

Henthorn Road, Clitheroe – Transport Planning Review (TN01 rev A)

Project No.: A111419

Date: 14 November 2018

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1.1 WYG has undertaken an independent review of the Transport Assessment (TA) (ref: 1616/2/B, August 2018) prepared by Ashley Helme in support of a planning application (ref:3/2018/08688) which seeks consent for 110 dwellings on land off Henthorn Road, Clitheroe.
- 1.1.2 In particular the review considers if the TA adequately assesses the three issues identified by members at the 1st November 2018 planning committee, namely:-
1. Capacity and traffic congestion at the junction and level crossing at Eshton Terrace.
 2. The frequency of the existing bus service, and partly associated with this.
 3. Distance from existing facilities.
- 1.1.3 It is noted that the highway officer raised no objection to this application subject to conditions and a financial contribution in respect to promoting public transport. Furthermore, an application for 270 residential dwellings and a doctor's surgery on a site immediately to the north of this application site received permission following an appeal (Ref: APP/T2350/A/11/2161186) in March 2012.
- 1.1.4 The following sets out our review of the above three issues in turn.

2.0 Capacity and Traffic Congestion

- 2.1.1 Members raised the issue of the capacity and traffic congestion at the Henthorn Road/Eshton Terrace/Thorn Street junction and at the level crossing on Eshton Terrace, as a concern.
- 2.1.2 The TA prepared by Ashley Helme in support of the planning application reviewed the operational performance and capacity of the junction currently, and in the assessment years 2023 and 2028. The TA states that in 2028, the junction was:

'predicted to operate with spare capacity and with small/modest queues/delays in the 2028 AM peak hour Base situations and continues to do so if the development proceeds. In the 2028 PM

peak hour Base situation, the PICADY suggests that the Eshton Terrace arm of the junction is starting to experience stress. Unsurprisingly, the addition of traffic generated by the proposed development to [the junction] does lead to some worsening of the queue/delay on Eshton Terrace but not to a level that would require mitigation or that could reasonably be described as severe’.

- 2.1.3 The TA concludes that the traffic impact of the proposed development in the assessment years 2023 and 2028 *‘is acceptable’*.
- 2.1.4 The report also shows that using traffic generation trip rates that have been approved by the Local Highway Authority (LHA), the increase in traffic at the Henthorn Road/Eshton Terrace/Thorn Street junction as a result of the development would just be 55 vehicles and 61 vehicles during the AM and PM peak periods respectively. This equates to one additional vehicle every minute during the weekday peak hours.
- 2.1.5 The report also assessed the impact of the proposed development at the Eshton Terrace level crossing. This was undertaken by observing how many times the crossings were closed during the AM and PM peak hour and the average length of closure. The average number of additional vehicles generated by the proposed development arriving at the level crossing during each closure was then estimated. This showed that the estimated increase in the queue at the level crossing during a closure the AM and PM peak hour would be less than one vehicle in each direction.
- 2.1.6 Based on these figures, the TA concluded that the impact of the proposed development on the level crossing would not be *‘material’*.
- 2.1.7 On the basis of the above, it is concluded that the submitted TA adequately assessed the traffic impacts associated with the development, including the influence of the level crossing.**
- 2.1.8 The above conclusions are supported by the LHA, which confirmed that, even in 2028, only one junction, the Henthorn Road / Eshton Terrace junction *‘shows any sign of becoming stressed but to a level which would not be considered “severe” in respect of the NPPF’*.
- 2.1.9 In terms of the level crossing, the highway officer in his consultation response confirmed that the build-up of traffic queues at the crossing when closed did not have a *‘severe impact on the network’* and that the queues *‘cleared quickly once the crossing reopened.’*

2.1.10 In summing up, in respect to capacity and traffic congestion the highway officer's consultation response stated that *'the modelling submitted with the application has not shown that the impact of the existing and predicted traffic flows are such that it could be construed as being "severe" in respect of the NPPF and on this basis I am satisfied that the proposed development will not have a detrimental effect on the functioning of the highway network'*

2.1.11 It is also noted that the appeal decision in 2012 for the adjacent proposed development for 270 residential dwellings in terms of capacity and congestion stated that:

'From the evidence that is before me, including the video evidence, it is clear that the appeal proposal would have no material traffic impact on the operation of the key traffic junctions of Henthorn Road/Bawdlands or the Henthorn Road/Thorn Street junctions. This is the position agreed by LCC. Similarly, on the basis of the Appellant's survey work including the video evidence, the appeal proposal would have no material impact on Eshton Terrace and the railway crossing. I have not identified any material detrimental impacts of the appeal proposal elsewhere in Clitheroe. In short, there is clear objective evidence before me that the traffic concerns raised by the Council and other interested persons are not warranted, for all that there may be a genuinely held perception on the part of some. I conclude on the second issue that traffic generated by the appeal proposal would not lead to unacceptable highway conditions particularly on Woone Lane.'

