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Date	25 March 2024	*Email*	TestValleyDC@hants.gov.uk

Dear Ms Barter,

Land At Halterworth Lane, Halterworth Lane, Romsey

Outline planning application for demolition of existing buildings and erection of up to 270 dwellings, including affordable housing, with land for the potential future expansion of Halterworth Primary School, public open space, structural planting and landscaping, sustainable drainage system (SuDS) and vehicular access points. All matters reserved except for means of access

Thank you for your consultation on the above planning application. The Highway Authority wish to make the following comments.

Policy Status
The Transport Assessment at Appendix 6.1 of the Environmental Statement attempts to set out the relevant policies to this application.

The list of policy documents considered includes Hampshire's County Council's recently adopted Local Transport Plan 4. This document represents a shift in focus towards sustainable modes in line with national policy. It is also noted that this development is not allocated in Test Valley Borough Council's Adopted Local Plan for the period up until 2029 and that site is situated within the Local Strategic Gap identified within the emerging TVBC Draft Local Plan for the period up until 2040.

Existing conditions

The site is located to the west of Halterworth Lane, with Halterworth Primary School grounds to the south and agricultural fields to the east and north. The development site is currently in agricultural use and located circa 2km from Romsey town centre, residing on the eastern edge of the town of Romsey.

Currently, the site is served by two agricultural access points along Halterworth Lane. The site has two sections of frontage onto Halterworth Lane and there is an access for each frontage. The northernmost of the two existing accesses also acts as an access point to Public Right of Way (PROW) footpath 198/15/1 which connects Halterworth Lane and Highwood Lane.

Public Rights of Way

Hampshire's Countryside Services team have provided comment on the proposals and formally responded separately to this response.

Sustainable Access

Walking:

As advised during the pre-application process, the applicant has undertaken a WCHAR assessment to review the existing infrastructure and identify any deficiencies or areas for improvement. This has been submitted at Appendix F of the TA, whilst the body of the TA provides a narrative on the findings of this assessment.

The information provided sets out that both sides of Halterworth Lane benefit from 2m wide footways for most of their length, although the eastern footway terminates close to the cut-through to Kennett Road. The footway on the western side of the carriageway connects to the pedestrian infrastructure on Jenner Way to the north of the site, from which pedestrians can cross to the footway on the eastern side via a bollard protected refuge island.

The applicant has identified that there is potential for a number of crossing improvements to improve east-west connectivity across Halterworth Lane and the proposed site accesses. It has also been identified that there is the opportunity to provide tactile paving at the dropped kerb points on Halterworth Lane that currently do not benefit from them.

The crossing points identified are the junctions at Bolney Road, Montford Heights, Benedict Close, Saxon Way, Seward Rise, Jenner Way and Hestia Close, as well as the existing dropped kerb crossing on Halterworth Lane between Highwood Lane and Jenner Way. The applicant has offered to carry out these works. This is agreed and should be secured via a Section 106 legal agreement, with the applicant required to enter into a Section 278 for these works.

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Furthermore, it is proposed as part of the site access strategy that several uncontrolled crossings consisting of dropped kerbs and tactile paving are included along Halterworth Lane adjacent to the site, two of which are directly north and south of the proposed northern vehicular access with another a short distance from PROW route 198/15/1.

An uncontrolled crossing point will also be provided a short distance to the north of the southern vehicular access and another adjacent to the south-western corner of the site aligning with a potential dedicated pedestrian access. Whilst these measures are agreed, they are not considered sufficient in isolation to improve connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists.

Cycling:
There is currently no dedicated cycle infrastructure along Halterworth Lane and the route from the site towards Romsey town centre and the range of services and amenities as well as the train station along Botley Road also does not benefit from any cycle infrastructure.

In order for cyclists to travel east from the site, there are no designated cycle facilities until the toucan crossing on Botley Road in the vicinity of the junction with Montford Road circa 410m from the junction of Halterworth Lane/Botley Road and approximately 680m from the southern site access. From this crossing point onwards cyclists are able to join a shared footway/cycleway which forms part of National Cycle Route 24.

The applicant has also suggested a couple of potential measures to improve cycle connectivity to and from the site, however HCC deem these proposals to be of limited benefit. HCC have identified a number of areas where the cycle infrastructure can be improved through their work on the Southern Test Valley LCWIP which are considered necessary in connection with the proposed development. Therefore, a contribution towards cycle connectivity to Romsey town centre is required in order to mitigate the impact of this development and to ensure it is served adequately by sustainable modes.

