

## PROPOSED FOOTWAY IMPROVEMENTS – HIGHWAYS NOTE v1 (OCTOBER 2019)

### Proposed Residential Development, Land off Top Road, Summerhill, Wrexham

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Croft were appointed by McBryde Homes to produce a Transport Assessment (TA) and Travel Plan (TP) to assist the Local Planning Authority's determination of an outline planning application for a residential development on a parcel of land off Top Road in Summerhill. The site location is shown in **Plan 1**.
- 1.2 It has been confirmed by officers in the highway department at Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC) that all matters relating to highways have been resolved, with the exception of road safety and the potential pedestrian/vehicle conflict along a short section of Summerhill Road, where there is currently no footway provision.

#### 2. Scope of Note

- 2.1 The purpose of this Highways Note is to address this last remaining issue and demonstrate that the proposals are acceptable in highways terms and that suitable mitigation could be provided, if deemed necessary by the local highway authority.
- 2.2 The submitted Pedestrian Route Audit report included details of the recently undertaken pedestrian surveys along Summerhill Road and confirmed, that at present, pedestrian footfall is low. In addition, it included a walking route plan and comparison of walking distances to numerous local facilities and amenities, and in particular the routes likely to be taken by new residents at the development to the following destinations;
  - Premier Store on Wheatsheaf Lane;
  - Bus Stops on First Avenue;
  - Lidl on Old Mold Road; and
  - Gwersyllt Station.
- 2.3 The assessment established that only three of the likely destinations would result in a longer walking time using an alternative route to Summerhill Road, those being the Premier convenience store on Wheatsheaf Lane, the Lidl store on Mold Road and Gwersyllt train station.

- 2.4 The originally submitted TA and subsequently submitted Pedestrian Route Audit referred to potential improvements to the pedestrian environment along Summerhill Road by the provision of a new footway along its eastern side. The scheme however, required the use of land not under the control of the applicant, as it was Council Land, associated with existing residential properties on Bryn Coed.
- 2.5 Following a meeting held with the planning case officer and highways engineer on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> October, it was confirmed that the use of this land (Public Open Space) would not be permitted.
- 2.6 As such, this note will consider the provision of an alternative improvement scheme, which relies solely on land within the extent of adopted highway. The details of the scheme and its merits are set out in the following paragraphs.

### 3. The Revised Proposals

- 3.1 The revised scheme continues to seek to address the deficiencies in the pedestrian network, in order to facilitate safe walking trips to and from the site, which will assist in reducing the use of the private car.
- 3.2 The revised proposals are presented in **Drawing ref no. 1772-F05 REV B**.
- 3.3 The plan shows that pedestrians would be able to use the proposed new 2 metre footway to walk along Top Road, to its junction with Summerhill Road and Bottom Road, taking account of the re-aligned priority controlled junction. Indeed, these works in themselves provide a significant benefit to residents, both new and existing, as currently there is currently no footway provision for the first 200 metres or so of Top Road.
- 3.4 From the junction, a set of dropped kerbs and tactile paving will be provided to safely cross pedestrians onto the eastern side of Summerhill Road. From here, the existing carriageway will be subject to some localised widening, to result in a constant carriageway width of 5.5 metres for a distance of approximately 150 metres.
- 3.5 As can be seen on the plan, this results in a new footway of varying widths ranging from 1.0 metres to 1.2 metres at the northern end, to around 1.7 metres to 1.9 metres at the southern end. At this point, the works retain the previously proposed build-out and short one-way section, so that the footway width can be increased to approximately 2 metres. Immediately to the south of where the proposed works terminate, pedestrians will join the existing footway, which has a width of approximately 1.8 metres.

- 3.6 It is therefore considered that the above revisions to the proposals address the points raised by the highways department at WCBC. It should also be noted that this section of Summerhill Road is lightly trafficked and vehicle speeds will be low, given the 30mph speed limit in place. The reduction in carriageway width is also likely to have a speed reducing effect, thus further enhancing the pedestrian environment.

