

Development Control Committee Update – 4th October 2017

Item 4 – Preston Western Distributor Road

Further Representations relating to Salwick and the Hodder Aqueduct:

1. A letter of support has been received from an employee at the Springfields site at Salwick. The letter states that many employees at the site consider that the new road will ease congestion in the residential areas nearby by offering better access to the site from junction 1 of the M55 than the current situation. The letter requests that the section of the PWD from the new motorway junction to the Saddle Inn roundabout is constructed and opened to traffic as soon as possible as it would provide immediate traffic relief in the north Preston area.
2. A representation has been received on behalf of a landowner at the northern end of the scheme in relation to the diversion of the Hodder Aqueduct on his land. The landowner considers that the diversion cannot be approved through the current application as parts of the diversion route lie outside of the application area for the road. The owner also states that the County Council has not considered how the proposed diversion alters the findings of the Environmental Statement and that it is clear that the original ES pre dates the knowledge that the scheme would be affected by the diversion. The owner therefore considers that the original ES is not fit for purpose.

Advice

Members should note the letter of support. It proposed to build several sections of the route concurrently and the northern section, including M55 junction, would be key to allowing access into the area. However, there are some ecological and other issues in this area which may delay progress on opening the northern end of the scheme.

In relation to the representation regarding the Hodder Aqueduct diversion, some small areas of the diversion route do lie outside of the application area for the road. However, the diversion works can be undertaken by United Utilities as the pipeline owner under their permitted development rights that exist for such works – no specific planning permission is required. The ecological impacts of the diversion have been assessed via an addendum to the Environmental Statement which has been advertised in accordance with the Regulations. It is not considered that the need to divert the aqueduct invalidates the original Environmental Statement.

Amendment to Noise section of report

Pages 48 and 49 of the report contain details of noise levels that are predicted at certain properties close to the road. As a result of the lowering of the road, the noise levels have been recalculated and the figures should now read 10.3, 12.6, 14.0 and 14.0 Db(a). The recalculation of the noise levels would now mean that there would be 179 properties with SOAEL impacts and 294 with LOAEL impacts. There would be 1066 properties that would experience beneficial impacts with night time figures of 306 and 576 for adverse and beneficial impacts respectively.

Advice: - The reduction in noise levels at the worst affected properties as a result of the lowering of the road is noted. However, the decrease is slight and it is still considered that there would be merit in investigating further noise controls as set out in condition 17. In terms of wider noise impacts, the number of properties that would be beneficially or adversely affected is not significantly changed from the levels set out in the report.

Update on Conditions:

17. Reword drawing number referred to in the condition to read 'drawing B2237806-B2237808-Fig98-Noise –Barrier-Loc Rev 0'

Proposed additional condition 9:

9. No erection of street lighting shall take place until details of the light spill from each lighting column and its impacts on residential properties has been submitted to the County Planning Authority for approval in writing. The details shall include information on any measures including shields or baffles to be incorporated at lighting heads to reduce light spill and glare to residential properties.

The lighting shall thereafter be erected in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of local amenity and to conform with Policy 17 of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy.

Further representation relating to Tabley Lane

A further representation was received after publication of the Committee agenda. The representation is one of several representations made to the County Council from the same person, and many of the concerns raised are addressed in the Committee report. However, for completeness the main points are summarised below together with officer advice.

Issues raised in the representation:

- Tabley Lane should have no connection with the East West Link Road (EWLR). The north-south route should be via Sandy Lane/ EWLR/B6241 or via routes through the new Taylor Wimpey and Redrow housing developments. Vehicles cutting through residential areas can be controlled.
- Tabley Lane is a rural road that is narrow and windy, and is unsuitable for volumes of traffic.
- The North West Preston Master Plan requires more traffic to use Sandy Lane than Tabley Lane; and says that rural roads should not experience additional traffic which includes Tabley Lane.
- The proposed housing estate roads through the Taylor Wimpey and Redrow sites will operate at significantly reduced capacity and can accommodate more traffic, which means there is no need for a junction at Tabley Lane and the EWLR because traffic can use these routes.

- The traffic modelling to support the scheme is flawed.
- There is no data on the environmental impact of traffic on Tabley Lane south of the EWLR that properly assess impacts.
- Tabley Lane experiences significant increases in traffic of between 166% and 195%.

Advice

There is no justification for not having a connection between the East West Link Road and Tabley Lane. Traffic levels in 2034 are predicted to be well within the carrying capacity of the road, and peak levels in 17 years are not forecast to increase much beyond the levels experienced today in the morning peak. Environmental impacts are small and around half, or less than half, of the UK standard for nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter.

Having no connection from Tabley Lane to the EWLR means that traffic from Tabley Lane will be displaced to other residential roads nearby, and the level of displacement is likely to be significant. These roads will have a large number of properties fronting the roadside. It is also important to recognise that having no connection between Tabley Lane and the EWLR will be contrary to local policy as set out in the NW Preston Masterplan which states *"the section of B5411 Tabley Lane south of the EWLR will remain open to traffic"*.

