

Technical Note

Project Number: T19595

Project: North Hinckley

Title: Highways Update

Date: 10.05.23

Prepared By: JC

Distribution List: HBBC

Floor 1B
4 Temple Row
Birmingham
B2 5HG

Background

- 1.1 Hub Transport Planning Ltd has been commissioned by Richborough Estates Ltd to provide transport advice to support the planning application for a residential development north of Hinckley. The land in question is located to the north of the A47, east of Stoke Road.
- 1.2 The outline planning application is for the erection of up to 475 dwellings, including public open space, land reserved for a primary school together with future expansion land (use Class F1(a)), landscaping, drainage, and associated infrastructure.
- 1.3 Following notification from the applicant of their intention to appeal the planning application for non-determination (ref. 22/00318/OUT), Leicestershire County Council (LCC), as local highway authority, issued a consultation response objecting to the application. The reasons for refusal are as follows:

'1. The Applicant has failed to demonstrate that safe and suitable access for all users would be provided to the development and the proposal, if permitted, could consequently result in an unacceptable form of development and could lead to dangers for highway users contrary to paragraph 110 and 111 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

2. The Applicant has failed to demonstrate that any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be mitigated, contrary to paragraph 110 and 111 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).'
- 1.4 Following LCC's response, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (HBBC) submitted a decision notice which listed three reasons for refusal, two of which corresponded with the reasons listed above. The third reason related to the applicant not having entered into a signed Section 106 agreement.
- 1.5 As part of LCC's consultation response, it was acknowledged that LCC have been actively engaging with the applicant team following formal submission of the application. LCC also acknowledged that the applicant team has actively engaged with relevant stakeholders such as National Highways and Warwickshire County Council. They also acknowledge that assessment work is ongoing in relation to the Pan Regional Transport Model (PRTM) and whilst this work continues to progress positively, it has yet to be concluded. LCC state:

'Therefore, whilst the LHA would expect that conclusion of the transport assessment work may well lead to a positive response being forthcoming, regrettably at this stage the LHA has no alternative than to advise refusal on the highway grounds identified above. The LHA will however continue to work proactively with the applicant team in order to resolve the issues and assessment work currently outstanding where possible.'

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- 1.6 The purpose of this note is to set out the work undertaken to date and identify the additional assessments that will be carried out as part of the planning application re-submission to overcome the two highways' reasons for refusal. The applicant is confident that a positive outcome is achievable by working proactively with LCC and other stakeholders.

Work Completed To Date

- 1.7 A Transport Assessment Scoping Report (TASR) was prepared by Hub Transport Planning in December 2021 setting out the geographical and technical scope of the assessment for a scheme consisting of 500 dwellings with access off Stoke Road.
- 1.8 In January 2022, LCC indicated that it would require the Transport Assessment (TA) to use the PRTM in assessing the potential traffic impacts on the local highway network.
- 1.9 To enable the planning application to be validated a TA was prepared based on the initial scope of works proposed. This involved more traditional methods of traffic distribution and assignment based on census data and undertaking capacity assessments based on traffic count data collected in 2021.
- 1.10 The initial TA submitted as part of the application set out the proposed site access arrangements. Vehicular and pedestrian access is proposed via a new three-arm roundabout on Stoke Road (Drawing - T19595.001 Rev C). The site access arm of the roundabout has been designed to a width of 6.75m. The existing footway/cycleway on both sides of Stoke Road will be extended to the site access and along the central spine road through the site. Dropped kerb crossings with tactile paving will be provided at the access roundabout.
- 1.11 Further pedestrian access is provided to connect with the A47 Normandy Way, together with two Toucan crossing points, with one crossing aligning with the existing Public Right of Way that crosses the application site. A second crossing is located between Cornfield and Nelson Drive, to connect to the existing footway/cycleway infrastructure on the southern side of the A47. The crossings will be staggered to minimise delay to traffic on the A47 Normandy Way. Details of the proposed toucan crossings are provided within the TA (Drawings: T19595.002 Rev D and T19595.006).
- 1.12 To mitigate the potential impact of the proposed development, an improvement scheme was proposed at the A47 Normandy Way/Stoke Road roundabout, which involves widening the exit lanes on the A47 arms of the junction to allow the lane designations on the approach arm to be amended to allow two ahead lanes. A mitigation scheme is also proposed for the A47/Ashby Road traffic signal junction, the scheme provides an additional right turn lane on the A47 western arm of the junction as well as an additional left turn lane on the Ashby Road southern arm. Additionally, improvements are proposed at the junction, to provide a staggered pedestrian crossing on the A47 west arm and both of the Ashby Road arms (current provision is uncontrolled pedestrian facilities only).
- 1.13 The applicant also explored the potential for footway improvements along Stoke Road between the site and Stoke Golding; a village which lies approximately 2km to the north. Whilst the appeal site does not lie within Stoke Golding Parish, the Parish Council were approached as part of the pre-application consultation exercise. Whilst the extent of the adopted highway would not allow for a fully compliant pedestrian/cycle route to be provided along the length of Stoke Road, Hub Transport has prepared and costed a scheme for the footpath improvements which have been shared with the Parish Council and were well-received. These were formally shared with the LPA as part of the original application with the intention that they would be secured by condition and the necessary works undertaken by the developer, rather than via a S106 contribution.
- 1.14 The TA also demonstrated that the proposed development benefited from good access to local facilities including shops and schools.