#### 4. Compliance with Guidance

- 4.1 Notwithstanding the above, it is noted that the footway widths achieved are below those that would normally be provided in instances where there are no constraints or restrains such as the lack of adopted highway land.
- 4.2 However, it is strongly considered that the proposals are still a betterment to the existing situation, and furthermore with reference to Manual for Streets, the proposals comply with current guidance. At Figure 6.8 (page 68), Manual for Streets provides a series of widths and their suitability for different types of users, which can be summarised as follows;
- 0.75 metres - pedestrians with walking aids, such as sticks or walking frames;
  - 0.9 metres - wheelchair users;
  - 1.2 metres - adult and child; and
  - 1.5 metres - two adults and pushchair.
- 4.3 The above criteria are also illustrated in **Figure 4.1** below.

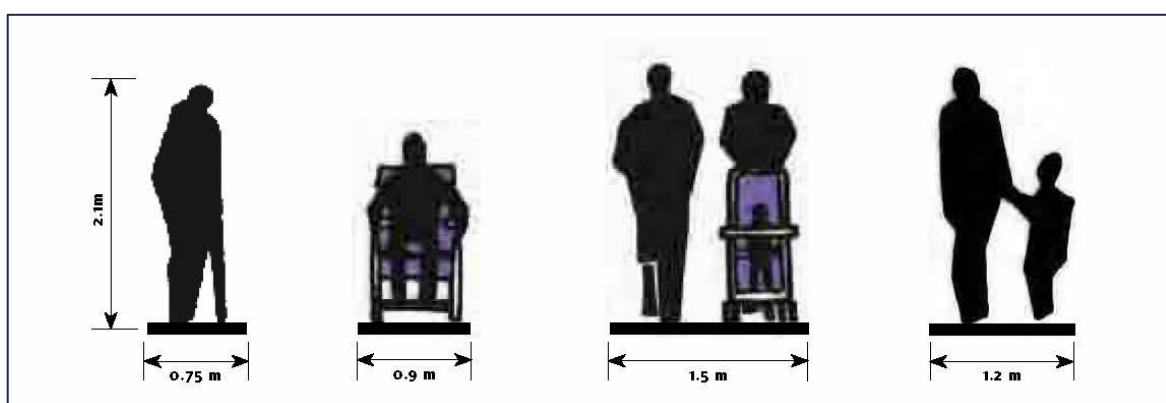


**Figure 4.1 – Extract from Manual for Streets regarding Footway Widths**

- 4.4 As can be seen above, a footway of 0.75 metres is considered acceptable for people walking with the assistance of sticks or walking frames, while 0.9 metres is considered acceptable for wheelchair users. A width of 1.2 metres is deemed suitable for an adult walking, holding the hand of a child and 1.5 metres would be acceptable for two adults walking with a pram or pushchair.
- 4.5 On that basis, it is considered that the revised proposals provide a safe walking route for those wishing to walk along Summerhill Road, albeit that alternative routes are available.

## 5. Potential Reduction in Speed Limit

- 5.1 As previously stated, the existing speed limit along Summerhill Road is 30mph.
- 5.2 Should the local highway authority consider the revised proposals to be acceptable in principle, there may be potential for the speed limit to be reduced further to 20mph, but this would be subject to further discussions.
- 5.3 Such a speed reduction would further contribute to improving road safety and the narrowed carriageway width would assist in this regard. This could be reinforced further with traffic calming measures such as speed humps, should this be deemed necessary by the local highway authority.

## 6. Additional Consideration

- 6.1 It has to be acknowledged that in semi-rural areas, such as Summerhill, and its surrounding area, the existing road and pedestrian infrastructure is often limited, or restricted due to narrow lanes or the topography.
- 6.2 Indeed, it is worth noting that in respect of another application site within the Borough, Vicarage Road, Gresford (Appeal Ref APP/H6955/A/15/3095184) which had a similar issue in terms of pedestrian connectivity and safety, the Inspector reported that;

*“There are no footpaths along Vicarage Lane and there is a high level of on-street parking between the site and the junction with Chester Road to the north. The Council is concerned that this does not provide a safe route for pedestrians from the site to the local shops and bus stops on Chester Road.*

