

REVISED OBSERVATIONS



**Leicestershire
County Council**

PLANNING APPLICATION CONSULTATION
RESPONSE

Report of the Director of Environment and Transport
to the Planning Authority relating only to the Highway
aspects.

DETAILS OF APPLICATION

Planning Ref No: 2009/2376/02
CE/EN Ref: AA295
Application Address: Land at, Melton Road, Barrow upon Soar
Parish: Barrow Upon Soar
Applicant: Jelson Homes
District Planning Case Officer: Neil Thompson
Brief Description of Development: Site for residential development with associated access. Outline.

OBSERVATIONS

(a) On any Improvement lines: None
(b) On Access Arrangements:
 New vehicular access: No **New pedestrian access:** No
 Altered vehicular access: No **Altered pedestrian access:** No
(c) On effect on Rights of Way: Yes
(d) On any new road proposal: No
(e) On application in general:

County Councillor: Mr. A.M. Kershaw (Quorn & Barrow)

RECOMMENDATIONS

Reason(s) for Refusal

1. The applicant has failed to demonstrate that a safe and satisfactory access to the proposed development, complying with current standards can be provided to serve the development.
2. The proposed development would result in a material increase in vehicular traffic on the local highway network in Barrow upon Soar, particularly the existing signal controlled bridge on Barrow Road and the roundabout junction of Barrow Road/South Street/High Street. The increase in traffic would exacerbate existing capacity problems with queues and delays at the bridge and at the roundabout junction, resulting in an unsafe and unsatisfactory operation of the highway system.
3. The existing junction of Grove Lane with South Street/Sileby Road is lacking in adequate visibility to the left out of Grove Lane. The proposal if approved would lead to increased dangers for road users and not be in the interests of highway safety.

4. The Transport Assessment (TA) and Framework Travel Plan (FTP) submitted in support of the application fails to identify any meaningful and viable measures to mitigate the impact of traffic generated by the proposed development.

5. The FTP fails to identify any viable transport measures and initiatives to achieve the target reductions in car journeys (and achieve modal shift) stated in the FTP. The existing public transport services and facilities in Barrow upon Soar are insufficient to cater for the anticipated increased demand from the proposed development and would therefore not result in a sufficient modal shift away from the car.

Note(s) to Planning Officer

TRANSPORT ASSESSMENT (TA)

2.7 Proposed Access Arrangements

The proposed access roundabout shown on the A056789-5-03 within the Transport Assessment appears to encompass land outside of the adopted highway and not within land in control of the applicant. Furthermore, the drawing lacks sufficient detail to determine whether a safe and satisfactory access complying with current standards can be provided. The roundabout should be relocated such that it is within the existing highway and within land in control of the applicant. The drawing should also be to an appropriate scale and must have sufficient detail to enable an assessment to be made of compliance with standards and geometric capacity.

Paragraph 2.7.4 refers to forward visibility to the roundabout which has been calculated using the LCC design guide; however, it is considered that values in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges should be used. Therefore the forward visibility of 59 metres is not considered appropriate.

4 Sustainable Transport Strategy

4.7 Rail

No information is given on the patronage of the existing rail facilities and whether or not the existing services can accommodate the passengers from the proposed development.

In paragraph 4.8.4 it is stated that "the developer will undertake best endeavours to secure bus services within the site that are viable in the long term, though further work with LCC and the local operators". This has not been done and it is considered essential that this is done at this stage to determine what is and what is not feasible.

5 Development Trip Generation

5.1.1 85 % ile trip rates from TRICS has been accepted in order to assess impact on the highway network, however, person trip rates should also be calculated to enable the developers to assess demand for bus/rail.

5.2.4 30% of traffic destined for the south has been assigned to Sileby Road/Slash lane. There does not appear to be any justification for this. In any case there will be occasions when this may not be possible when Slash Lane is closed due to flooding.

