further transport related submissions in order to determine the acceptability of the proposals on highway grounds.

2.0 WCBC/MOTT MACDONALD COMMENTS & FOCUS TP RESPONSE

2.1 Overview

2.1.1 This review of WCBC and Mott MacDonald's comments, dated 12th August 2020, has been undertaken with reference to both the Focus TP Transport Assessment submitted with the outline planning application, as well as prior correspondence and Technical Notes which have formed the basis of ongoing pre and post-submission discussions between the Applicant and WCBC's Planning and Highways teams. In addition, and as noted in Section 1 above, this review is informed by recent discussions with both the WCBC planning case officer and WCBC's appointed highway consultants Mott MacDonald.

2.1.2 This Technical Note considers each section of the comments in order.

2.2 Traffic Distribution

2.2.1 Mott MacDonald has requested that full trip distribution data from the 2011 Census Data and associated methodology used to derive trip distribution is provided to ensure the method used is sound. As the data is contained within an extensive spreadsheet, and would therefore be difficult to reproduce in a legible manner in print, it has not been attached to this TN. Rather, Focus TP will separately issue this data electronically to WCBC/Mott MacDonald for review.

2.3 Traffic Impact Assessment

2.3.1 Firstly, Mott MacDonald refer to concerns previously raised by WCBC Highways officers regarding the operation of the B5425 Rhosddu Road/B5101 Stansty Road (Walnut) junction. We welcome the comments that MMD, having reviewed the operational capacity modelling undertaken in the TA, accept that the junction operates within capacity with the development in place in the modelled 2030 scenario. This confirms the findings of the TA, as well as our previous response to WCBC Highways comments outlined in our Technical Note 02b.

2.3.2 The Mott MacDonald response goes on to outline that concern prevails over additional development related traffic utilising the route of Stansty Chain Road.

Specifically, MMD identify that this is likely to be an issue north of the proposed development, on the more restricted width section of the route and which is also subject to the National Speed Limit (NSL). They go on to note that they feel mitigation measures are required to address these concerns.

2.3.3 The issue of development access and resulting traffic on Stansty Chain Road is one which is extensively discussed in the submitted TA. Indeed, during the Pre-Application Consultation process, and in particular discussions with WCBC Highways officers, it was agreed to specifically include a dedicated section within the final TA submitted with the planning application, which would cover the proposed access strategy and the use of Stansty Chain Road (TA sub-section 5.2 “Highway Access Strategy”). In addition, the anticipated distribution of development related traffic is covered extensively in Section 7 of the TA.

2.3.4 In addition to the above, our post-submission Technical Note 02b (responding to WCBC Highways comments from Feb 2020) provides further clarification of the anticipated quantum of development traffic that would actually be likely to use the restricted section of Stansty Chain Road to the north of the Application Site. **Table TN2.1** of that document is reproduced below:

J000069-TN02b - Table TN2.1 - Anticipated Increase in Traffic on Restricted Section of Stansty Chain Road (North of Site) - 455 Dwellings

2030	AM Peak		PM Peak	
	Base Flow	Dev Traffic	Base Flow	Dev Traffic
Northbound	12	0	9	0
Southbound	214	3	77	13

2.3.5 As outlined in both the TA and TN02b, the proposed development is anticipated to give rise to extremely low levels of additional traffic on the restricted width section of Stansty Chain Road to the north of the Application Site. During the AM period just 3 additional vehicle movements are anticipated, all southbound, equating to just 1 additional vehicle movement every 20 minutes. During the PM peak just 13 additional vehicle movements are envisaged, again all southbound, equating to just 1 additional vehicle movement every 4-5 minutes.

2.3.6 These levels of anticipated additional traffic on the restricted section of Stansty Chain Road to the north of the Application Site would not give rise to any notable

increase in highway safety risk. Moreover, it should be borne in mind that the development proposals would provide enhanced Active Travel Links through the site, between Stansty Chain Road and the A541 Mold Road, which would significantly reduce the potential for conflict between vehicles and vulnerable non-motorised road users.

2.3.7 With the above in mind, it continues to remain Focus TP's consideration that the proposed development would not give rise to any material highway safety concerns on the restricted section of Stansty Chain Road to the north of the Site. Accordingly, it is considered that there is no reasonable justification for the implementation of any mitigation measures along that section of highway.