*It is clear from the discussion at the hearing that existing residents on the site walk or use mobility scooters between the site and Chester Road and I observed staff from the Hall and local residents walking along Vicarage Lane, as I also did. Whilst it would be preferable to segregate pedestrians from the main highway the Council confirmed this was not possible.*

*Notwithstanding this, the route is within a 30mph area and the nature of the road together with the parked cars actively slow vehicles. Pedestrians do have to be more aware of the traffic when using a shared surface rather than when there is a dedicated footway and I accept that some residents may choose not to walk to local services. However, I do not consider the situation to be significantly different from numerous roads in rural settlements.*

*Furthermore, I do not consider that the increase in the use of Vicarage Lane by pedestrians as a result of the proposed development would be so significant as to be detrimental to highway safety”.*

- 6.3 As such, no improvements were considered necessary.
- 6.4 It is also worth noting that the above conclusions were also based on a speed limit of 30mph, as is Summerhill Road, although, as already mentioned, there is potential for this to be reduced to 20mph, should the local highway authority be supportive of such an undertaking.
- 6.5 It can therefore be concluded that in respect to this development, while the situation would not be ideal, the provision of a new footway along Summerhill Road and the other works to Top Road and the junction with Bottom Road, will go a long way to improving pedestrian linkages and road safety in the area.

## 7. Conclusions

- 7.1 This Highways Note (v1) has provided additional information relating to the proposed improvements to the pedestrian network in the vicinity of the site and in particular a section of along Summerhill Road, where there is no footway at present.
- 7.2 The traffic count data and figures presented in the originally submitted TA demonstrated that Summerhill Road is lightly trafficked and comprises mainly cars, and light vehicles, with hardly any heavy goods vehicle movements, apart from a small number of buses.

- 7.3 The pedestrian survey results set out in the submitted Pedestrian Route Audit report also confirmed that the existing number of pedestrian walking along Summerhill Road is low and intermittent.
- 7.4 The report also showed that, of all the local facilities and key locations such as the bus stops on First Avenue, the majority of walking routes were only marginally longer using alternative routes, when compared to using Summerhill Road.
- 7.5 Residents at the new development will be informed of these alternative routes and these will be promoted through the Travel Plan. The habits of existing residents in the area are more difficult to influence, but clearly safer routes are available to use, should pedestrians wish to do so.
- 7.6 The revised plan (1772-05 REV B) showing the revised footway improvements take account of all the issues raised by WBCB and demonstrate that these matters have been satisfactorily addressed. The new scheme can be accommodated within adopted highway land and does not require the use of the Public Open Space, as the previously proposed scheme.
- 7.7 The amended scheme presented in this note will be a betterment to the existing situation, thus having a positive impact on road safety and will ensure that a safe walking route is provided to all local facilities and amenities in the village, should people choose to do so using Summerhill Road.
- 7.8 In conclusion, it is considered that taking account of the originally submitted TA, the additional information provided within the Pedestrian Route Audit report data and the amended drawing that has been provided within this note, demonstrate that the proposals are acceptable in highway and pedestrian terms and will not give rise to any road safety issues.

## PLANS



MACBRYDE HOMES

PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT  
LAND OFF TOP ROAD, SUMMERHILL  
WREXHAM  
SITE LOCATION PLAN

**croft**  
Transport Solutions

Email: info@crofts.co.uk  
Tel: 0161 667 3746  
Web: www.crofts.co.uk

9 Jordan Street,  
Manchester  
M15 4PY

|        |          |          |          |        |                 |           |
|--------|----------|----------|----------|--------|-----------------|-----------|
| DRAWN: | DATE:    | CHECKED: | DATE:    | SCALE: | DRAWING NUMBER: | REVISION: |
| SM     | 30.03.17 | MTC      | 30.03.17 | N.T.S  | 1772-01         | .         |

## DRAWINGS





**Croft Transport Planning & Design**

340 Deansgate

Manchester

M3 4LY

**0161 837 7380**

**[croftts.co.uk](http://croftts.co.uk)**

Offices across the UK