Bus:
A review of the bus stops in the vicinity of the site, as well as the services available from these stops, has been provided. The TA sets out the closest bus stops to the site are situated 305m and 378m from the proposed development on Halterworth Lane, with one adjacent to and one opposite the footway to Kennett Road. There are a further pair of stops on either side of the carriageway on Botley Road, 507m and 568m form the site.

The Botley Road stops represent a far more attractive option given that they comprise of flag and timetable information, a bus cage and raised kerbs, whilst the Halterworth Lane stops are hail and ride with no infrastructure on the northbound stop and flagpole and timetable on the southbound stop. The Halterworth Lane stops are also only served by the 35 service which runs from Braishfield to Romsey once per day.

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The Botley Road stops are served by the frequent Bluestar 4 and 5 services. The Bluestar 4 bus provides a regular daily service Monday-Sunday inclusive and routes from Romsey to Southampton City Centre, whilst the 5 runs from Romsey to Boyatt Wood via Eastleigh hourly Monday to Friday but is less regular on Saturdays and does not run on Sundays.

Despite the limited service served by the stops opposite to and adjacent to Kennett Road on Halterworth Road, the applicant has confirmed they are willing to fund the upgrade of these bus stops to include raised boarding areas, shelter, seating and timetable information. The applicant has also confirmed in the TA that they are willing to fund the provision of shelters at the two Botley Road stops. These improvements are considered required in order to encourage travel via sustainable modes by making bus travel a more attractive options for users of the proposed site. This will need to be secured via a Section 106 legal agreement.

Train:
As stated in the TA, the nearest train station to the site is Romsey station, circa 2.3km from the development. This distance is considered an attractive cycle distance, however there is a lack of cycle infrastructure connecting the site to the station. Therefore, a contribution towards cycle improvements to the routes towards Romsey and Romsey train station is required along with additional cycle parking.

From Romsey station, users can travel to destinations such as Chandlers Ford, Southampton Central, Eastleigh, Southampton Airport Parkway, Salisbury, Portsmouth Harbour and Bath Spa.

Accident history
In order to establish the accident history in the vicinity of the proposed development site, the applicant has obtained Personal Injury Accident (PIA) data from Hampshire Constabulary for the most recently available five-year period running from 1st September 2018 to 31st August 2023.

The scope of this assessment was agreed at the pre-application stage and includes the following junctions as well as the highway network between these:

- Jenner Way/Halterworth Lane
- Halterworth Lane/Highwood Lane
- A3090 Winchester Road/Halterworth Lane
- Botley Road/Halterworth Lane
- A27/Botley Road/Premier Way
- A27/Rownhams Lane
- A27/A3057 (Ashfield Roundabout)

- M271/A3057/Coldharbour Lane (Romsey Road Roundabout)

This assessment showed that there were 34 recorded accidents within the parameters of the study. This would suggest emerging accident patterns which could potentially be exacerbated by the development. This review of the accident pattern in the area should take account of potential improvements which would mitigate against the additional trips arising from the development and how these measures would contribute to improving the identified locations in terms of road safety. For example, further exploration of segregated cycle facilities, speed limit reductions, additional controlled/uncontrolled crossing provision and junction alterations should be considered against this existing accident record and road safety criteria.

Site Access

Access to the development is proposed via two new simple priority controlled junctions on Halterworth Lane. The TA describes that these will comprise of a 5.5m wide carriageway, 6m corner radii with corner tapers and two 2m wide footways to connect with the existing footway provision on the eastern side of Halterworth Lane.

The northern vehicular access is shown in Drawing P21004-001C, whilst the southern access is shown in in Drawing P21004-002B.

Northern access

The proposed junction lies within 50m of Saxon Drive, an existing junction on the opposite side of Halterworth Lane. This separation distance falls below the recommended desirable minimum (50m) and will need to be considered by HCC's Departure from Standard Board. Furthermore, the tactile landing is proposed on the radius, increasing the crossing distance for pedestrians. The designer should consider shifting the access further north to address both issues.

There are two sets of tactile crossings north of the proposed access. It should be explored whether this can be reduced to one set of tactile crossings to improve safety for both pedestrians and drivers. The proposed 'indented' tactile crossing on the side road will be located away from the pedestrian walking desire line. Appropriate visibility splays should be shown in each direction and from both of the 'indented' crossing landings.

