STRATEGIC PLANNING BOARD COMMITTEE – 19th April 2017

UPDATE TO AGENDA

APPLICATION NO: *17/0195C*

LOCATION: *LAND OFF WAGGS ROAD, CONGLETON*

Highway comments regarding the internal layout

Parking provision is below CEC requirements for a number of the properties. It seems that plot 40 and 46 have only one space each. If a driveway is bounded by a fence or wall on either side then the minimum driveway width should be 2.7m, reflecting CEC requirement for internal dimensions of garages. This isn't the case with all the properties, for example for plot 9. Some of the driveway lengths are too short to accommodate 2 vehicles, for example with plot 24.

The access width is 5.5m with footways either side, and extends into the site for approximately 70m. Beyond this the footways have been removed and the shared space concept has been introduced. A shared space carriageway effectively serves 100 dwellings. The 5.5m carriageway with footways should have been extended further into the site with a shared space serving around 25 units only.

It's not clear is a refuse vehicle would be able to access properties to the east of the site and then turn round and exit in a forward gear. It would most likely have to reverse back around the corner for around 100m before being able to turn.

In summary, there are a number of design issues to be addressed on the internal layout submitted and the applicant should consider the points raised and submit a revised plan. These are not considered to be fundamental concerns at present that cannot be rectified. There are no additional reasons for refusal to be added to the application.

Officer comment

The comments from the Highways Engineer advise that some further modifications would be required to the internal layout however these are not considered to be fundamental concerns which could not be addressed by planning condition.

Further comments from the applicant

The first concern the LHA raises relates to the site access impacting visibility for properties opposite the site access, referring to a single private driveway only, which serves two houses. Whilst we accept that the proposals would

slightly reduce the visibility splays from the driveway opposite the access, we would make the following points:

- CEC LHA did not raise this issue when they approved the access at the pre-app stage.
- Importantly, Manual for Streets (MfS) does not specifically requires vehicle visibility splays from private driveways. MfS states that: 'The absence of wide visibility splays at minor accesses will encourage drivers to emerge more cautiously.'
- Even for new developments LHAs do not require vehicle visibility splays from private driveways. Only pedestrian visibility is required and our proposals ensure the pedestrian visibility is maintained.
- CEC LHA has not asked for visibility splays based on MfS for the proposed driveways on the internal layout of this detailed application. If there is no requirement to provide splays for new private driveways, why raise an objection to an existing driveway?
- The visibility splay achieved from the driveway opposite the site access under our proposals would be greater than many existing driveways on Waggs Road. The accident data shows that these existing driveways are very safe, with no accidents reported.

It is noted that the LHA identifies that existing footway provision from the site to the town centre is sub-standard and that the application proposals will improve the footways by increasing it to 2m over a distance of 145m. Given that LHA have not specifically stipulated further footway improvements, it is interpreted that the LHA is satisfied with the improvements to be provided. Please note that Bellway then spent 12 months acquiring sufficient land interest to achieve the design that the CEC LHA Officers required. The solution agreed was to be fully funded by Bellway Homes at a cost of circa £400,000.

The LHA comments are noted about carriageway width on Waggs Road being inadequate for cars and HGV passing each other. We would raise the following points in response

- The LHA did not raise this issue when they approved the improvement scheme, which was based on the topo survey
- MfS states that an HGV and a car can pass each other with a 4.8m carriageway.
- The minimum width required for two cars to pass each other is 4.1m, as per MfS
- Parking is limited due to the presence of waiting restrictions (single yellow lines on both side of the road) over a significant length of Waggs Road in this locality. Where parking does occur it is unlikely to be continuous. The limited car parking reduces speeds and hence increases high safety
- Due to the nature of the proposed development it would not generate any meaningful HGVs
- The LHA requirements for wider carriageway are excessive and unnecessary, which would also lead to an increase in speeds and corresponding reduced highway safety

The proposed Congleton Link Road (CLR) was approved in July 2016. It is understood the scheme is likely to start on-site in early 2018. The forecast flows on Waggs Road/Fol Hollow with the CLR suggest that there would be a c70% reduction in trips. Accordingly, any intensification of traffic due to the proposed residential development would need to be considered in the context of the major reduction expected due to the CLR. To be robust the TA (Traffic Assessment) did not rely on the CLR and also as it was not approved at the time. However, the approved CLR should now be a material consideration in the positive determination of the proposed development, along with the significant highways improvements that it will deliver.

The LHA has raised a number of concerns relating Fol Hollow including its alignment and width. However, Bellway should not be required to consider any improvements to Fol Hollow, based on the fact that the Inspector who the dismissed previous scheme was comfortable with Fol Hollow, stating as follows:

'The absence of footways along Fol Hollow is not unusual for a country road and occupiers of the proposed development would have access to the existing footpaths around Astbury Mere which provide links to the north and west of the town. Whilst the Council has expressed concern over the width of this road, surveys undertaken by the appellant indicate that even at its narrowest points 2 cars can pass. The traffic surveys indicate that HGVs do not frequently use the route and there are a number of places along the road where larger vehicles can pass. Forward visibility is restricted by the winding nature of the road, but this and the varying width of the road will have the benefit of discouraging higher vehicle speeds and use of the route by larger vehicles. Given the fewer additional trips predicted in this direction I do not therefore consider the proposed development would result in a significantly increased risk to the safety of drivers or pedestrians in Fol Hollow.'

Officer comment

The additional comments from the applicant have been forwarded to the highways department for response, however these have been received too late to be considered as part of the report update. Therefore a response will be provided to members at the committee meeting.

Recommendation

No change to initial recommendation.

REFUSE FOR THE REASONS AS STATED IN THE MAIN REPORT