
Land at Chapel Road, Grundisburgh

Technical Note 1: Response to Peer Review

22nd October 2021

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Brookbanks is appointed by East Suffolk Council to review the transportation evidence produced to support a residential development on Chapel Road, Grundisburgh.
- 1.2 Previously, Brookbanks provided a non-bias and independent consideration to the transport evidence that was submitted to support the Planning Application. The purpose was to identify any shortcomings and to then suggest any additional details that would aid in determining the application.
- 1.3 The principal source of the transport evidence was presented within the Transport Assessment. The purpose of any Transport Assessment is to provide the necessary information to enable the local planning authority and highway authority to reach a decision on the acceptability of the development.
- 1.4 The Brookbanks peer review identified additional information that was considered relevant. This information was not requested in order to find fault, to then justify an objection to the development. The information was requested to allow an informed judgement to be made. The final judgement is a balancing act between the level of provision against likely impact.
- 1.5 The peer review identified 19 areas where additional information would be beneficial. These were categorised as:
 - Essential: Being components of the current Transport Assessment that are either missing or incorrect and are deemed necessary in order to determine a full planning application.
 - Desirable: Being components which would be ideal to have awareness/knowledge of prior to determination but are not deemed essential.
 - Moderately Beneficial: Being components which would help to provide a more comprehensive and considered appreciation of the site and it's traffic impacts but are not formally required or expected.
- 1.6 In response, the Applicant has provided additional responses to each of the 19 topic areas, together with additional evidence. The purpose of this note is to comment on that response and then to identify a course of action that could be followed in order to allow the application to proceed.

2 Action points

Action point 1 – provide traffic flow data

- 2.1 The Transport Assessment did not contain classified turning count data for the junctions closest to the development. This data was considered necessary in order to facilitate junction capacity assessments and confirm the status of the ‘Quiet Roads’.
- 2.2 The Applicant has provided additional traffic flow data including the roads adjacent to the development. This data did not include turning count information but does provide sufficient information in order to make an educated judgement on the impact of the development.
- 2.3 On this basis, it is considered that no further action is necessary in relation to action point 1.

Action point 2 – Provision of vehicle speeds

- 2.4 The Transport Assessment did not contain sufficient vehicle speed data. This data was considered necessary in order to validate the assumptions regarded junction visibility splays.
- 2.5 The Applicant has provided additional vehicle speed data.
- 2.6 On this basis, it is considered that no further action is necessary in relation to action point 2.

Action point 3 – Road Safety Audits

- 2.7 The application is a full application and on that basis, considering the sensitivity of the junctions, it was considered reasonable to request a RSA in order to confirm the acceptability of the highway works from a highway safety perspective.
- 2.8 The Applicant has responded to this point by the following:

A road safety audit is a requirement to support the “detailed design” of highways improvement schemes which is normally pursuant to discharging a planning condition relating to those works.

Such planning conditions are applied to control and approve the detailed design of improvement works and their acceptance by the Highway Authority prior to works being able to take place on the public highway (under S.278 of the Highways Act). The s.278 process provides the Local Highway Authority with the necessary process to ensure that highway schemes are delivered in accordance with design and safety practises. The highway works proposed and considered by SCC are not unusual in their design, or scope, and these local improvement works will provide betterment to existing highway infrastructure. On this basis SCC did not require Road Safety Audits to be carried out for the off-site highway works or in respect of the internal layout which would be later offered for adoption.

When proceeding with the detailed design of the works and agreement with the Local Highway Authority, Stage 1 and 2 road safety audits to accompany the detailed design would be submitted for approval. Once approved these works would proceed and further audits (stage 3 and 4) would be carried out prior as required by SCC.

- 2.9 The suggestion made by the Applicant is considered reasonable.
- 2.10 Therefore, it is recommended that a pre-commencement planning condition is included to safeguard the

production of the Stage 1 and stage 2 RSA, together with the associated designer's response, both of which should require the approval of the highway authority.