2.1.12 The local highway authority did not identify any conflict with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and find the development proposals to be entirely acceptable with respect to traffic impacts. It should also be noted that the Planning Inspectorate found the impacts associated with an adjacent scheme more than twice the size to have 'no material impact on Eshton Terrace and the railway crossing'.

3.0 The frequency of the existing bus service

3.1.1 The TA set out the existing bus provision serving the proposed development. This shows that there is a half hourly town circular bus service operating Monday to Saturday which stops at a bus stop which is located within 300m from the centre of the site. The service operates from around 7:30 in a morning to around 6:30 in an evening and therefore provides opportunity for commuting and leisure journeys to use the bus.

3.1.2 There are further school bus services that stop at bus stops further afield, but which are still within walking distance (i.e. within 800m and 1200m from the site).

3.1.3 It is evident that the submitted TA provides an accurate review of public transport provision including buses. The TA concludes that the site has 'good public transport accessibility.'

3.1.4 Equally, the LHA agrees with the findings of the TA and confirm that *'accessibility to public transport is good although this access is limited to a single circular service (No.2) to Clitheroe town centre'*.

3.1.5 It should also be noted that a financial contribution has been requested which would further enhance the public transport accessibility of the site. The committee report also states that the Highways Officer *'raised no objection to the sustainability of the location, subject to a financial contribution of £200,000 (£40,000 per annum for five years) in respect of sustaining and promoting local public transport in this area.'*

3.1.6 The appeal decision for the adjacent site also confirmed that the bus *'journey time to the town centre and the railway station is very short'* and *'the reality is bus accessibility would be good'*. That has some directly relevant contexts to the application site and levels of bus accessibility.

3.1.7 The local highway authority has confirmed that the development of the site has good public transport accessibility. That will be further improved by the public transport financial contribution.

3.1.8 It appears that the bus contribution, is to promote and sustain public transport, not fund the existing bus service per se. Furthermore, once the 5-year period is complete, there is a reasonable expectation that public transport 'habits' would have been instilled in future residents and the development would be built out and occupied to offer increased fare revenue in lieu of the contribution.

3.1.9 The Planning Inspectorate also concluded that the immediately adjacent site has good accessibility which supports the findings of the local highway authority.

4.0 Distance from existing facilities

4.1.1 The TA provides an assessment which shows that there are a wide variety of facilities and amenities that can be reached within a 2km walk from the site, including bus stops, schools, community facilities, shopping and leisure opportunities.

4.1.2 The TA provides a sufficient review of existing facilities to enable a review of the ability to access those sustainably to be undertaken.

4.1.3 The local highway authority identified that continuous footways to the wider highway network are achievable and improvements are proposed as part of the development. They identify some issues with respect to walk distances, but agree that there is a viable journey choice, *'the proposed development lies at the extreme of acceptable walking distances for pedestrian trips to local amenities'*. The committee report adds that the highway officer has *'therefore raised no objection to the sustainability of the location subject to a financial contribution of £200,000 (£40,000 per annum for five years) in respect of sustaining and promoting local public transport in this area'*.

4.1.4 At the above-mentioned appeal for the adjacent residential site, the Inspector recognised some issues, but ultimately found (at Paragraph 35) that:

'The site is sufficiently accessible with the measures proposed by the Appellant. The proposal would not conflict with national policy, the aforementioned RSS policies or Policy T1 of the RVDWLP. Overall I conclude on the first issue that the appeal proposal would comprise a sustainable form of development.'

4.1.5 It is clear that the local highway authority has undertaken a significant review of local facilities and accessibility. Whilst they recognise some issues with walk distances, they find no basis for objection and agree that walking is a viable journey choice. The findings of the Inspector when considering the adjacent site at appeal has some directly relevant contexts to the application site which further support the Local Highway Authority position.

5.0 Conclusions

5.1.1 It is concluded that the submitted TA adequately assessed the traffic impacts associated with the development, including the influence of the level crossing.

5.1.2 It is evident that the submitted TA provides an accurate review of public transport provision including buses. The TA concludes that the site has 'good public transport accessibility.'

5.1.3 The TA provides a sufficient review of existing facilities to enable a review of the ability to access those sustainably to be undertaken.

- 5.1.4 The Local Highway Authority have undertaken a detailed review and are clearly in agreement with the findings of the submitted TA.
- 5.1.5 The appeal decision for the adjacent site (Ref: APP/T2350/A/11/2161186) also provides further suggestion that due to locational relevance to the site that there is no justification for planning to be withheld on the basis of any of the matters considered.