

TECHNICAL FILE NOTE

Project	Henthorn Road, Clitheroe	Project No	1616	Meeting	[]
Contact		Originator	SJH	Telephone	[]
		Date	25.01.19	Aide Memoire	[x]

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Ashley Helme Associates Ltd (AHA) are appointed by Gladman Developments Ltd (GDL) to provide highways/transportation advice with respect to proposed residential development at the southern end of Henthorn Road, Clitheroe. The scheme comprises 110 dwellings. AHA prepared the Transport Assessment (TA) report (ref 1616/2/B) which accompanied a planning application (ref 3/2018/08688).

1.2 The application was registered by Ribble Valley Borough Council (RVBC) in August 2018. The scheme was originally deferred by Members at the 1 November 2018 planning committee so that Lancashire County Council (LCC) Highways Authority could provide further comments in respect of the highways implications of the proposal. The application was referred to committee on 29 November 2018 and it was confirmed that LCC still raised no objections to the proposal on highways grounds. Despite this, Members resolved to refuse the application in relation to highways matters; namely:

- (i) the impact at the junction of Henthorn Road/Thorn Street,
- (ii) the impact at the junction of Greenacre Street/Woone Lane/Eshton Terrace,
- (iii) the impact at the Thorn Street/Eshton Terrace railway crossing, and
- (iv) the unsustainable location of the proposal with a lack of cycling or pedestrian access to the town centre with future residents being wholly reliant on the car.

1.3 Officers drafted proposed reasons for refusal which were taken back to the 10 January 2019 committee meeting. The reasons as drafted read:

1. The proposed development would result in an unsustainable form of development within the countryside. Due to the site's location, with a lack of cycling or suitable pedestrian access to the town centre, future residents will be wholly reliant on the car. As such the development is contrary to Key Statements DS2 and DMI2, as well as Policies DMG2 and DMG3, of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

2. The proposed development will introduce additional traffic onto the highway network immediately surrounding the site which will result in increased traffic congestion and risk to highway safety, in particular at the key traffic junctions of Henthorn Road, Woone Lane, Eshton

Terrace and the railway crossing. The residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe and as such the development would be contrary to Key Statements DS2 and DMI2, as well as Policies DMG2 and DMG3, of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy and guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 1.4 AHA understand that RVBC has sought opinion from a number of highways consultants about the development proposals and their willingness to defend the RVBC reasons for refusal if the applicant lodged an Appeal. AHA further understands that all of the highway consultants concur with the conclusions reached by AHA and LCC highways officers and have declined to represent the Council.
- 1.5 AHA has been instructed to prepare a Technical Note which responds to comments made by members at the planning committee meeting, being:
- (i) The performance of Henthorn Road/Thorn Street and Greenacre Street/Woone Lane/Eshton Terrace junctions, including the potential changes to rail services and increased operation of the barrier at the nearby level crossing on Thorn Street/Eshton Terrace.
 - (ii) Confirmation that the cumulative impacts on the road network are not severe.
 - (iii) Consideration of the phrase 'courteous nature' in the Lancashire County Council (LCC) Consultation Response (5 October 2018);
 - (iv) Sustainability and access to services and facilities;
 - (v) Long term operation of local bus services.
- 1.6 AHA is aware that GDL instructed White Young Green (WYG) to undertake a Transport Planning Review (ref TN01 rev A) of the AHA TA report. This is referred to in this Technical Note.
- 1.7 AHA provided highways/transport advice to GDL for their scheme of 270 dwellings on land off Henthorn Road (planning ref 3/2010/0719). This site is immediately north of the current planning application Site. The GDL scheme for 270 dwellings was granted consent following an appeal. Given the proximity to each other, this Technical Note makes reference to the Inspectors Appeal Decision (Inquiry ref APP/T2350/A/11/2161186).

2.0 HENTHORN ROAD/THORN STREET JUNCTION

2.1 Existing Situation

2.1.1 The Henthorn Road/Thorn Street junction is SJ6 of the TA study network and is located about 1.0km north-east of the Site. The junction operates as a priority-controlled crossroads junction. The Thorn Street (E) and (W) arms form the minor arms of the junction. Drg No 1616/06 in the AHA TA report presents the existing layout of the junction.