- 2.11 Furthermore, the Applicants suggestion that a planning condition is included to safeguard the production of the Stage 3 RSA (typically a pre-occupation condition), together with the associated designer's response and completion of any remedial works, both of which should require the approval of the highway authority, should be attached to the consent.
- 2.12 Similarly, the Applicants suggestion that a planning condition is included to safeguard the production of the Stage 4 RSA (typically 12 months after first occupation condition), together with the associated designer's response and completion of any remedial works, both of which should require the approval of the highway authority, should be attached to the consent.
- 2.13 A RSA should be carried out on all construction works carried out on the public highway.

Action point 4 – Refuse vehicle tracking

- 2.14 The transport evidence did not contain vehicle tracking data of a refuse vehicle through the development. This was considered necessary to ensure the development could be serviced adequately and the refuse vehicles could enter and leave the site in a forward gear.
- 2.15 The applicant has now provided the necessary vehicle tracking.
- 2.16 It is suggested that a planning condition is attached to the consent that identifies the final development layout is subject to vehicle tracking, to be approved by the highway authority.

Action point 5 – Provision of visibility splays

- 2.17 As part of the original transport evidence, there was insufficient detail in order to confirm the necessary visibility splays.
- 2.18 Additional information on traffic speeds has now been provided.
- 2.19 Any highway works and the associated detailed design will confirm the visibility splays. These works will be reviewed through the road safety audit process, which will be safeguarded within the planning conditions suggested in response to action point 3.

Action point 6 – Safe routes to school

- 2.20 Additional information was requested in relation to FP20 and the acceptability of the local roads for cycling.
- 2.21 The Applicant has provided information regarding the traffic flows within the roads adjacent to the development, confirming that the roads would be suitable to be designated as quiet lanes.
- 2.22 The Applicants response acknowledges:

A requirement of the allocation is to improve FP20 ...

Significant discussion has taken place and it is accepted and confirmed by SCC that the improvement can be carried out under S.278 of the highways act. A landowner's permission is not necessary to carry out works within the public highway.

The proposed development has been designed to be conducive to cycling, and provides connections into the local highway network which forms part of the Council Council's 'Quiet Lanes' network.

A route for cycling to the school would be to use Chapel Road and Meeting Lane, which are both part of Grundisburgh 'Quiet Lanes' network accepting that cyclists would still need to dismount to use connecting footways and footpaths to reach the school.

- 2.23** On this basis, following confirmation of the traffic levels, a safe route for pedestrians and cyclists has been identified.
- 2.24** The Applicant response confirms the acceptability of the development is predicated on the improvements to FP20. Therefore, pre-occupation conditions are suggested in relation to the completion of the FP20 improvement.

Action point 7 – Assessment to establish gaps in walking / cycling provision.

- 2.25** Due to the reliance on FP20, it was recommended that a walking and cycling audit should be carried out to ensure they were no barriers to walking and cycling movements.
- 2.26** The Applicant response is indicated below.

During the course of compiling the Transport Assessment it was not considered that any other gaps existed that would be considered a barrier to safe movement. However, it is accepted that a cyclist cannot leave the development (other than to the south on Park Road) without dismounting and it is suggested that a connection is made to Chapel Road to allow a cyclist to achieve this direct connection.

It is therefore proposed to provide a cycle connection between the internal road at the northern end of the development (turning head) to the east onto Chapel Road. This connection will be 3m wide and provide cyclists with direct access onto Chapel Road. This will be secured by an appropriately worded planning condition.

- 2.27** The response from the Applicant suggests an acceptable pre-occupation planning condition that will improve connectivity.

Action point 8 – Provide a review of the latest accident records

- 2.28** The TA provided a review of accident records that were available at the time of production of the document. It was recommended that accident records were reviewed to identify if they were any recent collisions that may be relevant.
- 2.29** The Applicant has provided additional information regarding recent collisions, confirming:

In relation to off-site highways works, the measures proposed at the Lower Road/B1079 junction will benefit road safety generally and the accident at this location would appear to be driver error as no other vehicles were involved. Likewise, refreshing the white lines at the junction of Chapel Road and Park Road included in the Park Road off-site highway works would make it clearer who has priority and prevent overshooting of the junction.