The representation states that Tabley Lane is narrow (5.4m wide) and windy, and is a rural road. In fact Tabley Lane is classified as an urban road by the Highway Authority (up to the M55) and is a B class road.

It is suggested in the representation that the County Council can control vehicles cutting through or 'rat-running' through residential areas to prevent unintended adverse impacts on residents. Such a suggestion does not recognise that implementing controls through Traffic Regulation Orders is subject to a separate statutory process and there is no certainty of delivery. Orders must be consulted upon with affected residents and must also pass a series of statutory tests before they can be delivered.

Tabley Lane has an average width of 5.9m and a minimum width of 5.7m (not 5.4m). It has one curve with radii at 31m and one curve at 157m. By contrast, the first residential road through the Taylor Wimpey site has 70% of its length less than 5.5m, and has three bends at 30m radius. The second residential road through the Taylor Wimpey site has two bends at 70m radius and two bends at 30m radius. So the residential roads through the Taylor Wimpey site are mostly narrower and have more bends than Tabley Lane. In addition, all roads through the Taylor Wimpey and Redrow site will have substantially more homes fronting the road than on Tabley Lane. Finally, there is a very low prospect of changing any of the road designs on the residential roads and this has been made clear by certain developers that hold housing planning permissions.

The representation states that the North West Preston Master Plan requires more traffic to use Sandy Lane than Tabley Lane; and says that rural roads should not experience additional traffic which includes Tabley Lane. Both of these points are

not correct. The masterplan seeks to *"adopt the main north-south route using Sandy Lane (north of the proposed EWLR)"*. This is very different from saying more traffic should use Sandy Lane than Tabley Lane. Indeed, for Tabley Lane the masterplan says *"the section of Tabley Lane south of the EWLR...will in future experience increased peak period traffic volumes"*.

The representation says the proposed housing estate roads through the Taylor Wimpey and Redrow sites will operate at significantly reduced capacity and can accommodate more traffic. This means there is no need for a junction at Tabley Lane and the EWLR because traffic can use these new routes, with appropriate traffic controls. The manual calculations used in the representation are incorrect because they assume the carrying capacity of the road is almost three times greater than it should be.

The representation suggests the traffic modelling to support the scheme is flawed. Several lengthy representations have been made from the same individual on this point. The complexity of the nationally recognised (industry standard) modelling software used to provide forecast traffic information cannot be understated. It is also worth noting that the traffic model has been independently fully-verified.

The representation has attempted to analyse traffic modelling outputs through the performance of manual calculations and the application of assumptions that are contrary to the algorithms that inform the traffic modelling software.

Reviews of the concerns raised (and subsequently the publication of further modelling at a local level) have repeatedly demonstrated limitations in the manual calculations and understanding of the model; proving the analysis in the representations to be inaccurate and alternative options to be unsound.

The representation has suggested there is no data on the environmental impact of traffic on Tabley Lane south of the EWLR that properly assess the impacts. The ES contains data on noise impacts and air quality impacts. In particular, receptor point R510 predicts nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter impacts immediately south of the junction between the EWLR and Tabley Lane. The predicted levels show a small worsening impact (0.8 microgram increase - 16.4 to 17.2) for nitrogen dioxide; and no impact (15.2 to 15.2 micrograms per cubic metre) for particulate matter in 2021 when the predicted levels are compared with the scheme and without the scheme. For context, the UK standard for both nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter is 40 micrograms per cubic metre. So the predicted levels for both parameters is less than half the national standard. Similarly for noise it is concluded that the impacts are negligible or no change.

The person making the representation has claimed that there will be large percentage increases of traffic on the southern section of Tabley Lane by 2034. Different percent increases have been suggested in the past over the course of several representations. Many of the representations have contained arithmetic errors while performing a percentage increase calculation. And in other calculations incorrect values have been compared. The latest representation claims that traffic levels will increase between 166% and 195%.

However, these figures are not correct for two reasons. First, the arithmetic calculation used to derive the percent increases is wrong. Second, but more importantly, the figures used in the calculations have been selected incorrectly. Only south bound flows have been used. And south bound flows from different sections of highway have been compared rather than flows from the same section. Also, two-way flows, rather than flows in one direction should have been compared. And the two-way flows from the different sections should have been averaged for the southern part of Tabley Lane in order to compare traffic levels in 2016 and 2034.

When this is done, the percent increase for morning peaks between 2016 and 2034 is 8%, with two-way flows increasing from 517 to 558. For afternoon peaks the increase is 47%, with two-way flows increasing from 389 to 571. However, some context is needed for this increase. First, the predicted level in the afternoon in seventeen years (571) is similar to the level experienced today (517) in the morning. Second, the afternoon flow is low compared to the morning flow so the addition of vehicles to a low baseline will result in higher percent increase. Third, the road is a B class urban road that would still be well within its carrying capacity, and the predicted air quality and noise impacts are small to negligible. Finally, a planning condition is proposed to monitor the levels of traffic in the future. If monitored levels become unacceptable, then there is a requirement on the Highway Authority to submit a scheme to control traffic.

Conclusion

Most of the points raised in the representation are addressed in the report. The points raised in the representation are not supported for the reasons set out in this update sheet.