HIGHWAYS AGENCY

Our ref: P426913
Your ref: 09/00767/COU

13 NOV 2009

C3
5 Broadway
Broad Street
Birmingham B15 1BL

Direct Line: 0121 687 2502
Fax: 0121 678 8211

Richard Wright
Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council
Council Offices
Argents Mead
Hinckley
Leicestershire
LE10 1BZ

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
12 NOV 2009
RECEIVED

10 November 2009

Dear Richard,

A5 STRETTON HOUSE, WATLING STREET, BURBAGE, HINCKLEY LE10 3HZ

I am in receipt of a planning application dated 27th October 2009, regarding a change of use of the existing dwelling house to a place of worship and teaching, day centre, living accommodation and formation of parking area at the above location.

This proposal has been comprehensively assessed on several previous occasions and upon reading this latest submission it does not appear to offer any new matters in relation to addressing the highway safety issues highlighted in previous correspondence. Therefore, whilst the applicants have submitted a Transport Statement, Design and Access statement, an Events Management Plan and a Travel Plan, there is little information to add further to previous correspondence on this matter. I will however set the outstanding matters out in turn below, for ease of reference.

Trip Generation

As in previous submissions, the applicants have stated that the proposed development will have weekly congregations of around 40-50 people on Sundays between 1pm and 4pm. There will also be visits by the spiritual leader lasting 10 days, 4–5 times a year. During these events the development is likely to attract up to 200 people. The applicant's transport consultants, DTA, have estimated that during these events the vehicular trip generation of the proposed development will be approximately 80–100 vehicles per hour, based on an assumption that there will be an occupancy rate of 2.5 people per vehicle attending the event. In addition to Stretton House, the existing five bed roomed property, there are 4 existing properties on site, which DTA envisage will generate 170 vehicle movements a week.

I wish to correct the Transport Statement's misinterpretation of TD 41/95 Table 2/2, relating to the type of junction required for the envisaged traffic generation. The Statement refers to a capacity for 300 houses: this should be 300 trips – equivalent to up to 30 houses. Nevertheless, it is agreed that Layout 3 is the appropriate junction type for these proposals.

POSITIVE ABOUT DISABLED PEOPLE
INVESTOR IN PEOPLE
Department for Transport

The Transport Statement does not contain an evidence based approach to substantiate the figures used to estimate trip generation for the development. However, given the numbers of people likely to be attending the events, it is likely the events will result a significant intensification of use of the access from its existing residential use. Therefore, in accordance with Government Policy as set out in Circular 02/2007, the existing access must be improved to meet the required Standards, as set out in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB).

Access Arrangements/Visibility

DTA have stated that the development will be served by an improved access. They have stated that the visibility at the proposed access accords with the visibility requirements of the DMRB Standard TD41/05. The drawing provided (DTA Drawing 10123-05) shows the achievable visibility splays, which shows the visibility 'Y' distance to the west of the access measured to the centreline of the A5, as well as the nearside kerb line. As indicated previously to DTA, the Standards require measurement of visibility splays to the nearside kerb line.

The applicants indicate that visibility to the nearside kerb line can be achieved, as required by DMRB, but this is on the proviso that the hedge line is properly managed. The Highways Agency's previous experience has highlighted difficulties with this approach, such that it is not considered a workable solution. **I therefore require further information from the applicants showing whether the visibility splay to the nearside kerb line could be achieved by replacement of the existing hedge with fencing, and showing that the splay can be maintained within the highway boundary.**

I can also confirm that the required 'X' distance setback for visibility measurements must be 4.5 metres, as previously stated, It is indicated in the Transport Statement at Para 3.6 that a setback 'x' distance of 4.5 is not necessarily required, however DMRB TD41/95 Para 2.21 states: *The 2.4m set back relates to normally only one vehicle wishing to join the trunk road at one time. The 4.5m covers the situation where two light vehicles may want to accept the same gap in the trunk road traffic.* The 4.5m standard therefore applies to this proposal.

Accident information

The applicants appear to assume from the accident information data that the road has a good safety record, which has seen improvements since the safety works were undertaken in 2005. I would wish to highlight that this assumption is not a reason for allowing an intensification of an existing junction that does not meet highway Standards.

Whilst accident data indicates that a fatal accident occurred prior to the 2005 highway improvement works, there has been a serious accident since the works, in 2008. Also several of the accidents have been in the proximity of the existing entrance and involved rear end shunts with stationary traffic. The likelihood of further stationary traffic on the A5 carriageway would be increased by this proposal, with consequent safety concerns.

It should be noted there is already a traffic sign indicating there are queues likely, again this is not a reason to allow the proposal, as they may claim a sign already exists highlighting/warning for motorists to expect stationary traffic.

The likelihood of accidents occurring is made greater by the unlit nature of the road, and that the proposal has the likelihood of attracting visitors/motorists who are unfamiliar with the area.

Travel Plan

The Highways Agency welcomes the principle of a travel plan and traffic management strategy in order to manage the traffic entering the site. The applicant proposes to implement various methods during the 'events' including the provision of signs, notification of local authorities, media and marshals on site. There are however a number of issues which remain to be addressed in order to make these sustainable travel strategies acceptable to the Highways Agency.