Southern access

The width of the access road is not shown for consideration, but the TA sets out that the site access points will ensure that they can accommodate the largest vehicles expected to regularly access the site, such as refuse collection vehicles. This has also been demonstrated in the swept path analysis of the junctions.

Road Safety Audit

A Stage One Road Safety Audit (RSA1) was commissioned by the applicant and has been submitted along with the Designer's response.

The RSA1 identified potential parking issues arising from vehicles parking on the eastern side of Halterworth Lane in the vicinity of the proposed site access junctions and the effect this will have on visibility. The applicant has sought to address this issue through an amendment to the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) as demonstrated in Drawing P21004-002B. This is discussed in more detail in the following parking provision section of this response.

The other item raised by the auditor was the excessive vehicular encroachment into opposing lanes when turning into/out of the proposed access roads for refuse vehicles. This has been addressed in the updated tracking drawings.

Parking Provision

The pre-application submission for the proposed development included a car park comprising of circa 20 spaces off of the southern access, with the intention for this being for school drop off/pick up for the nearby Halterworth primary school.

HCC commented at the time that:

'The majority of pupils at Haltwerworth primary school will live within a desirable walking distance to the site and would be likely to travel to school via sustainable modes, whether that be walking or cycling. Parking provision this close to the school being provided by this development for school pick-up/drop-off has the potential to discourage travelling to and from school sustainably and increase travel to the school via private car.

That being said, there are known parking issues associated with the school pick-up and drop-off periods. On that basis, a car park may be useful to alleviate some of the current parking issues, but it has the potential to compound these issues and encourage more people to drive closer to the school. If a car park is to be pursued, it should be explored whether the car park could be provided in the vicinity of the northern access to the site so that it helps to alleviate parking concerns in the direct vicinity of the school.

Details of how a car park for the purposes of school pick-up/drop-off would be managed and maintained will need to be provided to ensure that this car park would not be used by local residents for parking.'

The TA submitted in support of this application outlines that Drawing P21004-003B shows a suggested amendment to the existing TRO at the southern site access in the

form of double yellow lines. The TA also sets out that the existing single yellow line to the north could be extended to keep the visibility splay to the right on exit clear.

Rather than providing the car park that was proposed at the pre-application stage, the applicant has now suggested that they are willing to provide some parking for school trips and visitors within the vicinity of their site in order to alleviate some of the parking concerns on Halterworth Lane at school drop off/pick up. The applicant has also suggested they will be willing to accept a condition requiring a number of parking spaces to be provided at the reserved matters stage.

Due to concerns regarding overspill parking on Halterworth Lane and the surrounding highway network, this issue should be addressed at the outline stage. A firm proposal is required at this stage for the highway authority to consider.

Internal Road Network

The TA sets out that the internal layout of the site has been designed with a design speed of 20mph as per Manual for Streets. Whilst the internal layout will be subject to a reserved matters application, this is good practice. The applicant should clarify whether they will be offering the internal road to be adopted as highway.

Trip generation

In order to obtain the estimated traffic generation of the proposed development the applicant has used the TRICS database. This is an industry standard tool and the trip rates presented in the TA were agreed during the pre-application process.

Therefore, the agreed trip rates are 0.518 two-way vehicular trips in the AM peak and 0.501 in the PM peak, resulting in 140 trips in the former and 136 in the latter. The 12-hour trip rate I also agreed as 4.335, resulting in 1,170 trips per day.

Traffic distribution/assignment

The trips associated with the proposed development have been distributed to the highway network using 2011 Census journey to work data for the area in which the site is located. Once the likely destinations were determined, Google Maps has been used to establish the most likely route that drivers will take when commuting.

This shows that the most common destination is central and west Southampton, with 23.5% of trips routing via the M271 to access this destination. 17.8% are estimated to travel to and from Winchester, with 13.4% to Chandlers Ford and Eastleigh.

For the purposes of assessment, the applicant has assumed that 60% of development traffic will use the proposed southern site access and 40% using the northern access based on the developable land at each part of the site. This is accepted.