2.1.2 AHA has purchased and reviewed accident data, from Lancashire Constabulary, for the period 1 May 2013 to 30 April 2018 (ie 5-year period). This confirms that there have been **no** recorded accidents at junction. This indicates that the junction presently performs in a safe manner.

2.2 Junction Assessment

2.2.1 A queue survey was undertaken at SJ6 at the same time as the traffic count. The survey recorded queues on each arm of the junction at the 5-minute mark (eg at 0800, 0805, 0810, etc). The results of the queue survey are presented in para 9.3.1.1 of the AHA TA report. The queue survey confirms that small queues were recorded on the 5-minute interval mark. This means that any queues that form are clearing. The results provide clear evidence that SJ6 is currently operating in an **acceptable manner**. This is not disputed by LCC highways officers.

2.2.2 A PICADY model was constructed for SJ6. A process of model validation was completed whereby model queue outputs were compared to recorded queues. This provides assurance that the model is suitable to test the future year scenarios of 2023 and 2028.

2.2.3 The results of the PICADY modelling for SJ6 are included in Table 2 of the AHA TA report. The PICADY modelling of the SJ6 confirms that the junction is predicted to operate in an acceptable manner in year 2023. By year 2028, the PICADY model indicates that Thorn Street (E) arm of the junction is being to experience some 'stress'. However, this occurs only in the PM peak hour. The results indicate for part of the peak hour the development may add about 5 vehicles to the Thorn Street (E) queue with an associated increase in delay of about 34 seconds. All other arms at the junction are predicted to be working with a high level of spare capacity and small queues/delays in the 2028 PM peak hour situation. It is considered that the traffic impact of the proposed development at SJ6 does not lead to a deterioration in performance that could reasonably be described as severe.

2.2.4 This conclusion is endorsed by LCC in their Consultation Response (5 October 2018), which states:

*“... taking into account committed developments in the area and future growth in 2023 and 2028 shows that of the junctions identified above only junction 1 above (Henthorn Road / Eshton Terrace shows any sign of becoming stressed but to a level which would **not** be considered "severe" in respect of the NPPF It is accepted that certain elements of the road network have localised issues notably Eshton Terrace / Henthorn Road and Whalley Road / Greenacre Street but it was evident during a number of visits to the site that these were **effectively managed by the courteous nature of drivers** which allowed traffic flows to be maintained through these junctions.”* (AHA emphasis).

2.2.5 The LCC Consultation Response (dated 5 October 2018) refers to the ‘**courteous nature**’ of drivers using SJ6. It is common on highway networks for junctions to operate in a different manner to the format of the junction. The layout of SJ6 gives motorists on Henthorn Road priority over users on Thorn Street (E) and (W). However, site observation suggests that Henthorn Road drivers regularly slow/stop to allow vehicles on the Thorn Street arms to complete turning movements. This is at odds with the format of the junction. This type of operation is similar to some new residential schemes which include crossroad junctions that have no markings and, therefore, no user has priority over another user. This fosters an environment where a resident is cooperative (or courteous) with other residents and this leads to slower through speeds and a safer operation.

2.2.6 It should be borne in mind that the junction modelling software used to test the performance of SJ6 does not include a ‘courteous nature’ setting. The PICADY program assumes that vehicles follow the conventional format of the junction, eg vehicles on the minor arm give-way to vehicles on the major arm. The modelling of SJ6 confirms that the junction will operate in an acceptable manner if the proposed development is implemented. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the junction does not need ‘courteous drivers’ to function in an acceptable manner.

3.0 **THORN STREET/ESHTON TERRACE**

3.1 To the east of SJ6, Thorn Street changes name to Eshton Terrace at a railway level crossing. There is full barrier/camera control of the crossing.

3.2 **Clitheroe to Manchester Rail Corridor Improvement Works**

3.2.1 Improvement works have taken place on the Clitheroe-Manchester rail corridor on the section between Blackburn and Bolton. These improvement works have enabled a half hourly frequency of rail journeys from Blackburn towards Manchester.

3.3 Rail Services: Existing Situation

- 3.3.1 Currently, Northern Rail operates an hourly frequency rail service from Clitheroe to Rochdale. This service includes travel to destinations including Blackburn, Bolton, Salford and Manchester. At present, Northern Rail also operates 2 trips on Sundays (one in each direction) from Preston to Carlisle. This service includes a stop in each direction at Clitheroe Rail Station. From December 2018, this service will change to 4 trips on Sundays (2 in each direction) from Preston to Hellifield. This service will include 2 stops in each direction at Clitheroe Rail Station.

