

Substantive response of the Local Highway Authority to a planning consultation received under The Development Management Order.



Response provided under the delegated authority of the Director of Environment & Transport.

APPLICATION DETAILS

Planning Application Number: 24/00657/FUL

Highway Reference Number: 2024/0657/04/H/R3

Application Address: Barnhills Farm Merrylees Road Thornton Coalville Leicestershire LE67 1AP

Application Type: Full

Description of Application: Re-consultation. Erection of two storey childcare facility with ancillary services and associated external play areas and animal interaction areas.

GENERAL DETAILS

Planning Case Officer: Sullivan Archer

Applicant: Mr and Mrs Gary and Amy Knight

County Councillor: Cllr Peter Bedford

Parish: Bagworth & Thornton

Road Classification: Class C

Substantive Response provided in accordance with article 22(5) of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015:

The Local Highway Authority does not consider that the application as submitted fully assesses the highway impact of the proposed development and further information is required as set out in this response. Without this information the Local Highway Authority is unable to provide final highway advice on this application.

Advice to Local Planning Authority

Background

The Local Highway Authority (LHA) has been reconsulted on the above full planning application following the submission of the following additional/revised information:

- Access Alterations drawing number RHC-24-155-01 revision C;
- Swept Path Analysis (Layout) drawing number RHC-24-155-03 revision C;
- Swept Path Analysis (Farm Vehicle) drawing number RHC-24-155-04 revision C; and
- Transport Statement revision 03 dated 13 December 2024.

The LHA has reviewed this information and provides detailed comments below, this response should be read in conjunction with the previous highway observations dated 17 September 2024, 14 November 2024, and 06 December 2024.

Site Access

The submitted Access Alterations drawing number RHC-24-155-01 revision C details that the existing access will be amended to provide a 6m wide bell-mouth junction with 10m radii.

In addition, the LHA note that the Transport Note states: *“In regards to the kissing gate proposed along the Right of Way (RoW), a minimum two metre width will be safeguarded for RoW users, as shown on Drawing Number RHC-24-155-01b”*.

Road Safety Audit

The Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA1) identified that there was a lack of clear circulation for traffic within the site which may result in vehicles queuing or parking on Merrylees Road. This confirmed that while the swept path analysis showed that vehicles will be able to enter the site in a safe manner, it was noted that only six parent drop-off / collect bays are to be provided and that these are all to the north of the site access.

Given the number of places available to children (72) there is a concern that in peak times, the flow of vehicles into the site will be impeded by the movements of vehicles into and out of the proposed pick up / collect bays, resulting in vehicles queuing back onto Merrylees Road. This in turn may lead to overtaking movements where visibility is limited, risking offside to offside collisions.

The Applicant has responded to the problem in the RSA and compared the parking provision to that for a similar size nursery (68 children), Markfield Day Nursery, Leicester Road, Markfield.

The other nursery has 23 vehicles accessing the site between 7:30 and 9:00, 18 of these being in the highway peak hours (8:00-9:00) and 17 vehicles accessing the site between 16:10 and 18:00 with 12 of these being in the highway peak hours (17:00-18:00). There was a maximum parking accumulation of nine parked vehicles (08:10).

The Applicants has concluded that the proposed number of drop off spaces within this site (12) is more than suitable to cater for anticipated demand and avoid vehicles queuing back towards Merrylees Road.

However, the LHA highlight that the number of vehicles recorded within the parking study carried out at Markfield Day Nursery does not match the level of proposed trip generation previously provided by the Applicants which predicted that the proposed development would generate 37 two-way trips in the morning peak hour and 41 two-way trips in the evening peak hour. This information suggests that the trips associated with the site would be more than the movements listed above.

In addition, the LHA highlight that the existing nursery would not be comparable to the proposed development in terms of location and accessibility. This is due to the example site being in a built up, predatorially residential area which is supported by footways and street lighting which would facilitate transport to and from the nursery by sustainable means. In addition, there is a on street parking located along Leicester Road, Markfield.

Given the above, the LHA remain concerned that in peak times, the flow of vehicles into the site will be impeded by the movements of vehicles into and out of the proposed pick up / collect bays, resulting in vehicles queuing back onto Merrylees Road

Tracking Drawings / Swept Path Analysis (SPA)

The LHA has reviewed the submitted Swept Path Analysis (Layout) drawing number RHC-24-155-03 revision C and Swept Path Analysis (Farm Vehicle) drawing number RHC-24-155-04 revision C and are now satisfied that these vehicles can access and egress the site in a forward gear.