5.3.1 There does not appear to be a detailed reasoning behind the reduction in traffic on Barrow Road Bridge.

6 Traffic Impact Assessment

6.1.4 This paragraph list locations which are sensitive. These are all considered problematic. Of particular concern is the junction of Grove Lane with South Street/Sileby Road where the visibility to the left out of Grove Lane is substandard.

6.6.7 No discussions have taken place with LCC in respect of traffic calming measures.

7 Highway Capacity Assessments

7.6 Barrow Road/High Street/South Street

The assessment shows that the junction has insufficient capacity and this will be worsened with the development. The proposed improvement appears merely to be cosmetic and will do little to improve capacity.

7.6.5 The capacity assessments take no account of the queuing that takes place from the signal controlled bridge and the roundabout. However, it is acknowledged in this paragraph. Indeed, It is stated " it may be considered inappropriate to provide the improvement shown etc".

7.7 Barrow Road Bridge

The assessments show that the signals over the Bridge have insufficient capacity and that the situation would be worsened with the development. It is stated in paragraph 7.7.3 that "in practice, it is unlikely that queues and delays of this magnitude would be tolerated by drivers, particularly when alternative routes etc". This is a judgement made without any basis. The alternative routes may not be attractive due to safety reasons and also at times there is likely to be closure due to flooding

7.7.4 to 7.7.5 refer to possible improvements to the bridge such as a footbridge to the west of the existing structure and provision of additional carriageway width over the bridge. I have received the following comments from the Bridge Team in respect of the existing situation:

"The two-way traffic on the bridge travelled very close to the masonry parapets and was causing an outward movement of the parapets and brickwork above the arch (spandrels) - this was first noted during an inspection in 1965, I believe. The movement was monitored and once it became more significant, traffic was restricted to the centre of the bridge, probably in the mid-1990's. This solution had the advantage of allowing the footway to be increased in width, thus increasing the safety of pedestrians.

Any proposal to remove the traffic restriction would be subject to remedial works being carried out to strengthen the bridge to prevent further outward movement of the parapets and spandrels.

The above proposal, and any proposals to widen the bridge, would be subject to gaining Listed Building consent - the bridge was listed in 1984 and the Government Office for the West Midlands is responsible for considering such applications. I am unsure whether such consent would be granted, but if it was, is likely that the structure would have to maintain its current appearance, using similar materials and using sympathetic techniques for the strengthening or widening."

The applicants have failed to provide firm proposals to improve the capacity of the bridge.

7.7.7 There have been no discussions with the County Council's Passenger Transport Unit in respect of public transport improvements.

PASSENGER TRANSPORT UNIT COMMENTS

Comments have been received from the PTU in respect of the submissions in the TA and Framework Travel Plan before and after the submission of the planning application. These are as follows

Prior to the application:

"Brief comments on the TA / TP - many of the info appears in more than one place / both documents, I have only listed once.

Transport Assessment:

4.3.4 + 4.3.5 - I haven't seen the isochrone / fig 3 illustration - but as long as the houses are close to the 400m as stated, this is fine.

4.6.9 + 4.6.10 - PTU needs to be involved in these discussions; if a re-routed service is not feasible, alternative measures may be required.

Travel Plan:

5.2.1 - we suggest the 6 monthly pass option provides a better incentive to new residents to change their transport choice to a more sustainable mode.

6.7.2 - duration of revenue support needs to cover a period from 1st occupation ' 1 year after final occupation; this may be longer than 3 years from 1st occupation depending on build rate.

In addition we would also request improvements to the nearest existing bus stops; e.g. raised kerbs, timetable displays, shelters, and Star Trak, (where these did not already exist); however things can, and do, change in the interim between pre-app and build out, so I wouldn't say at this point what if any improvements would actually be required."