3.4 Level Crossing

- 3.4.1 There is an existing level crossing on Thorn Street/Eshton Terrace to the south west of Clitheroe Rail Station. All train services towards Rochdale head south west towards this level crossing.
- 3.4.2 AHA commissioned a survey at the level crossing on 5 June 2018 between periods 0730-0930 and 1600-1815. The surveys recorded the following:
- (i) Times when the level crossing barriers were closed,
 - (ii) Times when the level crossing barriers opened,
 - (iii) Length of time they were closed, and
 - (iv) Length of queues that formed when the barriers were closed.
- 3.4.3 The level crossing barriers were down on 2no occasions during the AM peak hour (0800-0900). The barriers were down for an average of 1 minute 45 seconds in the AM peak hour. The maximum recorded queue on the eastbound approach was 19 vehicles, which occurred at 08:24:29. The maximum recorded queue on the westbound approach was 13 vehicles, which also occurred at 08:24:29.
- 3.4.4 The level crossing barriers were down on 3no occurrences in the PM peak hour (1700-1800). The barriers were down for an average of 2 minutes 3 seconds in the PM peak hour (1700-1800). The maximum recorded queue on the eastbound approach was 18 vehicles, which occurred at 17:51:48. The maximum recorded queue on the westbound approach was 25 vehicles, which also occurred at 17:51:48.

3.5 Planned Improvements

- 3.5.1 Based on a review of Ribble Valley Borough Council Committee reports, it is understood that discussions have been held over the possibility of extending the half hourly rail services from Blackburn to Clitheroe.
- 3.5.2 AHA understand that more evening services from Clitheroe towards Manchester could be introduced, however the frequency of this proposed service is currently unknown. Moreover, it is believed that discussions have taken place concerning additional services on the Hellifield line which would restore links from Clitheroe to Leeds and Lancaster, for example. However, due to economic implications, it is understood that it would take a significant amount of research and time before this comes into fruition.

3.6 Impact on Thorn Street/Eshton Terrace

- 3.6.1 Based upon the AHA survey results, if a half hourly service was to be implemented from Clitheroe, the number of level crossing barriers closures could increase from 2 to 4 during the AM peak hour (0800-0900). In the PM peak hour (1700 – 1800) the number of level crossing barrier closures could increase from 3 to 5.
- 3.6.2 In the AM peak hour, the barriers were down for an average of 1 minute 45 seconds. Hence, with the implementation of a half hourly service from Clitheroe towards Manchester, during the AM peak period the barrier will be down for a total of 7 minutes. This equates to 11.67% of the total AM peak hour period. Or, in other words, Thorn Street/Eshton Terrace would function as an unhindered highway for 88.33% of the peak hour.
- 3.6.3 In the PM peak hour, the barriers were down for an average 2 minutes 3 seconds. Therefore, with the introduction of the aforementioned half hourly service, during the PM peak period, the barrier will be down for a total of 10 minutes 15 seconds. This equates to 17.08% of the total PM peak hour period. Or, in other words, Thorn Street/Eshton Terrace would function as an unhindered highway for 82.92% of the peak hour.
- 3.6.4 This demonstrates that during both the AM peak hour and PM peak hour periods, the level crossing barriers will not impact traffic flow movement over 80% of the time and would not affect the overall performance of Thorn Street/Eshton Terrace or the surrounding local highway network.

- 3.6.5 LCC provided comment on the railway level crossing. Their Consultation Response (5 October 2018) states:

*“One issue that cannot be managed in this manner is the effect of the level crossing. Again during visits to the site the effects of a closed level crossing were observed and as expected traffic queues built up but **not to an extent that they had a severe impact on the network** and these queues cleared quickly once the crossing reopened.”* (AHA emphasis).

4.0 TRAFFIC IMPACT

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), July 2018, sets out in paragraph 109 that:

“Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impact on the road network would be severe.”

- 4.2 There is no precise definition of what constitutes a “severe” impact. The starting point for assessment is to determine the level of AM & PM peak hour traffic the proposed development is expected to generate and how it will be distributed across the local highway network. AHA adopted trip rates that had been agreed with LCC for other residential schemes on Henthorn Road. The consequent estimates of proposed development traffic (vehicles generated by 110 dwellings) are:

	ARR	DEP	2-WAY
AM	15	49	64
PM	48	25	73.