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- 1.15 Stage 1 Road Safety Audits were also provided to support the site access proposals and mitigation schemes. The audits carried out have not raised any significant issues, those that have been raised can be mitigated at detailed design stage.
- 1.16 Overall, the original TA report concluded that safe and suitable access could be provided for all users, and the cumulative impacts of the development are not severe and suitable mitigated could be provided where appropriate.
- 1.17 Nevertheless, following LCC's request for the PRTM to be used to inform the TA, Hub Transport Planning prepared a PRTM scoping report to agree the scope of the strategic modelling assessment with LCC and National Highways (NH). This was agreed with LCC and NH in September 2022 following submission of a 'Base Year Model Review and Refinements' report which deemed the model suitable to use in this area.
- 1.18 Following this the model forecasting report was prepared by Aecom. This set out the predicted development impacts on a strategic level and identified the Area of Influence. Whilst not the subject of the planning application, the forecast modelling also assessed the potential impacts of a wider development site consisting of 1,450 dwellings and provision of a link road between Stoke Road and Ashby Road.
- 1.19 Further consultation was carried out with LCC, NHs and Warwickshire County Council (WCC) regarding the next steps. As the model is strategic in nature it was agreed that there is still a need to undertake standalone junction modelling to determine the impact of the development, however, this will be based on outputs from the PRTM.

Next Steps

- 1.20 To overcome the two reasons for refusal, an updated TA report will be provided. The TA will present the results of the PRTM assessment as well as the results of the standalone junction modelling as agreed with LCC and NH.
- 1.21 Following submission of the PRTM Forecast Report, further consultation has been carried out with LCC, NH and WCC to agree the off-site junctions that require further assessment. It is agreed that the following off-site junctions will be assessed:
 - A47/Stoke Road roundabout
 - A47/Ashby Road traffic signals
 - A47/Wykin Road roundabout
 - A47/Roston Drive/Triumph Access roundabout
 - Stoke Road/Tudor Road Priority Junction
 - Stoke Road/Hollycroft/Wykin Road mini-roundabout
 - A47/B4688/The Common roundabout
 - Stoke Road/Hinckley Road mini-roundabout
 - A5 Longshoot / Dodwells

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- A47 / B581 Station Road (Elmesthorpe).
 - B590/Park Road (Hinckley)
 - Burbage Road / B4669/Brookside/Elm Tree Drive (Hinckley)
 - Leicester Road / Spa Lane (Hinckley)
- 1.22 Following a meeting held with LCC, NH and WCC on the 18th April 2023, a technical note was issued setting out the methodology that would be used to adjust observed traffic count data at the off-site junctions listed. This methodology takes account of cumulative traffic growth in the area as a result of committed developments.
- 1.23 In addition, it was agreed that the Longshoot and Dodwells junctions would be assessed using the approved VISSIM model provided by NH. The technical note issued set out the cordon traffic flow scenarios that would be used to inform the model.
- 1.24 As part of the planning application re-submission, the TA will set out the proposed mitigation strategy for the site. This will include a review of the proposed mitigation included in the original TA.
- 1.25 Sensitivity testing will be carried out at the proposed site access junction and A47/Stoke Road roundabout to consider the cumulative impacts of the potential wider development scheme in a future year of 2036. This will ensure the access proposals are future proofed.

Summary

- 1.26 In summary the revised TA report will include the following information:
- The site access strategy will be set out for vehicles and non-motorised users;
 - A summary of the PRTM Forecast modelling results will be presented;
 - A summary of the standalone junction modelling results will be provided for all junctions under assessment;
 - A summary of the Dodwells/Longshoot VISSIM results will be provided;
 - The proposed mitigation strategy at off-site junctions will be presented and assessed, along with accompanying drawings where appropriate. This will also set out proposed improvements to the sustainable transport network.
 - Sensitivity testing will be carried out at the proposed site access and A47/Stoke Road junction.
 - Updated Personal Injury Accident data will be analysed; and
 - A review of the sustainable transport options in the vicinity of the site will be undertaken.
- 1.27 The updated TA report will demonstrate that safe and suitable access can be provided for all users, and that the development impacts are not severe and are in line with paragraphs 110 and 111 of the NPPF.