Junction modelling

In order to understand the impact the proposed development would have on the local highway network, the applicant has conducted a junction capacity assessment for a number of scenarios. The proposed scenarios are as follows:

- 2023 Baseline
- 2028 Future Baseline
- 2028 Future Baseline plus Development
- 2028 Without Development (2028 Future Baseline plus committed development)
- 2028 With Development (2028 Without Development plus Development)

It is assumed that the 2028 With Development Scenario also includes committed development but this should be confirmed by the applicant.

The junctions included within the scope of the assessment are agreed as follows:

- Northern site access
- Southern site access
- Halterworth Lane/Jenner Way
- Halterworth Lane/Highwood Lane
- A3090 Winchester Road/Halterworth Lane
- Botley Road/Halterworth Lane
- A27/Botley Road/Premier Way
- A27/Botley Road/Premier Way proposed layout (Whitenap)
- A27/Rownhams Lane
- A27/A3057
- M271/A3057/Coldharbour Lane

In addition to these junctions, the applicant has also assessed the level crossing on Halterworth Lane which is located to the north of the site. A level crossing survey was conducted on Tuesday 7th November in order to establish the level of delay and queueing at the crossing. This information was gathered in the AM and PM peak, with the queue lengths recorded when the barrier was down.

Committed development

The TA refers to the impact of the development being considered cumulatively with other committed developments but does not set out what has been considered to be committed. It was highlighted during pre-application discussions that the Whitenap

development should be accounted for, as well as Kings Chase Phase 2 under planning application reference 23/00964/OUTS.

Junction capacity assessments

The applicant has initially set out the proportional impact of the number of trips applied to each of the junctions assessed as part of this application in the 2028 with and without development scenarios for the AM and PM peak.

The results of this assessment are displayed in Table 8.1 of the TA and shows that four of the junctions have a proportional increase of 5% or higher in the PM peak with development scenario and three in the AM peak. The biggest percentage increase in both peaks is at the Halterworth Lane/Jenner Way junction, with a 11% increase in the AM peak and a 14.3% difference in the PM peak.

The largest increase in actual trip numbers is at the Botley Road/Halterworth Lane junction, which is anticipated to take an extra 94 two-way trips in the AM peak and 92 in the PM peak as a result of the proposed development.

The modelling work undertaken by the applicant demonstrates that the proposed site accesses will operate well within capacity, as well as the Halterworth Lane/Jenner Way junction and M271/A3057/Coldharbour Lane junction. The A27/A3057 and Botley Road/Halterworth Lane junctions are also anticipated to operate within theoretical capacity, with the development anticipated to have a negligible impact on both junctions. The remaining junctions are either anticipated to be approaching or at theoretical capacity.

Halterworth Lane/Highwood Lane

This junction is shown to operate slightly over the practical capacity threshold with an RFC of 0.88 in the AM peak of the 2028 with development scenario. 0.09 of this RFC figure comes from committed development, whilst 0.04 is from the development. Therefore, the impact of the development on this junction is considered negligible.

A3090 Winchester Road/Halterworth Lane

In the 2023 baseline scenario, the Halterworth Lane arm of this junction operates with an RFC of 0.81 in the AM peak and 0.63 in the PM peak. In the 2028 with development scenario, this arm is anticipated to operate with an RFC of 0.99 in the AM peak and 0.75 in the PM peak.

The RFC of 0.99 is concerning for the highway authority and it is important that the sustainable measures that the applicant implements as part of nay mitigation package should this development be approved adequately mitigates this impact and encourages travel via sustainable modes rather over reliance on the private car.

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A27/Botley Road/Premier Way

The applicant has modelled this junction both with and without the measures proposed as part of the Whitenap development. Without the mitigation measures associated with the Whitenap application, the A27 north-eastern arm is anticipated to have an RFC of 1 in the AM peak, as well as the Botley Road arm having an RFC of 0.86.

When modelled with the proposed mitigation measures, the A27 north-eastern arm RFC drops to 0.88, whilst the Botley Road arm becomes 0.63. The reduction associated with these mitigation measures has been assumed to be funded and delivered by the Whitenap development and would provide benefit to future residents of the Halterworth Lane site. However, the proposed mitigation associated with the Whitenap development has not been agreed at this stage.

In the absence of the capacity improvement works, the impact of this development on the junction is not acceptable and will result in unacceptable capacity issues at the roundabout. The applicant for the Whitenap application has been asked to conduct a Cycle Level of Service (CLoS) assessment as part of the work around justifying their proposals and it is considered that the same is required of this application.