2.3.8 The last paragraph in the Traffic Impact Section of the MMD response identifies that it is not clear from the TA that the modelling that has been carried out has been based on 455 new dwellings or 375 dwellings (as per the current LDP proposed allocation). We can confirm that all sections of the TA, along with the supporting modelling work, refer to and are based solely on the figure of 455 dwellings.

2.4 Access

Access Junctions

2.4.1 The first key comment in this section of the MMD response relates to the proposed priority-controlled crossroads junction between the two Application Site parcels and Stansty Chain Road. MMD outline that in the interests of safety this junction arrangement should be changed to a staggered crossroads junction, thereby reducing the likelihood of driver misunderstanding priority and driving straight through the junction.

2.4.2 In the case of this particular location, Focus TP considers that the proposed arrangement would represent a safe highway access option. Prevailing traffic flows along Stansty Chain Road are extremely low (as outlined in the TA and above in **Table TN2.1**), and the Application includes the proposal to extend the 30mph speed limit to a point close to the northern boundary of the Application Site. In addition, where Stansty Chain Road currently forms a very open section of highway past the Application Site, the development of the site for residential use would,

by its nature, have a bearing on the perception of the route to drivers. Hence, factoring in the presence of buildings, landscaping schemes, and new footways along this section would reinforce the presence of the proposed junction arrangement. In addition, the proposed access scheme would include for new road markings and signage to further highlight the presence of the junction.

- 2.4.3 In addition to the above factors, it is also considered that the proposed arrangement would maximise the attractiveness of the connectivity between the smaller Application Site parcel, and the main signalised Application Site access with the A541 Mold Road, not only for drivers but also for non-motorised users utilising the Active Travel Infrastructure that is also proposed in the Application. It is considered key that the attractiveness of the link through the larger parcel to the proposed signalised access junction with the A541 Mold Road should not be diminished in any way - that connectivity would provide a crucial means of minimising the quantum of development traffic on the surrounding existing highway network to the south of the site (see the aforementioned Site Access Strategy section of the TA).

Emergency Access

- 2.4.4 The MMD response goes on to note that, based upon the anticipated number of dwellings that could be delivered on the smaller of the land parcels, a secondary/emergency access link should be accommodated to the northern section.
- 2.4.5 The illustrative masterplan for the Site includes for the introduction of a shared-use path along the western boundary of the smaller parcel (set behind the existing hedgerow). Following discussion with WCBC Highways officers during the PAC process, it was agreed that this would be accessible both from the vehicular access to the south, and also via Stansty Chain Road to the northern site boundary. This would enable any future development in the area to connect with this Active Travel infrastructure.
- 2.4.6 By virtue of the shared-use path exiting on to Stansty Chain Road at the smaller site's northern boundary, it is therefore entirely feasible that this location can also "double up" and serve as an emergency access to the site. The details of any such

access could be identified during any future reserved matters planning applications which would deal with proposed internal site layouts etc.

Speed Limit Change

- 2.4.7 Focus TP welcomes the acceptance of the proposed reduction in the prevailing speed limit on Stansty Chain Road, from NSL to 30mph, along with the extension of the existing footways up to the site access points.

Proposed Bus Layby

- 2.4.8 The final note in this section of the MMD response notes the proposed provision of a bus layby to accommodate existing southbound services on the A541 Mold Road. The layby would be located to the south of the proposed signalised access along the site frontage, with Active Travel connections through to the Application Site. MMD go on to outline that it is not clear why bus provision for northbound services has not been provided, and that they expect that such provision should be made to ensure the development is sustainable.
- 2.4.9 During pre-application roundtable discussions with WCBC Highways officers the matter of bus stop facilities near the Site was covered. It was agreed through these discussions that the possibility of creating a bus layby adjacent to the site, on the southbound side of the A541, would be investigated further. Such an arrangement would enjoy the benefit of the direct link from the centre of the development site to the bus stop.
- 2.4.10 During the same roundtable discussions, northbound bus provision was also discussed. It was agreed that the potential to incorporate a layby on this side of the A541 would be hindered by the limited width of the existing footway/verge, which would not be wide enough to accommodate an appropriate standard of layby within a reasonable distance of the Site and the proposed access junction.
- 2.4.11 It was identified that an existing stop is located to the north on Old Mold Road, with a footway connection between that stop and the Application Site as well as the high standard of signalised crossing facilities proposed at the main site access junction. Accordingly, this existing and proposed infrastructure would enable

access to northbound bus services on the A541. Moreover, it should be borne in mind that other local stops are available within a close walking distance of the site, in particular at Plas Coch Retail Park to the immediate south.