These estimates are **agreed** with LCC officers.

- 4.3 The distribution of traffic generated by the proposed development is also agreed with LCC officers. The distribution is identical to the pattern of distribution adopted for other permitted residential developments on Henthorn Road.
- 4.4 It is common practice to complete a detailed assessment of the performance of a junction where the development is predicted to increase traffic by more than 30 vehicles in either the AM or PM

peak hours. If the increase is less than 30 vehicles this is often referred to as not being material and it follows that this would **not** be a severe impact. In the case of the proposed development, nine of the twelve study junctions are not expected to receive an increase of more than 30 vehicles if the development proceeds. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that the impact at these **nine** study junctions is **not** severe.

4.5 Three TA study junctions are predicted to receive an increase of 30 vehicles or more. These are:

- (i) SJ6: Henthorn Road/Thorn Street,
- (ii) SJ10: Greenacre Street/Woone Lane/Esthton Terrace, and
- (iii) SJ11: Whalley Road/Greenacre Street.

4.6 The performance of SJ6 and the impact of traffic generated by the proposed development is considered in Section 2.0 of this Technical Note. The predicted increase at SJ10 is +27(AM) and +36(PM). The PM increase is only slightly above the 30-vehicle threshold. The predicted increase at SJ11 is +23 (AM) and +31(PM). The PM increase at SJ11 is only very slightly above the 30-vehicle threshold. Junction modelling of both SJ10 and SJ11 shows that the addition of traffic generated by the proposed development has an almost **imperceptible effect** on the performance of the junctions. This could **not** reasonably be described as severe. This position is accepted by LCC officers in their Consultation Response, which concludes:

“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”.

4.7 The AHA TA report has been independently reviewed by WYG and the results are set out in their Transport Planning Review. With regard to traffic impact, WYG conclude:

“The submitted TA adequately assessed the traffic impacts associated with the development, including the influence of the level crossing”.

4.8 This position is consistent with the decision of the inspector for the GDL scheme for 270 dwellings (ref: APP/T2350/A/11/2161186), which states:

“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".

5.0 SUSTAINABILITY

5.1 National Travel Survey (2017)

5.1.1 The National Travel Survey (NTS) of 2017 provides data on walk trips and establishes that:

- 81% of all trips under 1 mile (1.6km) are made by foot,
- The average walk trip is 17 minutes which equates to a distance of about 1.36km,
- Walking accounts for 26% of all trips and 3% of distance travelled,
- Education and Shopping trips account for 40% of all walk trips,
- 67% of people undertake a walk of 20 minutes or more at least once a week,
- The average shopping trip is 17 minutes and 27% of shopping trips are made by foot,
- The average commuting trip is 31 minutes and 11% of commuting trips are made by foot.

5.1.2 The NTS (2017) demonstrates that the overwhelming majority of people (81%) complete trips of up to 1 mile (1.6km) on foot. The survey also shows that two-thirds of the population regularly complete 20-minute walk trips. This would equate to a distance of about 1.6km, based on typical walk speeds.

5.1.3 NTS sets out that 46% of children aged 5-10 years walk to school. For journeys of under 1 mile (1.6km) 80% of children (5-10 years) walk to school.

5.1.4 It is clear from NTS that a distance of **1.6km** does **not** represent a deterrent to walking and is routinely completed on foot.

5.1.5 Figure 3 of the AHA TA report (ref 1616/2/B) highlights the local amenities that are within a 1.6km walk of the centre of the Site. These include:

- (i) Travel: Bus stops,
- (ii) Education: Primary school, Nursery/Pre-school,
- (iii) Community: Place of worship,
- (iv) Shopping: ATM, Convenience Store,
- (v) Leisure: Restaurant/takeaway, Public house, Salon, Sports ground/Club,
Public open space, Playground.

It is clear that there is a good range of services that can meet many of the everyday needs of residents of the proposed development that are within a distance that people regularly walk. It is concluded that the Site is in a sustainable location.

5.1.6 The LCC Consultation Response (5 October 2018) states:

“...the proposed development lies at the extreme of acceptable walking distances for pedestrian trips to local amenities”.

