Nottinghamshire County Council

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT
HIGHWAY REPORT ON PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT

DISTRICT:	Ashfield	Date received	19/03/2020
OFFICER:	Robbie Steel		
PROPOSAL:	Outline planning application (with all matters reserved except access) for a residential development of up to 300 dwellings with associated infrastructure and landscaping.	D.C. No.	V/2020/0184
LOCATION:	Land Off, Ashland Road West, Sutton in Ashfield		
APPLICANT:			

The above application seeks outline permission for up to 300 dwellings, with only access being considered at this stage.

A masterplan has been submitted along with the application. The indicated two points of access are triggered by a development of over 150 dwellings. Whilst there are two points of access, they only serve a very small proportion of the site and there is a single point of access internally within the site serving around 260 dwellings, as identified below:

An additional concern is that the majority of this layout does not attenuate speeds to a maximum of 20mph by use of junctions and bends at 60 metre spacings. The layout above would require vertical traffic calming which is not acceptable, if it can be avoided.

The site levels indicate a relatively significant gradient over the land. The applicant is advised that we require roads of the maximum gradients as set out in the Nottinghamshire Highway Design Guide for them to be considered for adoption.

However, only the issue in respect to the single point of access and required road widths has bearing on the determination of this application. We have the following comments on access in general:

Sustainability

The distance to the nearest bus stop is indicated within the TA at 100m from either access. However, they are both in the region of 200 metres away and this will also mean that they will be in the region of 600 metres away from the extremities of the site, which exceeds the maximum recommended walking distance to bus stops. It is also significant that the bus service runs just twice a day, neither within peak hours. It is therefore suggested that the LPA consider the sustainability of this site as the bus service is considered poor and will encourage reliance on private motor vehicles.

The nearest bus stops with a frequent bus service are on Huthwaite Road and are around a kilometre away from the extremities of the site. Given that the TA identifies that there are a minimum of 13 peak hour bus journeys associated with the development, (based on the trip rates presented – minimum referred to as some of the identified train journeys will be bus journeys first), we require a pedestrian audit of the routes to these bus stops, with consideration given to how pedestrians will safely cross the B6026 Huthwaite Road. Provision of suitable measures is likely to address any road safety concerns in respect to this.

Trip Rates

TRICS trip rates have been submitted for consideration. The selected sites have been ranked and the 4th on the list has been selected, which is above the 85th%ile in terms of 2-way trip rates. Whilst the 2-way trip rates of this site are in the region of what we would anticipate in this area, the selected site appears unusual in that it is split fairly evenly between arrivals and departures when compared to the rest of the sites within the top 10. The AM peak has an average percentage of departures in the am peak of 72%, whilst the selected site has a 55% departure rate. Whilst not as marked, the arrival rate in the PM peak is 52% and the rest of the sites within the top 10 have an average arrival rate of 63%. The trip rate proposed is therefore not considered acceptable.

As individual selection of a site is not recommended by the TRICS Good Practice Guide and in addition, this one appears to share very few characteristics with the site in question, the 85th%ile trip rate should be used instead. This is a standard way to derive a suitable trip rate. This has a lesser two-way trip rate but more realistic splits of arrivals and departures.

Distribution/Assignment

Whilst we do not agree the trip rates and therefore the numbers of vehicles generated by the development, the extents of the study area are not wide enough, even based on that submitted.

Furthermore, the distribution has been based on existing counts at the junctions. Whilst these were previously accepted, this is thought unlikely to be representative of the development flows. Below are some examples of why this is not considered appropriate:

- A significant proportion of vehicles travel along Highfield Road, but this is not a likely route for vehicles to travel to possible workplace destinations from the development, according to online route mapping tools.
- 17 vehicles travel west along Ashland Road West from Highfield Road, but this increases to 52 when passing the site, which suggests the majority of people leaving the existing residential areas use the junction of Ashland Road West with Huthwaite Road. Conversely, of the 92 vehicles which travel east along this road from Huthwaite Road, relatively few make it as far as Highfield Road, which again suggests that the Ashland Road West junction is used as the main access in/out of this area by the existing residents.
- Vehicles have been assigned to turn left from the development and turn right at the junction of Westbourne Road / Huthwaite Road and then travel straight across at the junction of Ashland Road West, effectively driving in a loop. This will not happen and similarly vehicles turning left into Westbourne Road to access the development will not, as they will have turned left into Ashland Road West.
- Vehicles have been assigned to turn right into Westbourne Road – however, this is unlikely. This is a longer and more convoluted route and it is more likely that existing vehicles doing so are accessing other parts of the network, such as Highfield Road where it is demonstrated the majority of vehicles turn.