After submission of planning application:

"There do not appear to be any [transport] significant changes to the versions I have already commented on (copy attached above), so all these comments still apply - notably they are still not offering sufficient revenue funding (TP 5.2.1) - any subsidising for bus services (SBS) needs to run until 1 year after final occupation. As to your question below about the bus service it is difficult to answer. The nearest current service is the Kinchbus 2 which is commercial, so any decisions will be taken by them on a commercial basis. They could route through the site providing the road is of sufficient width etc, but they may choose not to - obviously the SBS £'s should / may help; also I have not seen the site master plan so am unsure where the link road

goes, I am assuming it is just a big loop entry and exit at same place onto Melton Road? Another point is that although we would like to see the SBS and buses entering the site, it would appear (again without master plan difficult to judge) that the whole of the site should be just within 800m of the nearest bus stops on Babington Road.

In addition to the packs and passes (6 monthly) that they mention in the TP - we would also want to see improvements to existing (or new / on site), bus stop infrastructure e.g. raised kerbs, bus shelters, timetable cases - where these do not already exist."

FRAMEWORK TRAVEL PLAN (FTP)

4. Sustainable Transport

4.2.3 The two public footpaths I23 and I24 cross the site and Bridleway I20 runs along part of the site's eastern boundary and crosses the railway line at an uncontrolled crossing (currently closed due to an earlier accident). Network Rail may provide a new crossing but this will probably not incorporate facilities for the disabled or for horses. It is currently not certain what is going to be constructed, however, for the site to go some way towards being more sustainable, I would expect the developer to provide a fully accessible crossing over the railway.

4.6 Bus Routes and Facilities

The FTP refers to exploring the possibilities of securing public transport services within the development site etc. However no discussions have taken place with either the PTU or the bus operators.

Other options are considered but nothing firm is proposed.

4.7 Rail

Services are hourly and no mention is made of current patronage and capacity of the trains to deal with extra passengers.

5 Travel Plan Administration.

5.3 Travel Plan Co-ordinator

The Coordinator should also be tasked with developing and promoting car-sharing locally, not just for journeys-to-work but also for school run, shopping and recreational trips. Also the Coordinator should be required to undertake pro-active promotion of the public transport options that the estate will enjoy, including the provision of free 'taster tickets' (funded by negotiation between the developer and operators) for new residents for an initial period. The proposal to create a 'community travel forum' is welcomed but the co-ordinator's role in this and what resources the developer will commit to making this body a sustained success, should be spelled out.

6.6 Travel Plan Measures

The measures proposed in relation to public transport are not firm and no discussions have taken place. Comments have been made in relation to rail. The other measures proposed are disappointing and will do little to promote modal shift.

7 Targets and Monitoring

7.2 Targets

7.2.1 I challenge the assumption that most trips will be employment related (Is the implication that there will be a significant morning and evening peaks?) - the plan should cater for the significant proportions of trips that will be made to schools and for shopping and leisure purposes

7.2.2 The FTP proposes a target reduction in single vehicle occupancy car based trips of approximately 19% from 2001 census values in the first five year period. The target modal split for train is 10% whereas the baseline is 3.7%. This is a significant increase for train journeys. It is clear that the targets are ambitious, however the measures proposed are not firm and not considered robust to achieve such reductions in car based travel.

7.3 Monitoring

The proposal to monitor progress towards the targets by asking residents to volunteer to complete a questionnaire is weak - there should be a requirement for travel diaries to be completed once a year for a random sample of households to better check the numbers of trips actually generated and proportions by mode, backed up with observed vehicle counts at the main vehicular entry point to the estate. However, the proposal to report the results regularly to the Authority (and presumably to engage in discussion about modifying the plan if need be) is welcome.

7.4 Penalties

The figure of £25,000 sum proposed will not go far to rectify the situation a few years down the line. At this stage the developers should propose firm measures which can be put in place should the targets not be achieved. This could run into hundreds of thousand of pounds.

Other comments on the FTP.

The plan fails to mention what the developer will do to ensure every home has access to high speed internet access (so that home-working, home-shopping, distance learning and home-entertainment options become possible to minimise trips to these elsewhere).

Date Received	Date Of Inspection	Inspector	Signed Off
22/12/2009	11/02/2010	Younus Seedat	17/02/2010