



Proof of Evidence - Summary

Transport

Produced by Jon Parr
Rule 6 Party
Peel Hall - APP/ M0655/W/17/3178530

Transport Proof of Evidence Summary

- 1.1 Our main areas of concern is with regards to the traffic assessment, access strategy and associated documents of which there are many. These have been referenced throughout the main document.
- 1.2 The appeal site is located to the North of Warrington and runs alongside the busy M62 corridor. The site is landlocked between the wards of Poulton North, Winwick & Burtonwood as well as Poplars and Hulme as shown in Appendix 1.

The site has been subject to failed planning applications for decades. The issue surrounding infrastructure and risks to traffic and congestion have been known for over 30 years.

- 1.3 At the previous inquiry the inspector noted;

IR13.8 In addition to the evidence given by the Council and local residents, it was abundantly clear from my many car journeys in and around Warrington that the appeal site is situated in an area that suffers from high levels of traffic congestion, chiefly at peak periods in the morning and evening, on a daily basis. The M62 and A49 appeared to be particularly badly affected. I have no reason to doubt that congestion is more acute still when there are accidents on the M62, resulting in drivers diverting onto local roads. In addition, I observed vehicles queuing back on Sandy Lane West from the A49 junction, giving rise to particular problems for vehicles seeking to exit the Fordton Retail Park.

IR13.9 In short, the concerns of the Council, Highways England, Cheshire Constabulary and of local residents in relation to highway safety and efficiency are readily understandable.

- 1.4 The issues referred to above have not changed. The failure to accept the issues and propose a real workable solution (having been seeking planning approval for over 30 years) suggests that such a solution is not forthcoming. Local residents will hardly be surprised at this as they are all too aware of the challenges that this site poses.
- 1.5 The strategic road access points to the proposed development are all via residential streets with the exception of Mill Lane which is intended to serve the east of the site.
- 1.6 The five main access points referred to are as follows;
- i. Newly formed access off Poplars Avenue (opposite Cotswold Road)
 - ii. Newly formed access off Poplars Avenue (opposite Brathay Close)
 - iii. Extension of Birch Avenue
 - iv. Newly formed access off Mill Lane (North)
 - v. Newly formed roundabout access off Mill Lane (East)
- 1.7 Each access point has its own challenges and the Rule 6 party do not believe the appellant has satisfactorily demonstrated adequate attention to detail has been submitted to prove the impact on the transport network will not be severe.
- 1.8 Traffic surveys appear to be woefully lacking in quantity and quality for a site of such size and complexity.
- 1.9 The Rule 6 party are therefore concerned that a lack of accurate data has led to flawed data for traffic, noise and air pollution.

- 1.10 Within the appellants transport addendum 2, there is reference to provision of alternative and sustainable transport solutions to minimise journeys made by private vehicles.
- 1.11 The Rule 6 party have set out to prove that the extension of already poor performing existing bus services does not constitute a high quality sustainable transport solution.
- 1.12 The Rule 6 party argue that the disruption to existing journey times will likely lose existing patrons as a result – thus creating a net loss provision.
- 1.13 The other proposed measure is cycling – the Rule 6 Party have debunked the myth that this is an achievable and attainable goal. The road networks around the site and beyond are dangerous and a lack of quality cycling provision elsewhere makes the desirability of commuting by bicycle a very poor one
- 1.14 At the previous inquiry, the inspector concluded that;
-overall, the appeal proposal has failed to demonstrate that it would not create an adverse impact upon the safety and efficiency of the local and strategic highway network. It would conflict with Core Strategy policy MP7 and relevant paragraphs of the Framework, the requirements of which are set out above (IR 13.42)
- 1.15 The Rule 6 party and local residents still believe this to be the case. The appellant has tried to appease the very obvious traffic congestion issues with a series of ill thought out mitigation measures, very few of which are sustainable modes of alternative transport.
- 1.16 The majority of the mitigation measures are physical and seek to impose 20mph restrictions and traffic calming measures across a significant part of north Warrington which further demonstrates the appellants lack of understanding of just how severe the traffic often is.

- 1.17 The appellants desire to radically alter a significant number of roads and junctions through the local area, only serves to impact a significant number of residents lives over a wide area with very little in return. In fact, I believe the Rule 6 party has adequately demonstrated that existing residents will be worse off as journey times increase, traffic and congestion worsens and noise and air pollution from standing traffic further reduces our air quality.
- 1.18 The appeal site has been blighted by traffic for years and has significantly worsened year on year. The Rule 6 party has real concern over the traffic assessments undertaken and do not believe that quality and quantity of survey's have been commensurate with a site of this size and complexity. We believe had they been, the figures would have undermined the appellants own case.
- 1.19 We are facing a climate emergency and with that, a proposed development of 1200 dwellings, shopping centre, school and offices will be offset by a non existent bus service and extremely limited cycling provision.
- 1.20 The local residents have argued for almost 30 years that the proposal to develop this site was unsustainable. Factor in three decades of growth and exponential rate of dependence on private vehicles and it must surely now be apparent that the local residents are right.
- 1.21 The appellant throughout the entire process has failed to engage with residents to determine what we – the people who live here – would like to see, what services are actually needed. This whole charade has been simply about minimum expenditure and maximum profit, regardless of the severe impact on the town and its residents that will be blighted with traffic, noise and poor air quality for years to come.