A27/Rownhams Lane

The results of the modelling exercise at the A27/Rownhams Lane junction shows that in the 2028 with development scenario the Rownhams Lane arm on the western fork of the junction is estimated to operate with an RFC of 1 in the AM peak.

Whilst the highway authority note that the impact of the proposed development only results in an increase in 0.01 of the RFC of this junction, the development will still be contributing towards a junction that is expected to have capacity issues in the future.

Whilst it would not be reasonable for the highway authority to expect this development to improve this junction in terms of capacity, the sustainable measures of the site must be sufficient to encourage modal shift towards sustainable modes rather than the private car.

Travel Plan

The Framework Travel Plan submitted by the applicant has been assessed using Hampshire County Council's (HCC's) evaluation criteria for the assessment of travel plans – "A guide to development related travel plans".

Background/ introduction + aims

Paragraph 1.1.4 should include Gladman's view on travel planning and a statement from Gladman supporting the contents of the travel plan

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This section should also reference the developer's policies on sustainable travel. If the developer does not have a policy on sustainable travel, a statement of support for the aims of the Travel Plan from a senior member of staff at Gladman would suffice.

Existing site conditions / site audit

As the Travel Plan should be viewed as a standalone document for public viewing Section 3 should include the following:

Footways and cycleways, including:

- Walking Isochrone Map
- Cycling Isochrone Map
- Local Facilities

Measures

Walking

- Promotion of safe local walking routes, including the provision of route maps
- Promotion of free health apps
- Improvements to (and maintenance of) the walking network and signage

Cycling

- Formation of a Bicycle Users Group (BUG)
- Bike maintenance events e.g. Bike Dr, minimum annually
- Improvements to (and maintenance of) the cycle network

This section should include a final total cost estimate which will be used to set the Travel Plan Cash Deposit.

Management / TPC role

Section 8, relevant to management of the travel plan and the travel plan co-ordinator roles should include a commitment to providing full details at the Full Travel Plan stage.

The cost of the Travel Plan Coordinator will need to be estimated before the S.106 agreement to inform the cost of the Travel Plan Deposit/Bond - see action plan section below.

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Monitoring

The section relevant to monitoring should include the following details:

- Monitoring timetable as laid out below:
- Snapshot surveys to be conducted for years where a full survey will not be carried out.
- Measures to ensure that this response rate is met, e.g., a voucher for supermarket or online retailer.
- Alternative method of survey if 35% response rate not achieved, e.g., ATCs/TRICS. A minimum 35% response rate must be attained in order for travel questionnaire surveys to be considered statistically significant; commitment to this figure should be included in this section. If this cannot be achieved, then discussions should be had with HCC regarding carrying out TRICS SAM or ATC surveys.

There are currently no measures in place to encourage members of staff to complete a questionnaire survey. Entry into a prize draw could be offered to those who complete a survey, although it should be noted that the prize should not be travel-related (e.g., bus tickets, cycle vouchers, etc).

A sample questionnaire survey should be provided in the appendices.

Action plan

As per HCC's guidance, the travel plan should include an action plan to demonstrate how each measure will be achieved:

As detailed above estimate of the costs for the action plan will need to be provided before the S.106 can be completed.

Where a measure's cost is within 'TPC staff time' a number of hours per annum should be allocated and an hourly rate used to determine an accurate cost.

Delivery and Enforcement

A section relevant to enforcement is required which should contain the following;

- Paragraph explaining the role of the Section 106 agreement including the value of the Travel Plan Cash Deposit (where applicable)
- Commitment to pay HCC's monitoring and approval fees

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- Commitment to provide a Travel Plan Cash Deposit of equal value to travel plan measures

Conclusion

A final paragraph should conclude the travel plan summarising the key points from each section.

The FTP will require further amendments as set out above before it can be considered acceptable for submission in conjunction with the proposed site.

Recommendation

Further information is required prior to the highway authority being in a position to provide a recommendation. This is as follows:

- Amendments to vehicle access proposals
- Suitable sustainable modes improvements
- Clarity around school parking proposals
- Confirmation of committed development assessed
- CLoS assessment of A27/Botley Road/Premier Way roundabout
- Amendments to Travel Plan

Should the Local Planning Authority be minded to determine the application in the meantime, please contact Fraser Spinney for reasons for refusal.

Yours sincerely,

Gemma McCart
Team Leader - Highways Development Planning