The LCC response confirms that walking is a viable option for residents of the proposed development and LCC find no basis to object to the proposal on the grounds of accessibility.

5.1.7 This position is consistent with the decision of the inspector for the GDL scheme for 270 dwellings (ref: APP/T2350/A/11/2161186). Paragraph 33 of the Inspector’s Appeal Decision states:

“The Council’s main concern relates to pedestrian accessibility. To that end reliance is placed upon the IHT walk distance guidance. The IHT guidance does not provide a definitive view of distances, but does suggest a preferred maximum distance of 2,000m for commuting or school trips. In my view a degree of realism must be applied. Most journeys of less than a mile are undertaken on foot which would take a future resident close to the town centre. The appeal proposals plainly are such that pedestrians have a realistic choice of alternative modes of travel including the private car. It is a fact that some of the facilities lie beyond 800m, but from the walk isochrones and local amenities plan it is clear to me that there are a range of facilities within an easy walk of the appeal site. In

particular the northern access, linking to the Caravan Road and then to Edisford Road, would take a future resident to the Leisure Centre, the primary school and the local convenience store (Spar)."

5.1.8 Paragraph 35 of the Inspector's Appeal Decision concludes:

"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".

6.0 BUS SERVICES

6.1 Service No 2 calls within 300m of the proposed development. Service No 2 operates on a half-hourly frequency and functions as a town centre circular via Low Moor.

6.2 The No 2 service is currently assisted by a financial contribution, secured through a S106 agreement, from the GDL scheme for 270 dwellings. This made the following commitments:

- (i) Full funding of the C1 bus service (or its successor) for a period of five years;
- (ii) Route must include the development site and complete stops in Clitheroe town centre including a stop at the railway station;
- (iii) Frequency will be 30 minutes at peak times;
- (iv) Bus service must be operating prior to the occupation of the 51st dwelling;
- (v) 100% of the farebox revenue to be placed in a ring-fenced fund and retained solely for the purpose of providing further funding for the bus service to continue to operate when the five years' funding provided by the appellant ends;
- (vi) Bus stop will be provided prior to the commencement of the service.

6.3 The inspector for the GDL scheme for 270 dwellings (ref: APP/T2350/A/11/2161186) commented on the revised bus service in para 32 of the Appeal Decision, which states:

"Furthermore, it is part of the appeal proposals that the existing public transport facilities would be enhanced by the introduction of a new 'quality' bus stop within the appeal site and the rerouting of the existing service C1 to call at this new bus stop. This would be in accordance with the aims and objectives of current national and local policies. A residential Travel Plan is also proposed to raise awareness. The enhanced bus service would mean that the journey time to the town centre and the

*railway station is very short. Whilst there have been criticisms of some elements of the bus service, such as how much longer beyond the 5 year period would hypothecated fares fund the service, the reality is that **bus accessibility would be good.***" (AHA emphasis).

6.4 It is understood that the No 2 Clitheroe Town Circular service commenced on 5 December 2016. Therefore, it is assumed that the service has funding to operate until at least the end of year 2021. This may be extended beyond 2021 with additional monies collected through the farebox.

6.5 The applicant has agreed to provide a financial contribution, secured through a S106 agreement, of £200,000 to promote local public transport. This equates to £40,000 per annum for 5 years. This could help to secure the operation of the No 2 service from 2021 to 2026.

6.6 The LCC Consultation Response (5 October 2018) confirms that:

"Accessibility to public transport is good..."

This will be further improved by the public transport financial contribution.

6.7 It is reasonable to assume that the No 2 Service could remain financially viable, through a combination of existing and proposed contributions, to at least year 2026. Funding beyond year 2026 is highly likely with additional money collected through the farebox between 2016 and 2021. This will mean that the service is likely to operate for over 10 years. Development 'pump-priming' of bus services is usually 3 or 5 years. Therefore, the financial assistance offered to the C2 bus service is significantly greater than other assisted services. It also worth bearing in mind that the C2 service replaced the C1, which was in operation for some time before the introduction of the C2 service. Therefore, there is a history of a bus service operating in the Henthorn Road area. This, together with the applicant's commitment to a Travel Plan, means there is a high likelihood that public transport 'habits' will be instilled in existing and future residents and that the service can be sustained on a commercial basis well beyond year 2026.