The Highways Agency's primary concern with the travel plan is the suggestion that traffic travelling from the west along the A5 should be routed via M69 Junction 2 this traffic would then U-turn and travel back up the A5 to the site. This has been suggested in order to avoid an increase in right turn movements into the access from the A5 eastbound. However, as previously advised in my letter of 10th February 2009 to DTA, that proposal would require U-turning on the M69 junction, which would not be acceptable to the Highways Agency. An increase number of turning movements on the circulatory carriageway junction due to the proposed development is likely to be detrimental to the operation of the junction. The Highways Agency will not accept the use of the motorway network as a convenient means of resolving local issues.

The applicants indicate the presence of a no right turn sign on the A5 eastbound carriageway: I can confirm that no such sign exists. Furthermore, the applicants are not able to erect temporary signing upon the network or allow individuals to direct traffic upon the network. This issue arose during the previous period of operation of the site with its proposed use, with problems noted by the public and highlighted to the Local Authority and the Highways Agency.

I note that the nearest bus stop is over 800m away and Hinckley railway station in is more than 3km away. However DTA indicate it is their intention to provide a mini shuttle bus service from the railway station during events. **It may be possible that similar provision could be made from a remote car park, thereby minimising the intensification of use of the existing site access. I would therefore welcome further information from the applicant on whether such an option has been considered, or will be investigated. Such an option would necessitate further information on how access to the site would be controlled in favour of the remote car park/shuttle bus.**

One of the proposals to overcome the matter of traffic queuing upon the mainline A5 is to create an internal vehicle gyratory system to eliminate the pinch point between the trees. That would appear to be a workable solution within the site itself, but does not assist with the wider issue of traffic entering the access.

The Transport Statement refers to the accessibility of the site to pedestrians and states that there are existing footways in the vicinity of the proposed development. However the crossing over the A5 is a considerable distance from the access to the site. The A5 is one of the most congested routes in the region, hence the current footway facilities do not represent an attractive alternative the private car.

Conclusion

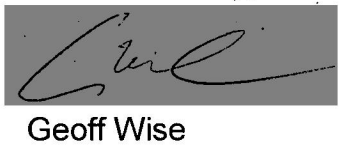
Given the lack of new information submitted with this application, the Highways Agency has no option but to reiterate previous concerns that this proposal is unsatisfactory in relation to highway safety issues on a heavily trafficked road that has a history of accidents. The proposal has the potential to generate additional traffic with a proportion of visitors not being familiar with the area.

Whilst the applicants have submitted a draft traffic management strategy, it should be noted the 'special events' are proposed to last up to 10 days, 4 to 5 times a year, which could be up to 50 days a year when the A5 is affected by an increase in traffic at a junction that does not meet the minimum standards. I would reiterate that the intensification of use of an access which does not accord to the standards outlined in the DMRB is contrary to Trunk Road policy as set out in DfT Circular 02/2007.

In the absence of information on how the access will be brought up to the required standard, as previously discussed, the Highways Agency does not have sufficient information on which to make a substantive response to this application. The points where further information is required are highlighted in **bold** above.

Therefore, under the Town and Country Planning General Development (Procedures) Order 1995 (as amended by ODPM Circular 08/2005) the information submitted is incomplete and the 21-day response period cannot start. I therefore attach a TR110 form directing that permission not be granted for a period of 6 months, to allow the applicant time to address the Highways Agency's concerns. I would be grateful if you would pass this letter on to the applicants so they may address the points raised.

Yours sincerely,



Geoff Wise
Planning Manager
Network Operations East Midlands
Email: geoffrey.wise@highways.gsi.gov.uk

HIGHWAYS AGENCY

An Executive Agency of
The Department for Transport

TR110 (May 2007)

Developments Affecting Trunk Roads and Special Roads
Highways Agency Response to an Application for Planning Permission

From: Divisional Director, Network Operations, East Midlands Region, Highways Agency.

To: Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Council's Reference: 09/00767/COU

Referring to the notification of a planning applications dated 27th October 2009, your reference 09/00767/COU, in connection with the A5 Stretton House, Watling Street, Hinckley, Leicestershire, notice is hereby given under the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 that the Secretary of State for Transport:-

~~a) offers no objection;~~

~~b) recommends that planning permission should either be refused, or granted only subject to conditions~~

~~c) directs conditions to be attached to any planning permission which may be granted;~~

~~d) directs that planning permission is not granted for an indefinite period of time;~~

e) directs that planning permission not be granted for a specified period (see Annex A).

(delete as appropriate)

Signed by authority of the Secretary of State for Transport

Date: 10 November 2009	**Signature:**
Name: Geoff Wise	**Position: Planning Manager**
The Highways Agency: C3, 5 Broadway Broad Street Birmingham B15 1BL	

Annex A

Reason(s) for the direction given at b), c) or d) overleaf and the period of time for a direction at e) when directing that the application is not granted for a specified period:

Period:

For a period of six months from this date.

Reason:

To allow the applicant time to address the issues raised in the attached letter.

To ensure that the A5 Trunk Road continues to serve its purpose as part of a national system of routes for through traffic in accordance with Section 10 (2) of the Highways Act 1980 by minimising disruption on the trunk road resulting from traffic entering and emerging from the application site and in the interests of road safety.