- 2.4.12 On the above basis it is considered that there should be no requirement for further enhanced bus infrastructure provision over and above that which is already proposed. The Application Site is already demonstrably extremely sustainably located, with excellent access to key local services and facilities by walking and cycling modes, and the Application includes for already significant enhancements to the Active Travel connections in and around the Site.

2.5 Parking and Internal Site Layout

- 2.5.1 This section of the consultation response to the planning application outlines that there are no indications of the proposed level of parking that would be provided within the development, that a site plan showing the internal road layout should be provided, and that all development and access roads should be designed to adoptable WCBC standards.
- 2.5.2 All of the above aspects of the potential future development of the site for residential purposes would be dealt with via any future reserved matters or full planning applications, rather than as part of this outline planning application.

2.6 Servicing/Deliveries/Waste Collection

- 2.6.1 MMD note that a swept path analysis would be required of the Site for a WCBC refuse collection vehicle as part of the full planning application.
- 2.6.2 Given that this application is being made in outline, the above details would be dealt with via any future reserved matters or full application.

2.7 Construction Traffic Management Plan

- 2.7.1 It is noted that a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) would need to be submitted in order to construct the scheme, and that this could be included as a planning condition.

- 2.7.2 This is agreed - this could be dealt with either via planning condition attached to this outline application, or to any future full planning application should one be submitted.

2.8 Conclusion

- 2.8.1 The consultation response concludes with a list of additional information that should be submitted, as follows. The below also includes our response:

- Full trip distribution data and associated methodology (see 2.2 above)
 - This is agreed and will be provided separately;
- Confirmation that the modelling is based on 455 or 375 dwellings
 - It is confirmed that the modelling is based on 455 dwellings
- Revised drawings showing the proposed layout for the crossroads Stansty Chain Road/site access junction (staggered)
 - Not agreed - see section 2.4 above
- Revised proposals showing a secondary access to the northern section (could take the form of an emergency access)
 - The illustrative masterplan submitted includes for access at the northern boundary to a shared-use path - this can be utilised for emergency access and details can be agreed during any reserved matters application.
- Visibility splays for any revised/additional junctions
 - No revised access junctions are proposed - see section 2.4
- Provision for northbound bus service with evidence that operators have been consulted and accepted proposals for an additional layby on the A541 Mold Road
 - See section 2.4 above. Northbound bus provision has previously been discussed with WCBC Highways and agreed that the opportunity to do so is materially hindered. It was agreed with WCBC officers to provide the southbound layby. Operators have not been consulted - it was not identified by WCBC that this would be necessary - WCBC advised rather that, in their experience, they felt operators would be satisfied to service additional facilities as long as there was no material deviation from existing serviced routes - hence the proposed layby arrangement.
- A site plan showing the proposed internal road network and any associated traffic calming

- Any such plan would be submitted as part of a future reserved matters or full application, not at this outline stage

2.8.2 The consultation response goes on to note that, as part of a full planning application the Applicant should provide the following elements. It is agreed that these would be submitted, either as part of full or reserved matters applications:

- Swept path analysis for a Local Authority refuse vehicle (typically 11.2m in length) servicing the site
- Parking provision
- Development roads to be adopted by WCBC should be designed to WCBC standards.

3.0 SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

3.1 Summary

3.1.1 This Technical Note has provided a detailed response to the formal highways consultation response received from WCBC framework consultants Mott MacDonald to the planning application for up to 455 residential dwellings on land either side of Stansty Chain Road, Wrexham.

3.1.2 This TN provides the relevant clarifications where requested, and justifications for the proposed development and its package of measures, where required. In summary, the proposed development lies in a sustainable location, with excellent connectivity to existing services and infrastructure. Nevertheless, the Application includes for an extensive package of proposed Active Travel measures which are considered to be significant, and would materially enhance both the development site itself as well as the surrounding areas and the infrastructure available to existing residents.

3.2 Conclusions

With the above in mind Focus TP considers that there should be no overriding reasons for refusal of the proposed development on highway grounds.