- 2.30** The suggestion by the Applicant to refresh road markings is reasonable and should be included as a preoccupation condition.

Action point 9 – FP20 Considerations

2.31 The Applicant is requested to consider conversion of the footpath to bridleway or confirm the street furniture necessary to protect pedestrians along the along the footpath.

2.32 The Applicant responded in the following way:

SCC have been asked to consider the point related to upgrading FP20 to a bridleway. They have furnished the following responses from the SCC PROW team. 2.66 The SCC PROW manager concluded, "FP20 does not lend itself to being upgraded to BR hence the ask to surface FP20 at 1.5m along its length where possible".

The local highway network and 'Quiet Lanes' are appropriate to accommodate the cycle needs of the development. A dedicated cycle connection will also be provided from the site to Chapel Road.

Protecting pedestrians from unlawful use of FP20 by cyclists will be included in the upgrading works which is subject to a condition.

2.33 The condition in relation to FP20 should include reference to protecting pedestrians, accepting that these works will be subject to RSA.

Action point 10 - The provision of an additional passing bay on Chapel Road

2.34 Due to the length of Chapel Road and the overall width, it was considered appropriate to review Chapel Road to determine whether there were opportunities to provide an additional passing bay.

2.35 The Applicants response is indicated below.

This was not considered necessary in discussion with SCC given their understanding of the lightly trafficked nature of the roads and the combination of existing informal passing places that exist over the length of Chapel Road that abuts the allocated site. SCC has considered the proposed development vehicle demands (2 in the peak hour) arising from the development on Chapel Road and consider this increase represents a very low level of impact, which does not justify the need for additional passing places to those already proposed. However, opportunity does exist within the public highway to make such additional provision, possibly at the access to properties at the northern end of Chapel Road as shown below. This would formalise an informal passing place immediately to the north. It is suggested this can be considered further at the S.278 stage as part of the condition to be discharged.

2.36 The Applicants suggestion is considered acceptable and a preoccupation condition should be included for the provision of two passing bays on Chapel Road.

Action point 11 – FP20 Width

2.37 The overall width of FP20 was to be considered. The Applicant response has provided commentary on this point.

2.38 No further action necessary.

Action point 12 – s106 items

- 2.39 There was uncertainty regarding a request for £9000, in relation to FP20.
- 2.40 The Applicant's response Provides further background to this request and this can be covered by the discussions between the applicant and the local authority.

Action point 13 – Provision of bus passes

- 2.41 It was suggested that the applicant considered the provision of monthly bus passes on occupation to encourage the use of public transport.
- 2.42 The Applicant has confirmed that a contribution for public transport improvement that will benefit all residents of Grundisburgh has been made for £100,000. This has been agreed and included in the S.106 agreement. There is also a separate £73,000 contribution towards school transport being made to meet the needs of the development.
- 2.43 These contributions should be included within the S.106.

Action point 14 – consideration of vehicle speeds

- 2.44 The applicant was requested to consider the need for any formal traffic calming measures.
- 2.45 The response from the applicant included:

There is no requirement for speed survey or any resultant traffic calming.

- 2.46 This is contrary to paragraph 4.6.11, 4.6.14, 4.6.15, 4.6.16 and 4.6.17 of the TA.

4.6.11 – This suggests that an improvement scheme to increase the conspicuity of the speed limit change and the junction with Park Rad would have a positive effect on reducing speeds.

4.6.14 - The above could be further supported by an entry gateway feature at the 30mph speed limit change. TRL Report 564 (2003) suggests that a comprehensive gateway feature with high visual impact may reduce mean speeds by 5-7mph. This potential improvement will be discussed with SCC as part of the application process.