Vehicular Visibility Splays

The LHA note that Access Alterations drawing number RHC-24-155-01 revision A shows that visibility splays of 2.4m by 87m can be achieved to the north of the access and 2.4m by 120m can be achieved to the south of the proposed bell mouth junction. These visibility splays would be suitable for 85th percentile speeds of 40mph and 44mph retrospective, however no evidence has been submitted that the proposed visibility splays would be sufficient to cater for the recorded 85th percentile speeds in this location.

The access is located on a curved road and the visibility splay crosses the carriageway centreline. However, visibility has not been evidenced in accordance with Figure 3.9 of DMRB CD123. The LHA are concerned that the proposed visibility splay as currently shown could result in a significant blind spot within the visibility splay.

Lastly the LHA are aware of historic speeds within the vicinity of the site which indicate that speeds in the vicinity of the site might be higher than the Applicant anticipates. Therefore, the LHA is not satisfied that the proposed visibility splays would be sufficient and should undertake a speed survey to understand the latest speeds near the proposed development.

The Applicants should be advised that a permit is required to carry out any traffic count/speed survey on the public highway within Leicestershire. A permit can be obtained by contacting ndi@leics.gov.uk. Alternatively, Leicestershire County Council offer a data collection service including a large traffic count database. For details of the services available please contact ndi@leics.gov.uk

Summary

Given the above, the Applicants have currently failed to demonstrate that a safe and suitable access has been provided for all users in accordance with paragraph 115 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Internal Layout

Childcare Facility

As per the LHAs previous response dated 17 September 2024, 14 November 2024, and 06 December 2024 the LHA would not support the use of tandem parking to support the user type being applied for.

The LHA would query how the Applicants intend to manage these spaces and highlight that should the tandem spaces be used by staff; this could require multiple staff to leave the building to move cars which may neither be appropriate or practical.

Given the above, the LHA do not consider that the current proposals demonstrate that adequate parking provision has been provided to serve the proposed development.

Public Right of Way

The LHA raised concerns over the impact of the proposed development on the PROW within its previous observations dated 17 September 2024 which have not been addressed by the Applicants within the additional information provided.

These will need to be addressed by the Applicants.

Transport Sustainability and Travel Plan

The submitted Travel Plan (TP) currently does not demonstrate a deliverable commitment to viable alternative modes of sustainable transport/active travel. Although it is appreciated the site is in a rural location some of the suggested alternative options to car use would not be viable to many due to the road network/traffic speed/lack of street lighting in the area.

As highlighted previously, the application site suffers from poor transport sustainability and cannot be reached safely by walking, cycling, or public transport routes. Therefore, users, visitors and staff are highly likely to be dependent on private motorised transport to visit the site.

There is a suggestion in the plan that many staff and users of the site will be local, more data to confirm this is the case is needed.

It is stated that grass verges could be used as a means of access to site, possibly by staff but again this may be unlikely especially in wetter/winter months and this is the same for access to the site via unpaved walking and cycling routes. These may be possible during some months of the year but cannot be considered a meaningful alternative.

Again, due the site location cycling may not be an option for many but can still be explored. Adult cycling courses as opposed to Bikeability (which is for school age children in the main) should be explore and offered. The option of offering the 'Cycle to work' scheme is noted and encouraged.

Site users/staff who are competent, confident cyclists may choose to cycle so to encourage this shower/changing facilities should be provided on site.

A cycle store is shown on the submitted Access Alterations drawing number RHC-24-155-01 revision C. The LHA also notes that paragraph 4.12 of the Submitted Travel Plan states the following:

4.12 safe and secure cycle parking will be provided within the site to meet the demands of the users of the site (parents and staff). The use of cycle parking will be monitored as part of the overall monitoring strategy on the site. The cycle stores for the staff members will be located for easy access to Headstone Drive where the majority of cycle trips are expected to route.

Whilst the LHA support the provision of safe and secure cycle parking, the Applicant is advised that cycle parking should also be undercover. The LHA are also unaware of a Headstone Drive being located in the vicinity of the site and seek clarification over this reference.

Car share is likely to be the most viable option and there should be more evidence in the travel plan setting out what initial meaningful thoughts has been given to this as an option, for how many

and how this could work in practice/would be set up for both staff and site users and how this will be managed going forward.

Despite the site having served bus stops within walking distance, due to the rural nature of the site, the lack of footpaths makes it difficult to access these stops from the site. On this basis, to ensure the proposed development is accessible by bus as referenced in the submitted Travel Plan (TP), the LHA would require the Applicants to install a bus stop directly outside and opposite the site. Infrastructure for both stops should include pole, flag, timetable case, hardstanding and road markings.

Date Received
16 December 2024

Case Officer
Victoria Vernon

Reviewer
DH

Date issued
13 January 2025