

MEMORANDUM

From: Chief Officer, Environment & Technical **To:** Chief Officer Planning & Regulatory
FAO: Matthew Phillips

Our Ref: **Your Ref:** P/2020/0354

Date: 4th November 2020

Land off Hillock Lane, Gresford, Wrexham LL12 8YN
Proposed residential development of 109 units with associated access and highway improvements.

Further to your email / consultation dated 19/10/2020 in respect of the above, I comment as follows:-

A highways technical note has been submitted in response to my initial response.

Hillock Lane/Wynnstay Lane Junction

My initial advice was that because this junction is of a low standard with inadequate visibility, a significant increase in traffic would not be supported, particularly if there is a pre-existing collision issue. STATS 19 data has now been presented to confirm that there have been no reported accidents at the junction within the last five years. While I have concerns over the suitability of this junction to accommodate the development traffic, a junction improvement could not be achieved without the use of third party land and there is no evidence of a safety issue at the junction.

The PICADY assessment of this junction is based on a major arm width of 6.3m, which we consider to be too wide. For accuracy, this measurement should be checked and the PICADY model re-run, although it is not expected to make a significant difference to the outcome of the capacity assessment.

Hillock Lane East of the Site Access

As previously stated, the proposed improvements in alignment would enable the visibility standard of MfS2 to be met, potentially alleviating concerns relating to increased traffic flow and SSD. STATS19 data has been presented as requested and confirms that there have been no reported accidents in the last five years.

The remainder of Hillock Lane, between the eastern boundary of the site and Wynnstay Lane, remains very narrow with no suitable passing places, with vehicles forced to use private driveways to pass. An analysis should be undertaken to establish the increase in probable incidences of vehicles meeting on this stretch of road that would result from the 31% increase in two-way traffic in the AM peak and 41.5% increase in two-way traffic in the PM peak. While low speeds mean that this is unlikely to create a safety concern, the more frequent need to stop and reverse to pass another vehicle is likely to increase local delays and frustration.

Hillock Lane West of the Site Access

The footway arrangement proposed in Plan 1 does not allow for a continuous footway on the southern side of the road, with a requirement for pedestrians to cross. As previously stated, this is not the preferred situation, it but does provide a connection for residents to the wider pedestrian network.

The Technical Note states that in addition to the main vehicular access a traffic free route for pedestrians and cyclists is available from Hillock Lane along the existing PROW. However, Plan 1 shows that the PROW would no longer be connected to a footway on Hillock Lane which is unacceptable.

The PROW currently connects to the existing footway on the southern side of Hillock Lane and this connection should be maintained. At a minimum, the footway along the development frontage must be extended to connect with the PROW. We propose discussion with Public Rights of Way Officer, Sean Hanratty 01978 729761.

While an uncontrolled crossing is required, it is not clear why a buildout and give-way markings are included. This should be reconsidered as it may be appropriate to simplify the design.

Internal Layout and Parking

The applicant had been asked to consider shared-use paths within the site and it is noted that these have not been included, because the internal layout has been designed to keep vehicle speeds low. I appreciate the traffic free access for pedestrians and cyclists on the existing PROW.

A swept path analysis has now been submitted, using 11.2m refuse vehicles, showing that internal movements by such vehicles can be accommodated.

New Access Junction

A swept path analysis has now been provided which shows that the access junction can accommodate an 11.2m refuse vehicle.

A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit should be undertaken at the site of the proposed new access.

Accident Analysis

The technical note has provided STATS19 data which confirms that there is only one reported accident in the study area which was at the B5445/Hillock Lane junction.

Conclusion

The narrow width and lack of passing places on Hillock Lane as well as the limited visibility at the Hillock Lane/Wynnstay Lane junction mean that no increase in traffic level would be welcomed at this location. However, the proposed improvement in highway alignment adjacent to the site would provide adequate visibility and the accident record of the Hillock Lane/Wynnstay Lane junction suggests no pre-existing safety issue. As such the issue is one of annoyance to local residents rather than of road safety and is not in itself sufficient to recommend refusal.

A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit is required at the site access before construction work begins and should form a condition for the Planning Application.

The footway arrangement currently proposed on Hillock Lane to the west of the site access is not acceptable, as drawn, because the existing PROW, which the Technical Note suggests will be used by residents of the development as well as others, is no longer connected to the pedestrian network. The PROW currently connects to the existing footway on the southern side of Hillock Lane and this connection should be maintained. At a minimum, the footway along the development frontage must be conditioned to be extended to connect with the existing PROW.



Chief Officer, Environment & Technical