4.6.15 – The speed survey data for Grundisburgh Road on the approach to the Lower Road junction demonstrates drivers are adhering to the speed limit to the south of the junction, but travelling in excess of the speed limit to the north of junction. This suggests that the bend in the road to the south of the junction and the 30mph road marking roundels painted on the carriageway are effective in reducing vehicle speeds, but measures to enforce the speed limit would be beneficial to the north of the junction.

4.6.16 - This will be enforced by no overtaking road markings and junction ahead warning signs.

4.6.17 - Woodbridge Road to the north of the junction with Lower Road is rural in nature and characteristic of many derestricted (60mph) roads in the local area, with limited frontage access, no presence of pedestrians or on street parking etc. which would usually have a speed reducing influence on driver behaviour in a 30mph area. The 85th percentile approach speeds to the north of the junction were recorded at 40mph. It is therefore suggested that measures to enforce the 30mph speed limit are put in place.

- 2.47 The Applicants TA identifies speeding issues. The applicant has already identified the Improvement Works would be subject to STAGE 1-4 RSA. This should also include a review of vehicle speeds.

Action point 15 - confirmation of quiet lanes

- 2.48 The development is predicated on the 'Quiet Lanes'. It was requested to confirm the status of these.
- 2.49 The applicant responded by indicating the 'Quiet Lanes' designations have been confirmed.
- 2.50 No further action is necessary.

Action point 16 - consider impact on "quiet lane" designation

- 2.51 The applicant was requested to consider the impact of the development on the quiet lane designation.
- 2.52 As indicated in the response to action point 15 the applicant has confirmed that the quiet lane designation process has been completed.
- 2.53 On that basis no action is required.

Action point 17 - Accessibilities to local amenities

- 2.54 The applicant was requested to consider the distance between the site and the local amenities based on the southernmost property.
- 2.55 This information has not been provided, relying on distances from the centre of the site instead. It is accepted that the accessibility of the site was considered during the development of the local plan.

Action point 18 - Policy compliance

- 2.56 The TA provided a summary of relevant planning policy but without identifying how the site was compliant. the applicant was requested To provide evidence of policy compliance.
- 2.57 This has now been provided and no further action is necessary.

Action point 19 - consideration of cycle accessibility

- 2.58 On the basis that FP20 might not be converted into a bridleway the applicant was requested to consider the accessibility of the site in relation to cyclists.
- 2.59 As indicated in the previous responses, this has now been considered. A further intervention has been identified (Action point 7).
- 2.60 No further action is necessary.

3 Summary

- 3.1** Brookbanks provided a non-bias and independent consideration of the Transport evidence that was submitted to support the Planning Application. The Peer Review identified additional information that was considered relevant.
- 3.2** In response, the Applicant has provided additional responses to each of the 19 topic areas, together with additional evidence. The response suggested a manner to move forward. A summary of these is indicated below.
- A pre-commencement condition is included that seeks the approval of the Highway Authority regarding the production of Stage 1 and stage 2 RSA and the associated designer's response in relation to any construction works that are carried out within the public highway.
 - A pre-occupation condition is included that seeks the approval of the Highway Authority regarding the production of Stage 3 RSA and the associated designer's response in relation to any construction works that are carried out within the public highway.
 - A condition is included that seeks the approval of the Highway Authority regarding the production of Stage 4 RSA, associated designer's response and completion of any identified remedial works in relation to any construction works that are carried out within the public highway within 12 months of the anniversary of the Stage 3 RSA.
 - Every RSA undertaken should be supported by vehicle speed survey.
 - A condition is included that seeks the approval of the Highway Authority regarding the development layout to demonstrate the refuse vehicles can safely negotiate the on road layout and can enter and exit in a forward gear.
 - A pre-occupation condition is included to safeguard the improvement to FP20. This should include measures to protect pedestrians as identified in action point 9.
 - A pre-occupation condition is included to cover the additional cycling link as referred to in action point 7
 - A pre-occupation condition is included to cover a scheme to review the road markings adjacent to the development as referred to in action point 8
 - A pre-occupation condition is included to cover the delivery of two passing points on Chapel Road
 - S106 to include sums identified in action point 12 and 13.