  The greater use of the Ashland Road West junction is supported given that the route using Westbourne Road is more convoluted because:

- It has 15 traffic calming features (of which 2 are priority features) as opposed to the 5 towards the Ashland Road West / Huthwaite Road junction.
- Online maps indicate that the route to the junction of Huthwaite Road / Westbourne Drive takes 2 minutes if using the junction of Ashland Road West, whereas it takes 3 minutes if using Westbourne Road itself. (The routes are the same distance at 0.8 metres).

(The above is not exhaustive and are just a number of examples)

In this instance it is considered more appropriate to assign using MSOA data to identify destinations and assign using an online map-based route planning facility with the day set to a suitable neutral date and the time set to a suitable time within the peak hour.

Study Area

The TA indicates that the impact of traffic on the surrounding highway network has been examined within a study area previously agreed with the local highway authority and consisted of four off-site junctions.

The factors behind this previously being agreed are not known, but the quantum of this proposed development is 50% larger than that application and it appears likely that the additional traffic will have an impact on junctions further afield.

As a general rule, we require any junction with 30 or more 2-way vehicles arising from the development to be assessed, or junctions where development traffic increases a particular movement by 5% or more. We also reserve the right to request a sensitivity test where the above parameters are not strictly met.

Whilst the trip generation and subsequent distribution/assignment is not yet agreed, the current information indicates that there are 71 2-way vehicles travelling east from Westbourne Road and 105 travelling west from Ashland Road West. It is likely therefore that at least the next subsequent junction in either direction will need assessing, and perhaps some of those further afield, on the basis of assessment as set out above.

Please note that we are unlikely to require re-assessments at the junctions of Ashland Road/Highfield Road and Riley Road/Westbourne Road and may not require re-assessment at the junction of Huthwaite Road/Westbourne Road, if the assignment is as anticipated.

Committed Development

The relevant committed developments to consider as part of this application will be determined by the agreed study area and it may be necessary to consider developments in both Mansfield and Bolsover Districts.

Assessment year

The TA refers to the Guidance on Transport Assessment suggesting the use of an assessment year of five years after the date of registration of a planning application. It actually says that the network should be assessed for a period of *no less* than five years and should development take place over a longer period, it would be appropriate to extend this.

The TA was prepared in 2019 and in anticipation of the application being lodged in the same year, assessed the year 2024, some five years.

We do not agree that this development is of the scale which warrants the minimum assessment year (and in any case as the application was lodged in 2020, this would require a 2025 assessment year). Of the 300 proposed dwellings, if 40 are built a year, this would take 7.5 years, and the assessment year should be revised to reflect this. In light of the current situation, which may delay the start of developments, a 10-year assessment period is likely to be more appropriate.

Access

As identified initially, the majority of the site is accessed by a single point of access. To overcome this issue, if the layout is not amended to provide 2 points of access to areas with over 150 dwellings, the length of road as far as the loop would need to be 'over-engineered' to ensure that vehicles can pass in the event of an incident.

Please note that the requirements in respect to this take up a relatively significant swathe of development land as we require a 7.3 metre carriageway flanked by 3 metre footways – an overall corridor of 13.3 metres as opposed to 10 metres (for a 6-metre carriageway).

For clarity, the length which would need the 'over-engineered' treatment is highlighted below. The required width impacts on the junction and will therefore need to be considered as part of this application.

In light of the above, whilst supportive of the general principle of development here, we are not able to support the development currently as the impact on the Highway network has not been assessed and amendments may be required to the site access junctions.

HDC SH 08-04-2020