

September 2020

Highway Assessment

Proposed Residential Development

Land adjacent to the Police Station
A525 High Street
Coedpoeth



Contents

1. Introduction
2. Development proposals
3. Local assessment relevant to the application
4. Conclusion

1. Introduction

In response to a recent pre application planning consultation Wrexham County Borough Council highway officers have raised the following concerns:

1. Visibility in the north westerly direction is inadequate providing a splay of approximately 2.4 x 16m to the nearside edge of the adjoining highway, Visibility is impeded by the existing BT boxes, street lighting and boundary pillar wall.
2. Adequate parking and turning provision would need to be provided within the curtilage of the site.

This report provides a highways development control assessment of the traffic aspects of the proposal and forms supplementary information to assist in obtaining a planning permission.

2. Development proposals

The site is located east of the Police Station on the A525 High Street, Coedpoeth. The A525 is a classified highway currently subject to a 30mph speed limit.

It is proposed to erect one detached dwelling on the site to replace the existing garage.

Two parking spaces are to be provided for the dwelling utilising the existing established vehicular access on to the A525.

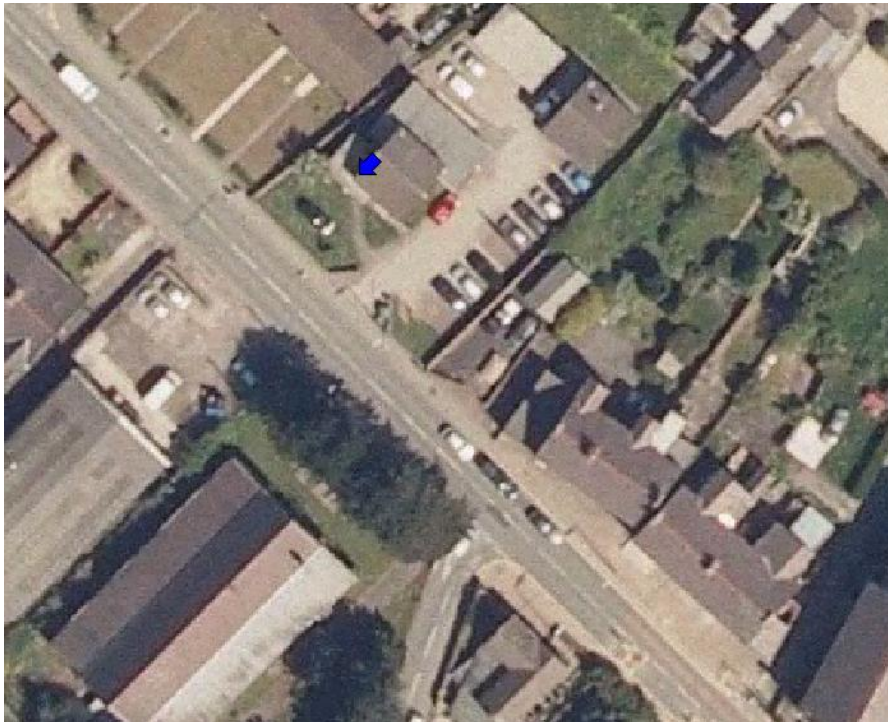
3. Local assessment relevant to the application

The site is currently occupied by a single garage set approximately 13m from the back of footway adjacent to the A525 carriageway. There is a car parking area of approximately 80 square metres between the existing garage and the back of footway. There is space within the car parking area for a minimum of 3 standard size cars as well as one additional vehicle in the garage.

The garage is not linked to any existing parking provision in the locality and is currently used for storage.

In its current format the site has a potential to park up to 4 vehicles off road at any one time. As there is limited turning facility at the site each of these four vehicles would have to reverse through the existing site access.

The aerial photograph below from 2009 shows 2 cars and a box van on site and proves previous traffic usage of the site.



The council highways department has no control over how many vehicles currently park on this site and therefore no control over current vehicular movements using the existing access.

The site owner has confirmed that the garage is currently used for storage and is used on a daily basis, usually in the morning and evening peak hours. This equates to a minimum of 4 traffic movements per day (2 inward and 2 outward)

Interrogation of the TRICS database traffic generation for a single dwelling in a highly sustainable location would produce a figure of between 4 and 6 movements daily. Even if this figure was between 6 and 8 movements, this would mean just 3 or 4 traffic movements out of the site on a daily basis. It is highly unlikely that an increase of just 1 or 2 daily outward movements would be deemed to be significant enough to refuse this application at appeal.

It must of course be remembered that the traffic movements out of the site are actually uncontrolled at the current time. When assessing traffic movements through the planning system it is standard practice to evaluate the site on its potential movements not on its current usage. This site has potential for a minimum of 4 vehicles to parked within the site and therefore a traffic generation potential well above that of the proposed dwelling.

The Council highways officer has expressed concerns that visibility at the existing access is substandard due to limited visibility in a north westerly direction measured along the nearside kerb edge of the adjoining highway. This is due to the presence of BT boxes, a street light, and the pillar of a boundary wall.

If it is the case that the street furniture mentioned above cause visibility issues from the existing garage access then it is also true that they cause visibility issues at the neighbouring police station. The photo below shows the impact of the street lighting column on visibility at the police station access; made significantly worse by the presence of industrial size waste receptacles in the access.



Visibility at the police station is limited by the presence of street furniture just like the neighbouring access below but has a significantly higher traffic generation.



The photo below shows the site 9 years ago when there was just one BT box fronting the application site.



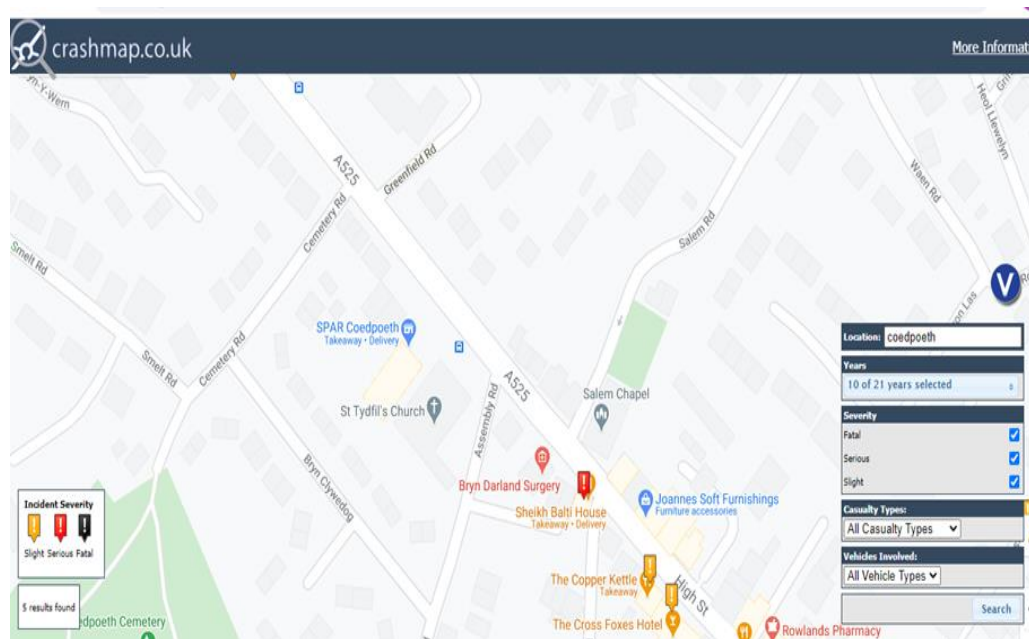
A second more recent photograph shows that another BT box has been erected at a later date.



If the visibility issue was so significant in highway terms then it is surprising that another BT box was permitted to be erected in this location. One would have expected a highway objection to the positioning of the new BT box if the access was considered dangerous.

Despite the perceived highway issues caused by the reported shortfall in visibility at both the application site (and indeed at the police station) there is no reported accident record in the vicinity of the site.

A study of Crashmap reveals that despite the lack of turning and substandard visibility there are no personal injury accidents within 50m of the site in the last 10 years.



There is no reason therefore for the access location to be considered dangerous.

The second reason for concern raised by the highway officer was the lack of parking and turning provision. WCBC Local Planning Guidance Note no. 16 recommends that three parking spaces are provided for a 4 bedroom dwelling but it also clearly states that this a maximum provision.

The submitted plans show a shortfall of 1 parking space on the maximum standards required by LPGN no 16; however it has been determined at previous planning appeals in Wrexham (and across the country) that it is inappropriate to apply these as minimum standards.

The site is in a highly sustainable location at the heart of the village of Coedpoeth; there are numerous shops, a dentist, public houses, schools, and leisure facilities all within easy walking distance of the site. The A525 High Street is a bus route; there is a bus stop within 30m of the site. The availability of a regular bus service in close proximity to the site ensures that there is no essential need to own a car to reach everyday destinations.

Given previous planning appeal decisions on car parking standards and Welsh Government guidance to reduce the need for cars then there is no justifiable reason to object on the grounds of inadequate parking provision.

It is therefore contended that 2 parking spaces will adequately serve the proposed dwelling.

The width of the land fronting the garage makes turning within the site difficult. However, there are a number of other properties within 200m of the site which do not provide an off road turning facility and yet there are no accidents recorded within the last 10 years. Furthermore it must be remembered that the traffic generation from the proposed dwelling is likely to be no more onerous than for its potential use for which there is no turning facility provided.

4. Conclusion

- There is potential for a minimum of 4 vehicles to currently park on the application site
- The highway authority have no control over the potential number of vehicle movements through the existing access
- The potential traffic generation from the existing site usage could be well in excess of the traffic generated by the proposed dwelling
- Although there is a shortfall in visibility in one direction, the traffic generation is no more onerous than the potential generation from the existing and means that there is no reason to object on these grounds.
- The site is in a highly sustainable location close to all the village facilities and near to a regular bus route. The two parking spaces proposed are therefore adequate for the proposed dwelling.
- Traffic generation from the proposed dwelling is likely to be no more onerous than for its existing potential use for which there is no turning facility provided. Therefore there is no justification to object due to the lack of turning facility.
- Visibility at the access will be maximised if the front boundary wall pillar is reduced to below 1m in height.

There is therefore no reasonable justification for the highway department to object to this proposal on the grounds of traffic generation or lack of parking and turning.